



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 805-th FSC Plenary Meeting**
(25 November 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)
(Agenda item 1)

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine is deeply concerned about significant increase in the number of ceasefire violations perpetrated by the pro-Russian illegal armed groups in certain areas of Ukraine's Donbas. Militants continued shellings of the Ukrainian positions and the residential areas of cities and villages. Over the last weekend the combined Russian-militant groups many times provoked the ATO forces into armed clashes by approaching the Ukrainian advanced positions and carrying out attacks from the "grey zone". The Ukrainian military also observed numerous attempts by the pro-Russian militants of conducting intelligence operations of the battle formations and tactical rears of the ATO forces all along the contact line. For these purposes the terrorists used local agents in the front-line as well as sabotage and reconnaissance groups, including by sending them under the guise of civilians. Many attempts of placing mines by pro-Russian sabotage and reconnaissance groups were registered in the tactical rear of the ATO forces.

During the period of 19-24 November the militants carried out over 264 shellings along the contact line, including with 82 mm and 120 mm mortars which are to be withdrawn according to the Minsk agreements. They also used grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms. In particular, during last week this happened near the settlements of Verhnetoretske, Troitske, Pisky, Marinka, Krasnohorivske, and Novohorodske in the Donetsk direction; Zaitseve, Mayorske, Lozove and Luhanske in the Artemivsk direction; Novotoshkivske in the Luhansk direction; Shyrokyne in the Mariupol direction. **As a result of these shellings 4 Ukrainian servicemen were killed and 9 were wounded last week.** As deadly attacks grow the Ukrainian military were allowed to respond when life is at risk.

The above mentioned attacks, also registered by the OSCE SMM, indicate that the combined-Russian separatist forces in Donbas have not withdrawn all heavy weapons from the contact line to the appropriate distances. In order to ensure the cessation of these deadly attacks we call on Russia and the militants it supports to enable the SMM observers to do their verification work on the arms removal.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine continues to implement fully and in good faith its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including on withdrawal of weapons under the Addendum to the Minsk Package of measures of 29 September 2015. The removal of tanks and artillery below 100 mm calibre from the contact line in Donetsk region was launched on 21 October. All tanks and artillery systems were relocated to areas beyond the withdrawal lines.

As a result of this withdrawal on 23 November a speaker of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine stated the completion of withdrawal of tanks and weapons

below 100 mm calibre in the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. The report of the General Staff was communicated to the OSCE SMM.

We note with great concern that, in spite of the undertaken commitments on the synchronized withdrawal of weapons from the contact line, the Russia-backed illegal armed groups have moved some weaponry to conceal it, to put it beyond the scope of the Addendum and therefore beyond the verification process. Russia and the militants it supports continue to amass weaponry that can be quickly brought to the front line in their re-escalation attempts.

Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine welcomes that the SMM increased the number of field presences in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, opening forward patrol bases. The establishment of additional patrol hubs and forward patrol bases, along with more effective use of established and new remote observation tools, will enhance the Mission's capacity.

We note the SMM reports that the OSCE observers do not yet enjoy full freedom of movement and access to the areas controlled by militants and the Ukrainian-Russian border, in particular in the Luhansk oblast, despite commitments of the Russian side on the freedom of access.

On 17 November:

- the SMM received a letter from the "LPR" demanding the removal of two SMM monitors from "LPR"-controlled areas, despite OSCE Permanent Council Decision 1117, which establishes their right and obligation to monitor and report throughout Ukraine;

- four armed "LPR" militants stopped the SMM approximately 200m from a training area near Oleksiivka, confirming training was conducted and denying the SMM further access.

On 19 November:

- five kilometres west of the "LPR"-controlled crossing point on the Ukraine-Russian border at Izvaryne (53km south-east of Luhansk), armed "LPR" militants refused to allow the SMM to proceed further, saying they had standing orders not to allow the SMM to access the area;

- in Lukove (41km north-east of Mariupol), armed "DPR" militants told the SMM to leave the village;

- while in Debaltseve (58km north-east of Donetsk), the SMM had a "DPR" "escort" at all times, acceptance of which was effectively a condition for continued monitoring in the city.

