OSCE RESPONDS TO CRISIS IN & AROUND UKRAINE

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OSCE responses to the crisis in and around Ukraine range from high-level diplomacy and multilateral dialogue, addressing concerns over fundamental freedoms and human rights, through to monitoring, fact-finding and military visits.

UKRAINE CRISIS TIMELINE*

23 Feb: Ukraine's parliament assigns presidential powers to its new speaker, Oleksandr Turchynov. The parliament votes to repeal the 2012 law on language, a move through a bill which would make Ukrainian the state language at all levels. Pro-Russian protesters rally in Crimea against the new Kyiv administration.

21 Feb: Decision taken on forming a government. Viktor Yanukovych leaves Ukraine and protesters take control of the capital.

20 Feb: Ongoing protests escalate to violence.

28 Feb: Acting President Oleksandr Turchynov vetoes proposal to repeal the 2012 law on language.

16 March: Crimea's "referendum" on independence and joining Russia as a federal subject. Russia recognizes independence of Crimea.

21 March: Russian President Vladimir Putin signs law on admitting Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation.

29 March: Ukraine's presidential race begins.

6 April: Protests escalate in the eastern cities of Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv, calling for a referendum on independence.

17 April: Geneva Joint Statement on Ukraine is agreed by foreign ministers of Ukraine, Russia, the United States and EU. They pledge full support for OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to lead efforts to de-escalate tensions.

11 May: "Referenda" on independence held in the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk.

25 May: Vote held for Ukraine's presidential election.

2 June: Petro Poroshenko officially declared by Central Election Commission as winner of Ukraine's presidential election.

7 June: Petro Poroshenko is sworn in as Ukraine's president, puts forth peace plan to launch talks on stopping violence rapidly.

2 July: Berlin declaration of Ukrainian, Russian and Russian Foreign Ministers specifies sending an OSCE observer mission to monitor the Ukrainian-Russian border.

17 July: Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 crashes in eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board.

5 Sept: Cease-fire announced.

28 Oct: Voting in Ukraine's early parliamentary elections.

Nov/Dec 2013: Tens of thousands protest in Kyiv's Independence Square following the decision of President Viktor Yanukovych not to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union. The City Hall is seized by activists.

* Disclaimer: This timeline is presented to illustrate the context of the situation around Ukraine but necessarily does not necessarily represent the official views of the OSCE, nor of its participating States.

NATIONAL DIALOGUE (OSCE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE) · ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS (OSCE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS) · OSCE SPECIAL MONITORING MISSION TO UKRAINE · HUMAN RIGHTS · MILITARY VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES · OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY · NATIONAL MINORITIES (OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES) · SWISS OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP · MEDIA (OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA) · OSCE OBSERVER MISSION AT THE RUSSIAN CHECKPOINTS GUKOVO AND DONETSK · ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

SWISS OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP

1 JANUARY 2014 - ONGOING

Swiss President and Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, has been active throughout the crisis and intervened on the presidential and ministerial levels with the aim of finding a diplomatic solution.

16 February: The Swiss OSCE Chairmanship acts as guarantor and impartial witness to the handover of the Kyiv City Hall.

24 February: OSCE Chair appoints Ambassador Tim Guldimann as his Personal Envoy on Ukraine.

12 May: Swiss OSCE Chairmanship proposes a roadmap for the implementation of the Geneva Joint Statement of April 17 at the EU Council of Foreign Affairs. The roadmap includes Ukraine-owned and led high-level roundtable meetings.

14–21 May: Kyiv, Kharkiv and Mykolaiv host "national unity" roundtable talks. The process is supported by Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, Representative of the OSCE Chair for National Dialogue Roundtables.

8 June: OSCE Chair sends Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini to facilitate Tripartite talks between Ukraine and Russia aiming at ending violence in Ukraine. First round of talks takes place. Trilateral Contact Group meets regularly.

18 July: OSCE Declaration calls for access to the MH17 crash site and a prompt international investigation.

5 September: Agreement on a ceasefire signed in Minsk to launch a political process to resolve the crisis. OSCE Chair assures President Poroshenko of OSCE support.

19 September: Memorandum signed between the Trilateral Contact Group of senior representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chair and reps of certain districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. OSCE Chair calls the Memorandum a significant step towards making the cease-fire sustainable.

