



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 833rd FSC Plenary Meeting
(2 November 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)
(Agenda item 2)

Madam Chairperson,

We would like to start by highlighting the Normandy Summit, held in Berlin on 19 October. We highly value the mediation efforts of Germany and France and their dedication to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the Russia-initiated and fuelled conflict in Donbas.

We hope that the outcomes of the Normandy Summit will give an important impetus to implementation of the Minsk agreements. As developments over the last two years prove the progress in de-escalation depends on Russia's readiness to fulfill its undertaken commitments.

We attach particular importance to the fact that the participants of the Summit agreed to elaborate a Roadmap of implementation of the Minsk agreements with clear sequence of steps and guarantees of their implementation. It will be a comprehensive document, covering all Minsk agreements, adopted in 2014-2015.

Every effort must be made to put an end to violence and security degradation on the ground, which means that the security package of the Minsk agreements must be implemented as a matter of foremost priority. The President of Ukraine reiterated at the Summit that security remains a critical requirement for progress on other aspects of the Minsk agreements.

Distinguished colleagues,

We note with regret that the current security situation in the conflict-affected areas of Donbas remains of great concern. The armed provocations by the combined Russian-separatist forces are registered along the entire contact line. Although the intensive shellings alternate with certain decrease of hostilities, the regular nature of these provocations maintains the escalation trend as dominating. Regular ceasefire violations by the Russian hybrid forces, often with the use of heavy weapons, remain the daily reality. The Russian modern weaponry continues to be registered in use in the occupied part of Donbas.

Ukraine notes an important step made in implementation of the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) Framework decision on disengagement of

forces and hardware of 21 September 2016 in two pilot areas near the settlements of Zolote and Petrivske. The OSCE SMM earlier confirmed the completion by both sides of disengagement of troops to the agreed positions in these areas.

At the same time we remain concerned about situation in the third disengagement area near Stanytsya Luhanska. The combined Russian-separatist forces over weeks have continuously shelled positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in this area of disengagement of forces preventing due implementation of the Framework Decision. The Ukrainian side views these armed provocations by Russian hybrid forces in the agreed areas of disengagement as violation of the initial provisions of the Framework decision that require full ceasefire. The Ukrainian side will be ready to proceed to disengagement when the agreed conditions are in place. It is essential to make sure, together with the SMM, that the agreed provisions are respected and implemented.

Distinguished colleagues,

Over the past two weeks, the Russian hybrid forces were very active in the Luhansk, Donetsk and Mariupol' areas, persistently defying the Minsk agreements and the recent September arrangements on full ceasefire. They are trying to expand their control of the territory especially in the Donetsk direction. The Armed Forces of Ukraine fought off the attacks and made the militants return to their former positions. The Russian hybrid forces continue to resort to different strategies of deception to escape responsibility for non-implementation of Minsk agreements and Framework decision on disengagement of forces and hardware as well as shift blame on the Ukrainian forces.

The Russian hybrid forces continue to resort to multiple shellings, including with the use prohibited by the Minsk agreements of 152mm and 122mm self-propelled guns, 120mm and 82mm mortars, 122mm MRLSs BM-21 "Grad" and infantry fighting vehicles, of the Ukrainian positions near Stanytsya Luhans'ka, Zhovte, Krymske, Avdiivka, Pisky, Pavlopol, Krasnohorivka, Shyrokyne, Mar'inka, Teramchuk and Vodyane. The number of armed attacks by militants has increased with an average intensity of **27 times per day**. The biggest number of attacks takes place in the Mariupol sector at night time when the SMM does not monitor. **4 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed and 16 wounded** during the last two weeks. According to the SMM report of October 27, the SMM camera in Shyrokyne (Mariupol direction) facing the positions of the militants recorded multiple explosions which were assessed as the result of artillery or mortar shells containing white-phosphorous. It is not the first time that the Russian hybrid forces use this ammunition which is extremely harmful to the environment and highly dangerous for the civilian population.

The SMM's freedom of movement and access remains significantly restricted while the Mission's members continue to be threatened in the

occupied areas of Donbas. We are particularly concerned that on 27 October, while travelling toward the last Ukrainian Armed Forces checkpoint before entering non-government controlled areas – and approximately 100 metres from that checkpoint - the last vehicle of the SMM convoy of three was targeted by a bullet (7.62mm) from the territory controlled by the militants. We strongly condemn the acts of intimidation of SMM monitors, regularly practised by the Russian hybrid forces.

We emphasize once again that impediments and obstructions of the SMM activities as well as threatening are unacceptable. We call on Russia to facilitate full freedom of movement and access for the SMM monitors as a matter of immediate priority. It is one of the commitments that Russia has undertaken and which remains crucial for further steps in de-escalation.

Madam Chairperson,

The escalation on the ground by the combined Russian-separatist forces is sustained by permanent supplies of military equipment, ammunition and fuel materials from Russia. Persistent reluctance on the part of Russia to expand the mandate of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian checkpoints “Gukovo” and “Donetsk” to all sections of the Ukraine-Russia state border that is temporarily not under control of the Ukrainian authorities can only be attributed to its unchanged intention to continue intervention in Ukraine’s Donbas, including by sending heavy weapons, military equipment, regular troops, fighters and mercenaries, sponsoring the terrorist activities in the territory of Ukraine. That is yet another deplorable example of how Russia’s political declarations differ from real actions, hampering the peaceful process in Donbas.

New facts of replenishment with military personnel, weapons and equipment, ammunition and fuel for the combined Russian-separatist forces in the occupied territories are continuously registered. In particular, according to available information, for the need of the so-called 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the combined Russian-separatist forces the following supplies arrived from Russia: - on 21 October to Horlivka across Yenakiyev and Makiivka 7 heavy trucks “Ural” with personnel and ammunition for large-calibre sniper rifles; - on 23 October two trains delivered to Amvrosiivka and Ilovaisk 14 wagons with lubricants and ammunition and 7 fuel cisterns.

The ongoing Russian arms supplies to illegal armed formations in Donbas make us to once again assert that the issue of permanent OSCE monitoring at the Ukraine-Russia state border and establishing security zones in border areas of both Ukraine and Russia has critical importance for progress in peaceful resolution of the conflict. We remind the Russian delegation that it is a commitment that Russia has undertaken in the Minsk agreements and it remains unimplemented.

As we have repeatedly stated it is evident that the illegal armed formations would not have been able to constantly provoke, shell and escalate the conflict unless they received permanent replenishment of ammunition

and logistical support across the border from Russia. As we have insisted many times before these Russia's military supplies must be stopped and Russia bears responsibility for stopping them.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, we urge the Russian Federation and its proxies to stop military provocations, to withdraw their heavy weapons in a verifiable manner, to stop provision of Russia's weapons, ammunition and logistical support to the illegal armed formations.

We also emphasise the imperative of full freedom of movement for the SMM, establishment of permanent and unhindered monitoring and creation of security zones in border areas as envisaged by the Minsk agreements. Re-establishing control on the Ukrainian-Russian state border remains critical.

We encourage Russia to engage in good faith in elaborating the road-map of implementation of Minsk agreements, which would lead to restoration of peace in Donbas with full respect to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We urge Russia to return to the tenets of the international law, to cease its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.