



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the 981th FSC Plenary Meeting

(30 June 2021, via video teleconferencing)

(Agenda item 3, General Statements, on the subject of “Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”)

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the Delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of “Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”.

The security situation in Donbas region remains tense and prone to escalation. Russia remains reluctant to pursue in good faith a peaceful settlement of the conflict it started and continues to sustain. Its occupation forces continue to commit armed provocations and undertake other actions that undermine the Minsk agreements.

We condemn in strongest terms ongoing illegal conscription campaign launched by the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied areas of Donbas. This is confirmed by the SMM, which reported on various posters inviting men and women to join the Russian armed formations, with promises of monetary remuneration and assistance in obtaining Russian passports. Such actions are in clear violation of the international humanitarian law. They do nothing to de-escalate tensions in Donbas. Russia must stop this practice immediately.

During the past week of 21-27 June, the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were shelled 102 times with an extensive use of Minsk-proscribed weapons near 18 residential areas (Krasnohorivka, Lebedynske, Vodiane, Svitlodarsk, Novoselivka, Pivdenne, Starohnativky, Novhorodske, Avdiivka, Sumy Nevelske Novotoshkiivske, Mariinka, Vodiane, Hranitne, Pisky, Hnutove, Talakivka). Diverse grenade launchers, small arms and heavy machine guns were also used. The Russian armed formations shelled the Ukrainian positions near the disengagement area of Zolote on multiple occasions endangering the disengagement process.

As a result of these acts of armed aggression by Russia, 2 Ukrainian servicemen were wounded and 1 was killed.

Near the residential areas of Zalizne, Luhanske, Mayorsk and Zolote-4 the occupants attacked Ukrainian position by remotely delivering landmines POM-2.

Allow me to draw your attention to some of the most glaring ceasefire violations by the Russian armed formations in Donbas region with the use of Minsk-proscribed weapons.

PRESENTATION

Slide 1. On 23 June (04.35-04.55), the Ukrainian positions were shelled near Pivdenne settlement from the temporarily occupied residential area near mine named after Gagarin (48°02'56,84N, 37°05'28,28E). 120mm mortar was used by the Russian armed formations for 25 min.

Slide 2. On the same day (19.15-19.25), the Russian armed formations shelled the southern outskirts of Avdiivka from the area of temporarily occupied Yakovlivka settlement (48°05'22.87"N 37°47'52.02"E) with the use of 120mm mortar (4 rounds). Impact sites were observed in the residential area in Avdiivka. In particular the shelling caused damage to the main structure of a private house. On another occasion, the occupants shelled the Ukrainian positions near Avdiivka with the use of 82- and 120mm mortars from the area of temporarily occupied Yasynuvata and Kashtanove settlements.

Slide 3. On 24 June (07.45-08.23, 9.40-10.16), civilian infrastructure in peaceful Mariinka settlement was under barrage of rocket fire from 100mm antitank guns MT-12. In total, 24 projectiles were launched. These ruthless actions were carried out from the temporarily occupied residential area near Trudivska mine in the outskirts of Donetsk city. As a result of the shelling, a school and its adjacent territory were damaged.

On other occasions, the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were under fire from 82mm mortars and small arms near Novotoshkyvske. The shelling was conducted from the area of temporarily occupied Donetskyyi settlement where the development of positions had been observed earlier.

The shelling inflicted damage to a vehicle of the observation group "Novotoshkyvske" of the Ukrainian side to the JCCC. It occurred at the time when the International Committee of the Red Cross was present onsite and forced the humanitarian mission to leave the area. The Russian armed formations resorted to such reckless behaviour despite the previously agreed security guarantees.

The observation teams of Ukrainian side of the JCCC ensure effective mechanism of control and coordination of the ceasefire and promptly respond to any attempts of ceasefire violations by the Russian armed formations. This mechanism provides for timely detection of violations and swift reporting to the SMM urging the Russian armed formations to seek ways of circumventing it.

Slide 4. On 26 June, the occupants bombarded the peaceful settlement of Krasnohorivka causing damages to its civilian infrastructure. The shelling was conducted from the area of temporarily occupied Staromykhailivka settlement with the use of 122mm artillery systems (16 projectiles), 120mm mortars (4 rounds) and SPG-9 (2 rounds).

END OF PRESENTATION

Such actions endanger the lives of civilians and are aimed at escalation of the situation along the line of contact. They are accompanied by the disinformation campaign implying dissemination of false narratives of so called “aggressive behaviour of Ukraine”. The occupants clearly try to provoke Ukrainian defenders for a response fire in order to plot false accusations of ceasefire violations by the Ukrainian side.

The Russian armed formations kept violating other provisions of the Minsk agreements.

On multiple occasions, the UAVs of the Russian armed formations, in particular of Orlan-10, Orlan-ZM and Mavic types, were observed crossing the line of contact as well as flying over the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. It was the case near more than 6 residential areas (Mariinka, Svitlodarsk, Avdiivka, Katerynivka, Krasnohorivka, northern part of Luhansk region). Such activities clearly infringe the 22 July 2020 TCG decision regarding additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire which ban the operation of any types of aerial vehicles.

The operation of the mentioned aerial means, supplied by Russia, was disrupted with the use of radio electronic warfare systems or small arms fire.

Since 2014, Russia has lost at least 20 Orlan-10 UAVs in the conflict zone in Donbas, according to open sources. Up to three UAVs of this type make part of the Russian electronic warfare system RB-341V Leer-3, which has been repeatedly observed by the SMM in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas. Within this system, Orlan-10 drones are used for jamming of radio channels, among other things. Russian UAVs have been used for psyops and information attacks in the conflict zone, for example mass text messaging.

The trend of severe impediment and denial of access of the SMM patrols and interference with its assets by the Russian armed formations in Donbas remains unchanged. They are clearly intended to hide illegal activities on the ground and must be stopped to ensure full and unhindered implementation of the Mission’s mandate.

Mr. Chairperson,

We express our serious concern over the ongoing large-scale concentration of Russian troops and military equipment near the border with Ukraine and in the temporarily occupied Crimea and territorial waters of Ukraine, a large number of which were redeployed to these areas under the guise of snap checks of forces.

The most recent Russia's unlawful provocative actions, accompanied with aggressive rhetoric, in the territorial waters of Ukraine near the temporarily occupied Crimea on 23 June, is a stark reminder of the lasting threats stemming from Russia's violation of the core OSCE principles and commitments and international law in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov region.

The Russian Federation should live up to its commitments under the Vienna Document and provide necessary measures of transparency regarding its no-notice military exercises this past April, including the withdrawal of its troops and those military units and equipment remaining near the border with Ukraine.

Along with the withdrawal of troops and halting all military activities in the occupied Crimea, these steps, when taken, would be in line with the recommendations expressed at the 14 April joint PC-FSC meeting.

In conclusion, we urge the Russian Federation to stop its aggression against Ukraine, reverse its illegal occupation of Crimea, de-occupy parts of Donbas, and restore freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, through the Kerch Strait and in the Sea of Azov. Russia must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of its armed forces, mercenaries, armed formations, and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.