



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council Nr 1049 Vienna, 30 April 2015

EU Statement on Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments

We welcome the Ministerial Meeting of the OSCE Troika that took place in Belgrade this week and emphasise the call by Foreign Ministers Dačić, Steinmeier and Burkhalter for the immediate establishment of Working Groups as provided for in the February 12 Package of Measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. We express our full support for the work of the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office to the Trilateral Contact Group, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, in particular on the establishment of Working Groups. Hence, we welcome the appointment of representatives to the Working Groups by the OSCE Chairperson in Office. We consider the political process as essential to overcome the crisis.

We express our deep concern that the fighting in and around Shyrokyne has continued to intensify and that Russia-backed separatist forces continue to amass north of Shyrokyne, despite the efforts of the SMM to ensure a local ceasefire and demilitarisation of the village and surrounding area. We therefore repeat our call on all parties to halt the fighting and expect Russia to use its considerable influence on the separatists to support the SMM in its endeavours and to allow SMM unhindered access to Shyrokyne.

We are also deeply concerned about the seriously deteriorating situation in the area around Donetsk airport and continuing fighting in other hotspots. We note the numerous observations by the SMM of heavy weapons missing from established holding areas. The build-up of Russian troops next to the Ukrainian border and information about continued inflow of military equipment and personnel into Ukraine from the Russian Federation further add to our concern. We reiterate that re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its border remains essential. Once again we underline that any attempts by the Russia-backed separatists to gain control of

additional territory will seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution of the crisis based on full respect for OSCE principles and commitments, and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

We reiterate our call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments. We underline the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. The ceasefire must be respected, heavy weapons withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment as well as mercenaries must be removed from the territory of Ukraine. We recall the European Council Conclusions of 19-20 March in all their elements, in particular those linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. We expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full.

Hostages and unlawfully detained persons, including Nadiya Savchenko whose health has further deteriorated after many weeks of hunger strike, must be immediately released. We call on Russia to respect its international commitments in this regard.

Mr Chairman, the SMM must be allowed to fulfil its mandate and implement its tasks under the Minsk agreements. The Minsk signatories must provide the SMM with the full baseline information that it has been asking for since February that would allow for credible and independent verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons. The Minsk signatories must ensure full, safe and unhindered access to all parts of the crisis areas including those controlled by the Russia-backed separatists. We condemn the incident on 23 April where separatists used a SMM convoy as cover in Shyrokyne. On the same day two mortar shells fired by separatists exploded close to a SMM patrol in Avdiivka.

We continue to deeply regret that so-called "humanitarian convoys" from Russia continue to enter Ukrainian territory, without the consent of the Ukrainian authorities and in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and without fundamental international humanitarian principles being observed.

The EU reaffirms its deep concern at the continued military build-up and deterioration of the human rights situation in the illegally annexed Crimean Peninsula, including the denial of free speech and the persecution of persons belonging to minorities, including the Crimean Tatars. We call for the provision of full, free and unrestricted access to the peninsula to international human rights actors.

We continue to strongly support the full engagement of the OSCE in Ukraine based on its concept of comprehensive security. We welcome the recent launch of a new ODIHR supported project to enhance effective mechanisms to address human rights issues in Ukraine in line with OSCE commitments and international standards.

Mr Chairman, the EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We once again urge Russia to recognise by acts these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

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 NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA 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.