



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 780 Vienna, 18 February 2015

#### **EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine**

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The European Union and its Member States welcome the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements adopted on 12 February 2015 in Minsk. Implementation of the Minsk Package offers a way forward to a comprehensive, sustainable and peaceful resolution to the crisis in eastern Ukraine.

We note that the ceasefire, which entered into force on 15 February, has been largely holding, as reported by the OSCE SMM, despite a number of incidents in some areas of eastern Ukraine. We remain extremely concerned about the continued fighting in and around Debaltseve where Russian-backed separatists are attempting to take control.

Moreover, we deeply regret that the SMM monitors have not been let through checkpoints near Debaltseve and Mariupol and were thus not able to report from there. This is unacceptable.

We urge all sides to the conflict to adhere strictly to the provisions of the Package and to carry out its measures without delay, in particular to stop their military operations, to observe a comprehensive ceasefire in all areas, including in Debaltseve, and to withdraw their heavy weaponry. All sides should refrain from actions that would hinder the full implementation of the Minsk Package. In this context, the European Union keeps noting evidence, including through SMM observations, of continued and growing support given to the separatists by Russia, which underlines Russia's responsibility in this regard.

We commend the urgent measures taken by the SMM in order to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire and to adapt and adjust to the requirements of the Minsk Package in line with its mandate. There is indeed an urgent need to act now to enable the SMM to carry out its tasks of monitoring and verifying the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy armament as well as withdrawal of all foreign armed forces, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine.

We continue to highly appreciate the timely and detailed reporting of the SMM of the security situation on the ground. We call on all parties to ensure secure and unrestricted access for the SMM's monitors and UAVs to all parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the areas along

the state border with Russia. Special attention should also be given to gain immediate access to the Debaltseve area taking into account the precarious situation and present lack of situational awareness.

At this crucial moment, we recall once again the urgency of making full use of all multilateral instruments at hand, including these under the OSCE politico-military dimension of security, in view of supporting the efforts towards peaceful settlement of the crisis in and around Ukraine by ensuring military transparency and stability, especially in the areas along the state border between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

We furthermore reiterate our deep regret that yet another Russian so called humanitarian convoy entered Ukrainian territory on 15 February in violation of Ukraine's national legislation, recognised international practices, as well as previously agreed modalities with the ICRC. We reiterate our position that this act constitutes a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We recall that the Package of Measures agreed in Minsk calls for humanitarian aid to be delivered through an international mechanism.

The European Union reiterates its commitment to fully implement its policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. We stand firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and call upon the Russian Federation to do likewise.

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 countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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\* 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 EFTA and the European Economic Area.