OSCE SPECIAL MONITORING MISSION TO UKRAINE

21 MARCH 2014 - ONGOING

On 21 March 2014, all 57 participating States of the OSCE take a consensus decision to send a Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). The first group of international civilian monitors is deployed within 24 hours.

SMM gathers information and provides impartial facts-based reports on the security situation on the ground and establishes contacts and facilitates dialogue to reduce tensions.

21 March: SMM agreed by consensus by all 57 OSCE participating States. First responders deployed within 24 hrs.

26 and 29 May: Contact lost in eastern Ukraine first with four monitors from the Donetsk team, and then four monitors from the Luhansk team.

27 and 28 June: Four monitors of the Donetsk team and four members of the Luhansk team of SMM, are released.

17 July: Mandate of SMM extended.

18 July onwards: SMM visits the MH17 crash site, facilitates access for Ukrainian, Malaysian, Dutch and Australian experts to investigate and recover bodies.

23 October: SMM completes the maiden flight of its unarmed/unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS (OSCE OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS AND OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY)

20 MARCH 2014 - 19 DECEMBER 2014

Following invitations from Ukraine to observe the 25 May presidential election and the 26 October 2014 parliamentary elections, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) deploy observation missions on both occasions.

The two missions assess the entire election processes for compliance with OSCE commitments, international standards and national legislation. On Election Day, observers monitor the opening of polling stations, voting, counting of ballots and tabulation of results at all levels.

20 March: ODIHR long-term Election Observation Mission opens for Early Presidential Election in Ukraine.

26 March–26 May: OSCE parliamentarians conduct a series of pre-visits ahead of the 25 May Presidential election. During the elections, approximately 100 parliamentarians are deployed and the OSCE PA: Joao Soares serves as Special Co-Ordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission.

25 May: More than 1,000 observers from the ODIHR Election Observation Mission monitor the presidential election at polling stations across the country.

30 June: ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Ukraine issues final report on the presidential election with assessment and recommendations.

19 September: ODIHR long-term Election Observation Mission opens for Early Parliamentary Elections.

13–17 October: Kent Harstedt, the OSCE Special Co-ordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission for Ukraine's parliamentary elections, visits Kyiv, Kharkiv and Luhansk oblasts ahead of the vote.

26 October: 675 OSCE short-term observers, including 660 from ODIHR and 75 OSCE parliamentarians, observe the parliamentary elections.

19 December: ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Ukraine issues final report on the parliamentary election with assessment and recommendations.

OSCE OBSERVER MISSION AT THE RUSSIAN CHECKPOINTS GUKOVO AND DONETSK

24 JULY 2014 - ONGOING

On 24 July, all 57 OSCE participating States decide to deploy an Observer Mission at the Russian checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk on the border with Ukraine. This follows an invitation from the Russian Federation, stemming from the Berlin Declaration of 2 July by the Foreign Ministers of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine.

The Observer Mission operates impartially and transparently, monitoring and reporting on movements across the border at the two checkpoints.

24 July: The Observer Mission is deployed.

22 October: OSCE participating States decide by consensus to extend the mandate of the Observer Mission for one month until 23 November 2014.

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MEDIA (OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA)

29 NOVEMBER 2013 - ONGOING

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media has monitored the situation in Ukraine closely, bringing attention to grave violations of media freedom, in particular regarding journalists' safety and restrictions to media plurality.

29 November: OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) Dunja Mijatović condemns attacks on journalists while reporting on the demonstrations in Kyiv.

8 March: Following her visit to Crimea, RFoM says media freedom in Crimea 'under siege'.

11 March: RFoM expresses concerns about demands from Ukraine's authorities that the country's cable operators stop transmitting certain Russian TV channels.

16 April: Following a three-day visit to Ukraine, RFoM says journalists face violence, intimidation and psychological warfare in Ukraine's conflict areas.

14 May: RFoM welcomes new Ukrainian public service broadcasting law as way to improve media pluralism.

23 May: RFoM releases report on media freedom in Ukraine, calls for respect of journalist's rights ahead of presidential elections.

19 June: Events in Ukraine pose a great threat to media freedom across the OSCE region, RFoM tells Permanent Council.

27 July onwards: RFoM continues to monitor the media landscape and situation of journalists, drawing attention to all instances of rights and freedoms violations as well as threats to journalists' security and working conditions.

