



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1024 Vienna, 6 November 2014

EU Statement on the Violation of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine

The EU continues to follow developments in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts with deep concern. We deplore the latest tragic incident in Donetsk where two children were killed and four injured after shells hit a school stadium. We welcome that the Foreign Minister of Ukraine has called for an immediate investigation of this incident. In our previous statements, we have raised a number of issues in regard to the crisis in and around Ukraine and our views are well-known. In this statement we will focus on two issues; the so-called “elections” on 2 November and the humanitarian situation of the civilian population in the Donbas region.

As we said on 3 October, these so-called “elections” are illegal and illegitimate and we will not recognise them. They, as well as the recognition by the Russian Federation of their results, are in breach of the letter and the spirit of the Minsk Protocol. These actions have a disruptive effect on efforts to find a sustainable political solution to the crisis. At its meeting on 23/24 October, the European Council recalled previous EU decisions on restrictive measures and announced that it will remain seized with the situation in Ukraine in order to provide further direction as required.

The EU calls on all sides to work towards early local elections in accordance with Ukrainian law, as foreseen in the Minsk Protocol, as the only legal and legitimate means of renewing the democratic mandate of the local authorities in these parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. Together with the recent national elections, such elections will facilitate a country-wide national dialogue aimed at consolidating Ukraine’s unity and internal cohesion. We welcome the intention of

Ukraine to invite ODIHR to monitor these elections.

We urge all parties to fully implement the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum swiftly and without further delay and to actively resume the political process foreseen in President Poroshenko's peace plan. We reiterate that a sustainable political solution to the crisis must be based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We would like to repeat our call on the Russian Federation to assume its responsibilities for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. In particular, Russian authorities should prevent any movement of military, weapons or fighters from its territory into Ukraine. In this context, we also express our concern about reports that Russia is again strengthening its military presence at the border with Ukraine.

The Russian Federation should also support effective OSCE monitoring and verification efforts including, without delay, along the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We deeply regret the continuing attempts by armed pro-Russian separatists to interfere with the operation of the SMM's UAVs. We continue to rely on the Special Monitoring Mission to report on the situation in the areas controlled by the armed separatists and on the implementation of all elements of the Minsk agreements.

Mr Chairman, we remain deeply concerned about the serious humanitarian situation in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. As we have said before, it is the activities of the armed pro-Russian separatists that are the root cause of this suffering. We note reports by SMM that shelling often hits residential areas, causing casualties amongst the civilian population, and hinders humanitarian aid efforts and repair work. There is lack of electricity, water and gas supplies in many places. With the winter approaching, the situation in these areas becomes even more critical. Many persons are still deprived of their liberty. Human rights continue to be violated. In sharp contrast, we also note the reports that the situation in the areas where Ukrainian forces have regained control is returning to normal.

The EU and its Member States will continue to provide humanitarian assistance

and call on all parties to facilitate distribution of aid to populations in need, on the basis of non-discrimination, cooperation with established humanitarian actors and with the consent of competent national authorities. We deplore that the Russian Federation once again has decided to conduct so-called “humanitarian” convoys without adhering to these norms and principles. Accordingly, these convoys are in breach of Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty and run counter to efforts aimed at de-escalation. They also raise serious questions about the content and purpose of these deliveries.

Mr Chairman, on a related issue, we were discussing earlier today the importance of gender issues. In this context we also welcome the efforts by the government of Ukraine and civil society on the implementation of UNSCR 1325, such as the preparation of a national action plan by Ukrainian NGOs, and we support the Special Monitoring Mission’s further work in this regard.

Mr Chairman, the EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to recognise 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 to the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

* Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.