



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 815th FSC Plenary Meeting**

(13 April 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)
(Agenda item 2)

Mr. Chairperson,

As this is the first regular plenary meeting of the FSC in the second trimester of 2016 let me first of all express sincere appreciation to the Chairmanship of the Netherlands for the skilful guidance in the first trimester under the challenging circumstances dominated by continued Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In the course of the Dutch Chairmanship the Forum has been actively engaged in reviewing the military aspects of the crisis in the Donbas region of Ukraine. Deliberations and evidence presented in the FSC by the Ukrainian delegation have factually proved that the crisis stems from the Russia's military aggression and flagrant violations of the OSCE fundamental principles and commitments. We are grateful to the OSCE participating States for solidarity and firmness in upholding Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express our gratitude to the delegation of Norway, the outgoing FSC Troika member, and to greet delegation of Portugal as a new member of the FSC Troika.

Today we warmly welcome the new FSC Chairmanship of Poland and wish them every success in guiding our work in the second trimester of 2016. We are grateful to H.E. Marek Ziolkowski, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, for his opening statement outlining the main priorities and planned activities of the FSC Chairmanship.

Distinguished colleagues,

The security situation in Donbas along the contact line has been further deteriorating over the past weeks and remains extremely tense. Continuous cease-fire violations by the combined Russian-separatist forces have an upward trend. Over past month, in the epicentres of the fighting - Avdiivka and Yasynuvata the security situation has considerably worsened. The combined Russian-separatist forces are trying to expand their control of the territory in the Donetsk direction. The Armed Forces of Ukraine fought off the attacks and made the militants return to their former positions. The attacks by Russian-separatist forces including on crossing points, further worsen the humanitarian situation. Militants continue armed provocations in the area. The combined Russian-separatist forces resorted to multiple shellings, including with the use of battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, 120-mm and 82-mm mortars of the

Ukrainian positions near Stanytsya Luhans'ka, Trohizbenka, Svitlodars'k, Horlivka, Yasynuvata, Avdiivka, Pisky, Mar'inka, Novotroitske, Hranitne, Mayors'k, Zaitheve, Chermalyk and Shyrokyne with an average intensity of 63 times per day. The toll of casualties continues to steadily grow. In March 19 Ukrainian soldiers lost their lives and 128 were wounded as a result of attacks and shellings by the illegal armed groups.

The combined Russian-separatist forces continue to use advanced technical equipment for targeting and provocations. Last week, on 8 April, a Russian military UAV "Orlan-10" was downed over Avdiivka.

New facts of replenishment with military personnel, weapons and equipment, ammunition and fuel supplies for the Russian military units in the occupied territories have been constantly registered. Russia continues to deliver powerful and sophisticated weapons to Donbas: artillery systems (including new MLRS "Grad"), surveillance and secure communication devices, drones and detection systems, air defence systems, battle tanks, armoured personnel carriers and others. Some of these weapons are in use only of the Russian military forces. According to available information, in the end of March for the need of the 2nd Army Corp of the combined Russian-separatist forces the following military equipment have arrived from Russia: - to Krasnodon an echelon with fuel cisterns; - to Luhansk 15 battle tanks T-72 and 7 heavy trucks with ammunition; - to Hartsys'k an echelon with military equipment: three 122-mm MLRS "Grad", four MT-LB, 10 automobile vehicles, 3 railway carriages with spare parts for battle tanks and 2 fuel cisterns.

The combined Russian-separatist forces in Donbas used prohibited by the Geneva Convention the Russian antipersonnel mines POM-2 "Otiok" near Avdiivka. These mines are installed remotely from the trucks ZiL-131 or KamAZ, are placed in six rotary systems with cassette blocks for their ejection. To mask the clustered blocks in the back of a truck, tents are used to make the trucks similar to those that carry military personnel. The antipersonnel mine POM-2 has a self-destruct device that after a time interval from 4 to 50 hours initiates its destruction. According to the Ukrainian military intelligence, at the end of March one of the subversive groups blew up its own POM-2 "Otiok" mine near Avdiivka. As a result, 2 Russian servicemen were killed, 3 were wounded. On 8 April the Russian-separatist forces used incendiary mines to shell an industrial zone in Avdiivka, Donetsk oblast. The mines were deliberately targeted to destroy farms and property of civilians.

