



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation No 807 Vienna, 16 December 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

Mr. Chairman, the European Union and its Member States would like to start by thanking you and your able team for the successful work and your able leadership as FSC Chair in the past four months. Even though we conclude your term and the year without a single FSC-related decision at the MC, we highly value the Security Dialogue discussions we have had over the past few months which gave us among others a very good insight into Nordic perspective of FSC-related issues. We look forward to work with the incoming Dutch Chairmanship as of next year.

Mr. Chairman, please allow us to return back to the security situation in and around Ukraine.

We remain concerned about the volatile and tense situation in eastern Ukraine. We underline the need to consolidate the ceasefire and to fully implement the Minsk agreements, in order to achieve a sustainable political settlement of the conflict, based on full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

We urge all sides to abide by their commitments in accordance with the Addendum on withdrawal of smaller calibre weapons. Likewise, we continue to urge for full and unconditional withdrawal of heavy weapons in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures, accompanied by an efficient verification mechanism. We remain concerned about the presence and movement of weapons in the security zone and about their concentration beyond the withdrawal lines. We urge in this context all sides to provide the SMM with all necessary information on heavy weapons requested by the SMM on 16 October.

We deplore any attempts to restrict the freedom of movement of the SMM, in particular in separatist-controlled areas along the international Russian-Ukrainian state border. We welcome the recent opening of two Forward Patrol Bases in Horlivka and Debaltseve in separatist-controlled areas which enable the SMM to enhance its monitoring.

The presence of mines and explosive remnants of war continues to pose a danger not only to civilians but also to the SMM. The risk of civilian casualties is increasing as unmarked

mines are increasingly covered by snow. We therefore appreciate the working meeting on demining and mine action which took place on Monday this week.

Mr. Chairman, we remain firm in our call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and to honour their commitments. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and also again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their commitments. The ceasefire must be respected. All heavy weapons must be withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential. We reiterate our concern about reports regarding the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia as indicated most recently in the Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine by the Office of the UNHC for Human Rights.

We recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members 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.