On 20 November:

- armed "DPR" militants denied the SMM passage through a checkpoint near the exit of "DPR"-controlled Staromykhailivka (18km west of Donetsk) in the direction of Krasnohorivka;

- armed "LPR" militants denied the SMM access to Sokilnyky (38km north-west of Luhansk).

On 21 November:

- at a checkpoint near "LPR"-controlled Uralo-kavkaz (45km south-east of Luhansk), an "LPR" militants denied the SMM to proceed, citing that he had orders not to allow the SMM to proceed toward "LPR"-controlled Izvaryne (54km south-east of Luhansk).

On 22 November:

- at a checkpoint in "DPR"-controlled Michurine (56km north-east of Mariupol), armed "DPR" militants did not allow the SMM to proceed;

- near a checkpoint in "DPR"-controlled Staromykhailivka (16km west of Donetsk), armed "DPR" militants denied the SMM to proceed, citing that the SMM needed to submit a formal request.

Interference in SMM operations by combined Russian-separatist forces undermines the Mission and its ability to present a more complete picture of the conflict zone. We urge Russia and the separatists it backs to grant full access to the SMM, including to the international border.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to draw attention of the Forum to new evidence of the presence of the regular armed forces' and the latest military equipment of the Russian Federation in Donbas.

In particular, on 19 November **the Russian modern ground reconnaissance systems "Credo M1" were registered** near the occupied settlements of Hranitne and Sahanka in Donetsk oblast. The surveillance zone of reconnaissance is from 200 m to 32 km. These systems are used by the Russian military personnel, disguised as local militants, to conduct observation of the ATO positions. According to our information, the Russian army got equipped by the ground reconnaissance systems "Credo-M1" from 2002. The "Credo-M1" was developed by the Scientific Production Association "Strela" in the city of Tula, the Russian Federation.

On 20 November the Russian **military personnel in uniform with chevrons "SOBR" (special detachment of rapid reaction of the Russian Interior Ministry) were observed** at a checkpoint near the settlement of Zaitseve on the occupied territory of Donetsk oblast. These servicemen did not hide that they had arrived from the Russian Federation to engage in the combat operations in Donbas.

In addition, according to the competent authorities of Ukraine, last week a **commission comprising up to 40 officers from the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, headed by Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff general-colonel Sergei Istrakov**, inspected some military units of the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the combined Russian separatist forces in Donbas on their combat readiness for resumption of hostilities. During the inspection of the artillery units of the 3rd separate rifle brigade (Horlivka) and the 9th separate rifle regiment (Novoazovsk) of the 1st AC general Istrakov handed awards, on the occasion of Missile Forces and Artillery Day to the Russian officers, who fight on the territory of Ukraine as part of the invasion force. Among them there were, in particular, such officers of the Russian Armed Forces: Pyotr Shevchenko (documented as Lysenko), Dmitriy Sidorov (documented as Prykhod'ko), Alexandr Miroshnichenko (documented as Sugatskyi), Alexandr Kot (documented as Smolenskyi).

The Ukrainian side is deeply concerned about the continuous strengthening of the Russian offensive groups in the north of the illegally occupied Crimean peninsula. Most recently, on 24 November five Russian military transport aircrafts Il-76 made the redeployment of two tactical battalion groups of paratroopers from the 98th airborne division of the Armed Forces of Russia from the city of Ivanovo to the airfield Dzhankoi (Crimea). In addition, the 97th land-assault regiment of the 7th mountain-assault division from the city of Novorossiysk, the Russian Federation, started deployment in the settlement of Kalynivka (3 km north-west of Dzhankoi). Thus, the offensive

potential of the Russian troops in the occupied Crimea was further strengthened with the Russian best trained units that are ready for assault combat operations.

Mr. Chairman,

The Russian Federation that resorted to armed aggression against Ukraine and claiming interest in peaceful resolution must withdraw its regular armed forces, weaponry and mercenaries from the sovereign territory of Ukraine, and practically deliver on the commitments it has undertaken to resolve the conflict.

We call on Russia to abide fully and in good faith by the Minsk agreements, to put an end to its aggression against Ukraine. We urge Russia to restore its respect for international law and the OSCE principles and commitments and reverse the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman