



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 788-th FSC Plenary Meeting
(13 May 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)
Agenda item 3**

Madam Chair,

Ukraine continues to seek a political solution of the current crisis and remains committed to the Minsk agreements, signed in September 2014 and on 12 February 2015. These agreements are seen by my country as an agreed roadmap for peaceful solution in Donbas which must be implemented fully and in good faith by all parties.

Unfortunately, while Ukraine has acted faithfully on all provisions of the Minsk agreements, the continuous failure by Russia and the illegal armed groups it supports to practically deliver on undertaken commitments is again leading to escalation of violence, increased loss of life among Ukrainian military and civilians, destruction and suffering. We express our deep concern over the surge of violence over the last week and that the illegal armed groups increasingly used heavy weapons, including larger caliber artillery and MRLSs that must have been withdrawn in compliance with the Minsk agreements.

Over the weekend pro-Russian fighters in Donbas shelled positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and civilian areas across the contact line 192 times using tanks, 120-mm mortars, and heavy artillery of 122-mm and 152-mm calibre, mounted grenade launchers and small arms.

On-going intense fighting took place in Pisky near Donetsk and Shyrokyne near Mariupol. In the ATO zone the pro-Russian militants continuously attacked settlements of Avdiyivka, Opytne, Hranitne, Mar'inka, Novotoshkovka, Krymske, Stanytsya Luhanska, Zolote, Schastya, Myrne, Chermalyk etc.

From 7 till 12 May, Russia-backed terrorists used MLRS "Grad" (9 times), bombardment artillery (47 times), mortars (94 times) and tanks (7 times) against Ukrainian Armed Forces. As a result, **9 Ukrainian military were killed, 41 - wounded**. Since February 15, when the immediate and comprehensive ceasefire was established by the relevant provision of the Package of Measures of 12 February 2015, **the Russia-backed militants have shelled Ukrainian positions over 3000 times**.

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 adds to our concern. Russia also continued to provide training, and command and control support for militants in eastern Ukraine.

According to Leonid Kuchma, former President of Ukraine and Ukraine's Representative in the Trilateral Contact Group, the number of people registered as missing in action in Donbas hostilities is 1,460 while almost 400 persons have been captured by militants. We therefore consider the statement of the Russian representative at one of the previous FSC meeting on about 10 Ukrainian servicemen in the militants' captivity, as an unavailing attempt to conceal the crimes against captured, including killings, and reiterate our call to the Russian Federation to speed up their release in line with agreed modalities.

Madam Chair,

On 9 May, when the civilized world celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Victory over Nazism, the illegal armed groups carried out a demonstration of heavy military equipment and weapons in the Ukrainian cities of Donetsk and Luhansk. Despite the relevant warnings from Head of the OSCE Special monitoring mission to Ukraine Ambassador E. Apakan and OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Mr. I. Dachich to abstain on this day from holding the so-called "Military parades" in Donetsk and Luhansk with the demonstration of military equipment, these provocative actions have taken place.

Ukraine considers the preparation and holding of these so-called "Military parades" with demonstration of 155-mm howitzer 2A65 "Msta-B", 122-mm howitzers 2C1 "Akatsia", multiple rocket launchers BM-21 "Grad", anti-aircraft missile systems "Strela-10", tanks T-72, heavy armored vehicles BTR-80, BMP-1, as well as other military equipment, as a gross violation of paragraph 2 of the Minsk Package of measures of 12 February 2015. This assessment is shared by the SMM.

The demonstration once again confirmed an illegal large-scale international delivery by the Russian Federation of different types of weapons and equipment to the illegal armed groups in Donbas.

Ukraine calls on the international community to take decisive measures in support of the Minsk agreements. We also urge the Russian Federation to condemn the irresponsible actions of the pro-Russian militants aimed at derailing the peace process. We expect an immediate response from the OSCE SMM on the facts when militants return heavy weapons to the prohibited security zone.

Distinguished colleagues,

The Delegation of Ukraine already referred to the ongoing violations of the ceasefire by the pro-Russian militants. Let me bring to your attention some facts of continuous violations by the pro-Russian militants, which were registered in the period of 7-12 May:

-on 7 May the Russia-backed terrorists used 120-mm caliber mortars (17 times) and bombardment artillery 122-mm caliber (10 times) against the Ukrainian Armed Forces. As a result, two Ukrainian military were killed, 26 wounded. As prohibited weapons were used throughout the contact line, it indicates purposeful intent by militants to disrupt the Minsk agreements;

-on 8 May militants fired from 122-mm artillery caliber and 120-mm caliber mortars the ATO positions near the settlement of Shyrokyne. The use of armored vehicles BMP-2 and BTR-80 was registered near the settlements of Pisky and Opytne. Moving the military vehicles from one area to another and supplying them with ammunition and fuel from the Russian territory was also registered;

-on 9 May the most difficult situation was in the Donetsk area, where militants repeatedly used 152-mm artillery and 120-mm mortars near the settlements of Pisky, Vodyane, Avdiivka and Opytne. In the Luhansk direction militants fired from 120-mm mortars on the settlements of Krymske and Novotoshkovka, and from automatic grenade launchers in Stanytsya Luhanska;

-on 10 May the village of Pisky remained the hottest point in the Donetsk region. There were 10 shellings on the Ukrainian military positions. In the Luhansk region pro-Russian militants violated ceasefire around the settlements of Krymske,

Stanytsya Luhanska, Zolote and Schastyia. There were 17 incidents of ceasefire violations by the illegal armed formations in the village of Shyrokyne. Militants also shelled the settlements of Myrne, Chermalyk and Pischevyk;

-on 11 May pro-Russian separatists violated the ceasefire 30 times, firing with 122-mm caliber artillery, tanks, 120-mm caliber mortars at the ATO positions near the villages of Shyrokyne, Pisky, Hnutove, Opytne;

-on 12 May militants continued to strengthen their positions: more than 200 people arrived near the settlement of Krymske and Novotoshkovka. An armored group of militants consisting of 6 tanks and 10 armored vehicles, firing at the Ukrainian troops, continued to operate in the area of Luhanske and Mironovske. The armored group was divided into several subgroups of 1-2 tanks, 3-4 armored combat vehicles, and acting from prepared positions. Their actions were supported by mortar fire. An installation unloading 4 MLRS BM-21 "Grad" was registered in the settlement of Torez.

Madam Chair,

The Minsk agreements remain the best opportunity to achieve peace in eastern Ukraine, but they will not succeed if the signatories do not honor their commitments. The present situation shows that readiness of the Russian Federation and the Russia-backed illegal armed groups to abide by their commitments is crucial for implementation of the Minsk agreements and for the entire peace process. It is therefore critical for de-escalation that the Russian Federation and its proxies immediately stop their attacks, enforce the ceasefire, withdraw heavy weapons in a verifiable manner and halt the flow of fighters and equipment from Russia into Ukraine.

We once again call on the Russian Federation to halt aggression against my country, to respect sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and to reverse annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Madam Chair