



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1007
Vienna, 10 July 2014**

**EU Statement in Response to the Report by the Chief
Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to
Ukraine, Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan**

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the Chief Monitor, ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, back to the Permanent Council. We reiterate our strong support for the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM), its leadership and its dedicated and professional staff. We believe that the SMM is playing a very significant and valuable role and we stand ready to support the use of its full potential.

We acknowledge that the SMM is facing major challenges as mentioned by ambassador Apakan; first among them is the difficult security situation in the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. The abduction in May of eight SMM monitors exemplifies the risks involved when operating in this part of Ukraine. We would like to use this occasion to express our gratitude to ambassador Apakan personally and his staff for their tireless efforts in facilitating the successful release of the abducted SMM monitors. We are aware that this was an extremely demanding task for the SMM.

We believe that the SMM is doing outstanding work, often under very complex and difficult circumstances. Ensuring the monitors' safety is vital. In this regard, we reiterate our confidence in the security measures and operational decisions of the SMM. The SMM needs to be able to adjust quickly to the situation on the ground. Micro-management from the Permanent Council in Vienna is not desirable.

We stress the importance we attach to a continued presence of monitors in those areas where they are most needed. At the same time, we recognise that these areas are the most difficult to operate in. When the security situation allows, we look forward to a quick redeployment of a substantial number of monitors back to the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, including where the Ukrainian government has regained control.

Mr Chairman, we commend the SMM for its impartial and valuable reporting on developments on the ground, particularly in the field of security and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and we stress the importance we attach to its ability to verify facts. We note the current limitations of reporting from the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. We appreciate the reporting in regard to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the close cooperation with the UNHCR in this field. We encourage the SMM to continue reporting in a timely, forthright and transparent manner and also to continue its extensive public reporting.

We reiterate our call for all OSCE monitors to have safe and free access throughout Ukraine to fulfil their mandate. We regret that the SMM has thus far had no access to Crimea where the number of reports of human rights violations is on the increase. Against this background, we appreciate the efforts of the SMM to report on the situation in Crimea based on conversations with interlocutors from Crimea, including IDPs and representatives of the Tatar community.

We welcome the SMM's activities with regard to dialogue facilitation at the local level, its active media strategy and outreach to the public as well as its coordination with and support to the work of the OSCE Executive Structures and its cooperation with relevant international organisations.

We recall that on 23 June, the EU Foreign Affairs Council agreed to establish a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission to assist Ukraine in civilian security sector reform. The Council stressed the importance of coordination and coherence with other efforts, including the OSCE. We believe

the SMM and the CSDP mission will complement each other and we look forward to fruitful cooperation.

We look forward to an early decision on the extension of the SMM's mandate. The SMM needs a reasonable planning horizon, also in order to consolidate its activities and retain or attract new staff. We welcome today's request by Ukrainian deputy Foreign Minister Kyslytsya for an extension of the mandate.

Mr Chairman, on 27 June 2014 the European Council expressed its support for an expansion of the role of the SMM in regard to monitoring the implementation of President Poroshenko's peace plan, a possible cease-fire and border control. We note the Russian invitation to deploy OSCE monitors at two Russian border checkpoints and stand ready to consider a draft decision to that end.

In conclusion, we wish ambassador Apakan and his staff success in their important endeavours. We believe that the SMM can play a crucial role in assisting Ukraine in overcoming the current crisis and the international community continues to rely on the efforts of ambassador Apakan and his staff.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.