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**STATEMENT BY MR. VLADIMIR ZHEGLOV,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1301st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

4 February 2021

In response to the joint statement by France and Germany on Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to exercise the right of reply to the joint statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representatives of France and Germany.

We urge colleagues to read the fundamental documents more carefully. In none of them – starting with the September 2014 Minsk Protocol and Memorandum and ending with the recent measures of 22 July 2020 to strengthen the ceasefire – is there any obligation that Russia has to fulfil in relation to resolving the crisis in Ukraine. The key settlement document, the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015, which was endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202, also has no references to any specific Russian obligations. At the same time, our country is taking a highly responsible approach to the task of co-mediating the settlement of the internal crisis in Ukraine, providing as much assistance as possible to direct dialogue between representatives of the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk.

As for the participation of representatives from certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, there are very clear provisions for this, starting again with the 2014 Protocol and Memorandum signed by representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk. Take a look, for example, at the text of the Memorandum of 19 September 2014 – it distinctly mentions their involvement in the drafting of that document. Furthermore, the Package of Measures explicitly mentions that a political settlement should be implemented in consultation with and upon agreement by representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group (paragraph 9). Please take a look at the Package of Measures – it is signed by representatives from Donetsk and Luhansk. Incidentally, the then Ukrainian President, Petro Poroshenko, insisted on their participation in the signing of the document.

We therefore appeal to our distinguished French and German colleagues to adopt a more conscientious attitude towards the documents and their interpretation. We regret the position they have taken today, which calls into question their role as impartial co-mediators in a settlement. Their aim is evidently to

“benefit” the Ukrainian Government rather than play the role of honest brokers in the process of resolving the internal Ukrainian crisis.

Thank you for your attention.