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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1025th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 November 2014

**On the situation in Ukraine and violations of the Minsk agreements
by the central authorities**

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia advocates an effective peaceful settlement of the internal conflict in Ukraine and an early start of meaningful national dialogue with the participation of representatives of all the regions and political forces of Ukraine. The basis for this today is provided by the Minsk agreements.

Unfortunately, despite the efforts being made both at the political level and on the ground, including under the auspices of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination, the parties have been unable to ensure their full implementation.

There is a pressing need to complete the necessary co-ordination procedure for the line of separation in order to effectively monitor the observance of the ceasefire and the terms of the ceasefire and to ensure the withdrawal of heavy armaments. The statements by officials in Kyiv regarding the impossibility of a dialogue with representatives of the population of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, whom they continue to call terrorists, can only lead to an escalation of tension. Our colleagues who spoke earlier tend to see only one side of the coin: what is happening on the side of the militias. The reality, however, is more complex.

During the entire ceasefire period, Ukrainian troops have been amassing practically along the entire front line. This is confirmed, in particular, by the Minister of Defence of Ukraine, Stepan Poltorak. Speaking at a government meeting, he reported that the army was regrouping its forces and preparing for combat operations during the winter. Contracts have been signed for the procurement by the end of the year of military equipment and armaments worth 1 billion hryvnas. Ukrainian presidential adviser Yuriy Lutsenko reported that four tank factories were working on a three-shift basis. Armoured vehicles are being sent to the south-east. These words are supported by deeds.

Ukrainian forces are concentrating in close proximity to urban areas in Donbas. Civilians are being killed every day as a result of incidents occurring along the line of contact.

In particular, residential areas near Donetsk airport are regularly shelled from the Ukrainian-controlled towns of Avdiivka and Peski.

Heavy artillery and tanks moved into Karlivka on 9 November. On 8 November, Grad and Uragan multiple-launch rocket systems and Scud missile launch systems were brought into the Luhansk area. A grouping of 500 Ukrainian military personnel was deployed near Krasnaya Talovka in the Luhansk region. On 7 November, 32 tanks approached the eastern suburbs of Horlivka, and 13 tanks, 15 Shilka self-propelled anti-aircraft weapon systems, 7 Tochka-U tactical missile systems and 6 Grad and Smerch multiple-launch rocket systems approached Artemivsk. On 6 November, a tank column entered Yasynuvata, a suburb of Donetsk.

Unfortunately, there is little or no information about these facts in the reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). There is only one reference to the concentration of heavy artillery and tanks near the village of Karlivka. This creates a distorted and provocative image of what is happening. In order to eliminate any doubts about the balanced approach of the monitors, equal attention should be paid to monitoring the situation on both sides of the contact line.

However, even this very modest report by the SMM has triggered a barrage of criticism of the OSCE from Ukrainian “patriots”. The OSCE is even being accused of “often acting as a cover for Russia’s aggressive plans” (Dmytro Tymchuk, a well-known Ukrainian advocate of the punitive operation). Equally surprising were the remarks by Vasyl Budyk, adviser to the Ukrainian Minister of Defence, to the effect that 80 per cent of the SMM staff are Russians, and moreover, are either former or active intelligence personnel, who “are hunting Ukrainian artillery battalions”.

One possible reason why SMM monitors are unable to report this could be the growing difficulties they are encountering in moving around the territory controlled by Ukrainian security forces. One example of this is the incident that occurred on 8 November. Ukrainian security forces detained two SMM monitors at the Karlivka checkpoint. They were held at gunpoint for two and a half hours, as they failed to produce some special documents authorizing movement in the so-called “anti-terrorist operation zone”.

It is important to continue to give priority to ensuring the monitors’ security. Direct threats against Russian SMM monitors, which are becoming increasingly frequent in social media, are especially worrying. We urge the Swiss Chairmanship, the Secretary General and the Mission’s leadership to pay special attention to this. In this connection, we would recall that the host country bears full responsibility for the security of the SMM staff.

Mr. Chairperson,

Given the regrouping and concentration of Ukrainian forces, it is hardly surprising that the militias are reinforcing their positions in areas that are coming under constant attack from the security forces, as reported by OSCE monitors. However, in an effort to justify the massive redeployment of manpower and equipment “to the front”, Kyiv is once again

beginning to talk loudly about alleged Russian weapon supplies and a “regular Russian army”. These allegations are being repeated by Western capitals and NATO. If there is real evidence, then submit it through existing mechanisms, for example, the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation. If there is none, this is all just empty talk.

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to reiterate that the elections held in the Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic on 2 November do not contravene the Minsk Protocol and other agreements. In any case, the results of the expression of will of the inhabitants of this region should be treated with respect. Without such respect on the part of the central authorities, it will be difficult to establish a dialogue and move towards a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The establishment of a sustainable direct dialogue between Kyiv and Donetsk and Luhansk should be a priority. Unfortunately, this is not happening. We firmly believe that the OSCE can also play a constructive role in promoting an inclusive political dialogue in Ukraine.

The long list of instances of non-implementation of the Minsk agreements by Kyiv, which we presented at the last Permanent Council meeting, has this week been supplemented by its refusal to enact the amnesty law. Thus, none of the laws provided for in the Minsk agreements have been implemented.

The destruction of vital urban infrastructure continues.

According to militia representatives, as a result of the military operations by the Ukrainian authorities, around 6,000 infrastructure facilities have been destroyed in the Donetsk region alone, including 3,600 facilities in Donetsk itself. Furthermore, 311 facilities, including 20 residential buildings, have been damaged since early November. Only last night, five streets in Donetsk were shelled from Mikhailovka and Peski. Casualties and damage to residential buildings were reported.

No effort should be spared in preventing a repeat of the shelling of a Donetsk school on 6 November, as a result of which several children were killed and injured. An analysis of the shell craters conducted by SMM monitors on the ground, and not images from Russian television, which the Ukrainian delegation distributed at the last Permanent Council meeting, showed that the shelling came from the north-west, that is to say from territory controlled by Ukrainian forces.

We urge our Ukrainian colleagues to stop blaming the militias for the shelling of towns under their control. This sounds simply absurd. Their relatives – parents, brothers, sisters and children – live in these towns.

We would be grateful to the Netherlands for any additional information on the work at the Malaysia Airlines crash site. As far as we are aware, Dutch experts arrived at the scene and began to study and remove parts of the aircraft wreckage. However, later this work was once again suspended.

Thank you for your attention.