



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 786 Vienna, 29 April 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States wish to reiterate our strong support to the Minsk agreements and remind that only their full implementation offers a way forward to a sustainable political solution to the crisis which must be based on full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. This important message has also been conveyed at Monday's EU-Ukraine Summit.

We are deeply concerned about the most intense shelling in Shyrokyne since mid-February which is taking place in addition to continued significant ceasefire violations in this and other hotspot areas in eastern Ukraine, in particular around Donetsk airport. High concentrations and build-ups of forces and heavy weapons on the separatists' side of the contact line, notably in the vicinity of Donetsk airport and Shyrokyne, as being reported by the SMM, are of great concern as well. We reiterate in this context that any attempts by the Russia-backed separatists to gain control of additional territory would constitute a violation of the Minsk agreements and will seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution of the conflict.

We are equally worried about the continued presence and use of heavy weapons inside the exclusion zone despite the claims of the parties that the withdrawal of heavy weapons was completed. We particularly note the attempts of the Russia-backed separatists to remove and eventually redeploy heavy weapons within the exclusion zone for alleged training or 9 May military parade purposes, as repeatedly observed and reported by the SMM.

We are therefore compelled to call once again on all parties, in particular the Russia-backed separatists, to strictly respect the ceasefire and complete without delay the withdrawal of heavy weapons in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures. Providing the SMM with the required baseline information remains instrumental in enabling the SMM to monitor and verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons. We appreciate the efforts of the SMM to broker a local ceasefire and promote demilitarisation of Shyrokyne and urge all parties to immediately stop fighting and support these efforts.

Furthermore, foreign armed formations, military equipment, as well as mercenaries must be withdrawn from the territory of Ukraine as stipulated in the Minsk Package. We

underline the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard and expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full.

The separatists continue to restrict the SMM access to large portions of the territory under their control, including in the critical areas along the state border, as consistently reported by the SMM. We remain also deeply concerned about information of continued inflow of military equipment and personnel into Ukraine from the Russian Federation.

We therefore appeal for the full implementation of all provisions of the Minsk agreements by all signatories, including substantial and effective OSCE monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We recall that re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border with Russia remains of paramount importance.

In this context, we recall that the Minsk package foresees that humanitarian aid will be delivered through an international mechanism. We 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 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 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 EFTA and the European Economic Area.