We continue to register an unacceptable situation when significant limitations are imposed on the SMM in the occupied areas to impede monitoring and distort the real situation on the ground. Access of SMM observers is denied or hindered. The SMM teams are imposed escorts on their visits, demanded patrol plans in advance. Russia and its proxies do not allow freedom of the SMM's movement in large part of the territory under their control, including along Ukraine-Russia state border.

Last week several the most flagrant cases of intimidation and threat to SMM were registered, when: SMM patrol came under fire from the «DPR»- controlled territory, and the SMM vehicle was hit by a bullet, while in a separate incident the SMM patrol leader was threatened at gunpoint by the «LPR» militant. On 9 April, an SMM patrol, comprised of five members in two armoured vehicles, was in Zhovanka, a government-controlled part of Zaitseve. The patrol was accompanied by the Ukrainian Armed Forces head of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) office in Toretsk. An explosion assessed as caused by an 82mm mortar at a distance of approximately 100-200m south-east of the patrol position was followed by small-arms shots fired towards the SMM from the same direction. We strongly condemn these

dangerous incidents. Ukraine reiterates that monitors must perform their functions in full security, the Ukrainian authorities do all necessary on their part and we urge Russia to exercise its responsibility in this regard.

We note with concern that Russia consistently escalates tensions by concentrating large amount of military personnel and equipment close to the Ukrainian border and in the occupied Crimea. Russia's military presence in Crimea doubled over the last year. It involves concentration of landing ship forces in the Sea of Azov and preparation of facilities for deployment of nuclear weapons in the occupied Crimea. Daily the Ukrainian border guards register numerous reconnaissance flights of the Russian helicopters and drones from the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea along the administrative border with the Kherson oblast, with cases of incursion into the territory of continental Ukraine.

The current worrying security situation proves how much still needs to be done to accomplish the initial security provisions of the Minsk agreements. Comprehensive and sustainable cease-fire has not been secured, the SMM cannot freely move to effectively monitor and verify. These must be accomplished as a priority and a basic requirement for the progress on other aspects of the Minsk agreements.

Mr. Chairman,

As highlighted in the previous 814th FSC meeting, the Ukrainian side continues to expose the facts of appointment and rotation of Russian generals on command positions in the combined Russian-separatist forces in Donbas. In March 2016 it was established that three generals of the Russian armed forces Aleksandr Lentsov, Aleksey Zavizion and Stepan Yaroshchuk, who performed criminal orders of the Russian politico-military leadership on the occupied territories of the eastern Ukraine, were subsequently appointed to command positions in the formation of Russian troops in Syria (airbase Hmeymim). Their presence in the occupied areas of Donbas was marked by shelling of residential areas, schools, hospitals, torture of prisoners, illegal detention of servicemen and civilians, use of military personnel and equipment without signs of recognition and etc. In particular, Colonel-general Aleksandr Lentsov, Deputy Commander of Land Forces of the RF armed forces, who in 2014-2015 was a coordinator of direct combat deployment of the 1st Army Corp (AC) (Donetsk) and 2nd AC (Luhansk) in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas was appointed to a position of Deputy Commander of the formation of the Russian armed forces in Syria. Notably, Colonel-general Lentsov during mentioned period led the Russian part of the JCCC in Donbas. Major-general Aleksey Zavizion, who in 2015 held the position of Commander of the 1st AC (Donetsk), was later appointed Deputy Commander of the formation of the Russian armed forces in Syria with responsibility for security of border areas. Major-general Stepan Yaroshchuk, former Chief of missile troops and artillery of the Southern military district of the Russian armed forces, who from the beginning of the Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine had been responsible for combat use of missile troops and artillery on temporarily occupied areas of Donbas, was appointed a Chief of missile troops and artillery of the formation of the RF armed forces in Syria.

We reiterate the responsibility of the Russian military for the armed aggression and war crimes committed by their troops in Donbas.

As Moscow's decisions and actions led to the conflict in Donbas, it also requires Moscow's decisions and faithful steps to put an end to this conflict and peacefully resolve it based on Minsk agreements of Ukraine and Russia.

We urge the Russian Federation and militants it backs to halt military provocations, to withdraw heavy weapons in a verifiable manner, to stop provision of ammunition and logistical support to the militants.

We urge for full freedom of movement for the SMM and establishment of permanent monitoring and security zones in border areas of Ukraine and Russia as envisaged by the Minsk agreements.

We urge Russia to return to the tenets of the international law, to cease its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.