NATIONAL MINORITIES (OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES)

24 FEBRUARY 2014 - ONGOING

Language and identity have been a battleground since the onset of the crisis. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities has issued impartial public statements on the importance of balanced language policy and spoken out about the rights of national minority communities, in particular the Crimean Tatars.

24 February: OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) warns changes to language legislation could lead to unrest, calls for laws and policies that unite rather than divide.

6 March: Following her trip to Crimea, HCNM voices alarm about situation facing Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar communities, finds no evidence of violations of, or threats to the rights of Russian speakers.

4 April: Following two visits including to Kyiv, Donetsk, Luhansk and Odessa, HCNM expresses concern about language policy and situation in Crimea. HCNM calls for authorities to ensure concerns of all ethnic and linguistic groups are taken into account.

18 May: HCNM reiterates concern about the alarming situation of the Crimean Tatars during an event in Kyiv marking the 70 year commemoration of deportation of the Crimean Tatar People.

10 July: In her statement to the Permanent Council, HCNM focuses on aspects of the crisis in Ukraine related to her mandate, expresses deep concern about the precarious position of the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian-speaking communities on the Crimean peninsula.

15–17 September: HCNM travels to Ukraine to evaluate the situation of national minorities and discuss ways forward with local stakeholders.

HUMAN RIGHTS

18 MARCH 2014 - ONGOING

The OSCE has been monitoring and supporting the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Ukraine.

18 March–1 April: The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), upon the request of Ukraine, conducts a Human Rights Assessment Mission, in co-operation with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

12 May: The Mission presents report on Human Rights and Minority Rights Situation in Ukraine in March-April 2014.

12 September: OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, concluding a trip to Kyiv, urges Ukraine's authorities to enhance women's participation in political life and giving them a role in reconciliation and peace efforts.

29 September: Displacement caused by conflict in eastern Ukraine adding to difficulties facing Roma communities in the country, says report by OSCE Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues.

MILITARY VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

5 MARCH 2014 - ONGOING

In March, Ukraine invokes Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011 and requests OSCE participating States to send their representatives from 5 to 12 March 2014 to visit various sites in the country to dispel concerns about unusual military activities. A continuation of verification visits is later requested by Ukraine until 20 March 2014, this time to cover the south and east of the country. During these visits, 30 OSCE participating States send 56 unarmed military and civilian personnel to Ukraine.

5–20 March: Upon the request of Ukraine, 30 OSCE States send 56 unarmed military and civilian personnel to Ukraine under Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011.

20 March onwards: Smaller inspection teams of unarmed military experts, from 27 countries and working on behalf of their national authorities, conduct 19 verification activities in Ukraine in accordance with the Vienna Document 2011. In addition, 11 countries conduct 5 verification activities in the Russian Federation. Requests for consultation and co-operation as regards unusual military activities are also made to the Russian Federation under the Vienna Document by four countries addressed, as well as by one addressed to Ukraine. These requests lead to three joint meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation and of the Permanent Council of 7, 17 and 30 April 2014.

25 April–3 May: A German led inspection team is held hostage.

NATIONAL DIALOGUE (OSCE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE)

20 MARCH 2014 - 30 APRIL 2014

Following a request from Ukraine's Government, the OSCE deploys a team of 15 international experts to Ukraine as part of a National Dialogue Project, run by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU), to identify areas for future OSCE engagement to foster social cohesion and dialogue in the country.

20 March: Experts are deployed.

17 April: Experts complete their field work and their report is presented to participating States at the OSCE Permanent Council on 30 April.

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

14 FEBRUARY 2014 - ONGOING

Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, the leadership and members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) have been engaged in dialogue and diplomacy aimed at finding a peaceful and lasting solution.

14 February: Parliamentarians from across the OSCE area debate the crisis in Ukraine during the 2014 OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna.

2 July: OSCE parliamentarians gather in Baku for the OSCE PA Annual Session. The Russian proposal to create an Interparliamentary Liaison Group on Ukraine aimed at de-escalation is approved; Russian and Ukrainian MPs meet on the sidelines of the Session.

4–5 September: OSCE PA President Ilkka Kanerva meets Russian foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Federation Council Chairperson Valentina Matvienko and Duma Chairperson Sergei Naryshkin in Moscow to discuss Russia's role in the situation in Ukraine.

For OSCE PA election-related activities see 'Election observation missions' above.

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