

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°837  
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**EU Statement on the security situation in and around  
Ukraine**

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The EU and its Member States would like to draw the attention of the FSC to the EU-Ukraine summit on 24 November. The European Union and Ukraine met at the highest level and reaffirmed their strong partnership. Following the summit, President Donald Tusk stated: "I am very impressed by the patience and the determination of the Ukrainian people in their struggle to retain territorial integrity and sovereignty. You are a unique example of courage, dignity and common sense." At the meeting, the EU reaffirmed its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. The EU will support the continued international diplomatic efforts within the Normandy Format and the Trilateral Contact Group aimed at reaching a sustainable political solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. For the EU, the full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all sides remains crucial, including Russia's responsibility in this regard. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and we continue to implement our non-recognition policy to this end. The EU furthermore renewed support to the SMM by providing additional €5 million, added to €25 million already provided.

Madame Chair, the European Union and its Member States remain concerned by the volatile situation in Donbas. Despite a decrease in violence over the last week, the situation remains tense and unpredictable, due to the ongoing cease-fire violations and the continued presence and use of heavy weapons. We regret that little progress has been registered in the disengagement process, including lack of progress with

regard to the fencing off and removing of mines and unexploded ordnance to allow the SMM's access. We encourage the sides to step up efforts to identify and agree on new areas for disengagement. We urge the sides to fully adhere to the ceasefire, verifiably disengage and withdraw Minsk-proscribed weapons to achieve tangible progress on the ground. These are necessary steps in order to ensure a sustainable political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments.

We once again underline that the SMM must have full, safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, in particular to the disengagement areas and also along the Ukrainian-Russian State border, and condemn any restrictions to its freedom of movement.

On 24 November the 56th Russian Convoy entered Ukrainian territory at the Donetsk Border Crossing Point, as reported by the OSCE Observer Mission. We deeply regret that, once again, this happened without a full inspection by the Ukrainian border guards and in violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. We also take note of the observation by the SMM of another so-called humanitarian convoy in Luhansk, in the vicinity of the Izvaryne border crossing point, on the same day. This, as well as the fact that the SMM was denied access to the warehouses in Donetsk at the arrival of parts of the 56<sup>th</sup> convoy, does little to allay concerns about the possibly military nature of the transported cargo.

We call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists it backs to meet these commitments in full. We reiterate our deep concern regarding information about the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the conflict zone. We call on Russia to immediately stop providing financial and military support to the separatists. The ceasefire must be respected. All Minsk-regulated weapons must be withdrawn. All foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries must be removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate

BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.