

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1149th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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**On the situation in Ukraine and
the need to implement the Minsk agreements**

Mr. Chairperson,

The security situation in Donbas continues to deteriorate. The complete ceasefire, which was initiated by the militia and timed to coincide with International Children's Day on 1 June, has not been taken up by the Ukrainian Government. What is more, the command of the punitive operation cynically announced that the ceasefire was only for 24 hours, but it even failed to keep that promise. Immediately after midnight on 1 June, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) camera at the Oktiabr mine recorded 22 projectiles in flight from north-west to south-east, in other words from positions held by the Ukrainian armed forces, against militia-controlled territory. At the same time, the SMM camera in Avdiivka recorded one projectile in flight from west-north-west to east-south-east, in other words also from positions held by the Ukrainian armed forces. The security forces have continued their indiscriminate shelling of towns and villages in Donbas. On 2 June, there were a series of artillery strikes on Lukove from a west-south-westerly direction, damaging a residential building, a warehouse, agricultural equipment and a bus stop. On the same day, the SMM confirmed that a house had been shelled in Frunze. On 3 June, the monitors received information about shelling on the outskirts of Donetsk and at the Donetsk filtration plant, which left areas on both sides of the line of contact without water, and also about shell craters near a cafe in Yakovlivka. On 4 June, the SMM recorded shell damage to several houses in Dokuchaievsk, including at 98/1 Gorky Street, 15 Vatutina Street, 87/46 Tsentralna Street, 7 Svobody Street, 12/1 Telmana Street, 108/2 Komosomolska Street and a water pipe. In all of the above cases, the established direction of fire points to the responsibility of the Ukrainian armed forces. On 5 June, the monitors confirmed that a woman had been killed, her nine-year-old son seriously injured and two houses damaged as a result of the shelling of Trudivske in the suburbs of Donetsk. On the same day, the monitors recorded that a civilian had been injured and two buildings damaged in Staromykhailivka.

During the week of 29 May to 5 June alone, the monitors recorded the consequences of the shelling of nine militia-controlled residential areas from positions held by the Ukrainian armed forces. According to the SMM, one civilian was killed, four injured and

18 houses damaged. That week, the monitors observed 5 weapons systems belonging to the Ukrainian armed forces deployed in violation of the Minsk Package of Measures and 105 units of Ukrainian military equipment immediately behind the withdrawal lines.

The intensity of the shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces of militia-controlled territory is much higher than it appears in the SMM reports. Between 29 May and 6 June, the Ukrainian armed forces violated the ceasefire regime more than 600 times and fired over 7,000 rounds from weapons that should have been withdrawn from the area under the Minsk Package of Measures. As a result, one woman has been killed, nine civilians injured and 56 buildings damaged.

The Ukrainian armed forces directed artillery fire at Vasylivka, Vesele, Donetsk, Dokuchaievsk, Donetsk-Severny, Zaitsevo, Zhabichevo, Kalynove, Kalynivka, Kruta Balka, Lozove, Mineralne, Sokilnyky, Staromykhailivka, Spartak, Styla, Petrivske, Pervomaisk, Frunze, Khristovoye, Yasynuvata and Yakolivka.

On the morning of 7 June, Ukrainian armed forces units launched simultaneous offensives from the north and west near the village of Zholobok in the Slovianoserbsk district of the Luhansk region. A few days earlier, on 2 June, the following statement was posted on the website of the 93rd Detached Mechanized Brigade of the Ukrainian armed forces – and I quote: “We have straightened out the front line a little and captured a commanding point, which gives us better control of the opponent and can be easily defended.”

We trust that the SMM will verify this information and prepare a report on this matter without delay. The monitors should patrol the line of contact constantly, be present at hotspots and literally prevent the artillerymen from firing their guns so as to help to reduce tension and promote peace, stability and security.

The attempts to shift responsibility for restrictions on the SMM’s freedom of movement onto the Donbas militia are at odds with the facts. The monitors encounter obstacles on both sides of the line of contact. Of the 42 restrictions recorded between 29 May to 5 June, 23 occurred in territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces. The security forces threaten the monitors and steal SMM property. On 5 May, a Ukrainian soldier in Popasna simulated firing a gun at the SMM with his hands. On 3 June, the monitors discovered that the SMM camera in government-controlled Shyrokyne had been tampered with. The control panel door had been opened and the fuel hose disconnected from the generator’s diesel tank, and 20 litres of fuel were missing from the tank. The SMM is still completely denied access to Stanytsia Luhanska, Shchastia, Popasna, Katerynivka and Bohdanivka under the pretext that there is a threat of mines. At the same time, the militia are taking steps to ensure the safety and freedom of movement of the monitors. In its weekly report, the SMM announced that it had received copies of instructions from the leadership of the Luhansk People’s Republic (LPR), prohibiting militia at LPR checkpoints from being unfriendly to the monitors or photographing them.

The latest meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group in Kyiv showed that the Ukrainian Government has no interest in de-escalating the situation in the conflict zone. Its representatives behaved as if they did not know that the Ukrainian armed forces were trying to seize Zholobok while the meeting was in session. They also have no intention of beginning the disengagement of forces in Stanytsia Luhanska. They do not want to formalize

agreements under the Steinmeier formula regarding the enactment of the law on the special status of Donbas.

Growing instability beyond the conflict zone in Ukraine is having a negative impact on the prospects for the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

Radical sentiments are spreading in Ukraine and the policy of aggressive nationalism continues. We have already spoken about discrimination against the Russian language and culture and the Orthodox Church. The events this week deserve our attention. On 4 June, SMM monitors witnessed attempts by members of the Right Sector and the Black Hundred to force their way into an Orthodox church in Kolomyia while a service was being held. According to the SMM, members of the Right Sector, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Svoboda and the National Corpus stormed into the Lviv regional council building and sprayed tear gas, while the police looked on. As a result, the council cancelled its session and later met the radicals' demands. On 6 June, the Ukrainian Minister of Infrastructure, Volodymyr Omelyan, said that he was in favour of a restriction on rail and bus connections with Russia and the introduction of a visa regime.

Heorhiy Tuka, Deputy Minister for the so-called Occupied Territories of Ukraine, said in an interview with the NewsOne television channel that in his opinion the current system of government in Ukraine is unable to lead the country out of the deep crisis. Tougher measures were required, namely a dictatorship. This is not the personal view of certain Ukrainian politicians but one reflecting the position of the entire nationalistic group that seized power following the Maidan coup. This would obviously be a tragic, although logical, turn of events. We once again urge our colleagues who have considerable influence on the Ukrainian Government to use it to ensure that the Ukrainian authorities implement the Minsk agreements – the only format that would enable the crisis to be resolved by political means while preserving the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. A dictatorship of nationalists in Ukraine, which may well happen if the crisis continues for much longer, is not in the interests of Russia or its European neighbours.

Thank you for your attention.