



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 794-th FSC Plenary Meeting
(22 July 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)**

Madam Chair,

I would like to start by expressing our appreciation to the outgoing FSC Chairmanship of Montenegro for the work done in the second trimester as well as for its professionalism and dedication shown in the challenging circumstances dominated by continued Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Ukraine warmly welcomes the next FSC Chairmanship of Norway and wishes it every success in guiding our work in the third trimester of this year.

In the course of the Montenegrin Chairmanship the Forum was actively engaged in reviewing military aspects of the crisis in and around Ukraine. Our deliberations and evidence presented in the FSC have reaffirmed that the crisis stems from the Russia's military aggression and flagrant violations of OSCE 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.

Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine remains convinced that there is no alternative to peaceful resolution of the conflict. We have demonstrated consistency in full and good-faith implementation of the Minsk agreements. In strict compliance with the agreements Ukraine has ceased fire on 15 February and completed the withdrawal of heavy weapons in line with agreed modalities. The Ukrainian servicemen strictly abide by an order to observe cease-fire and open fire only in response in order to protect themselves and nearby residential areas.

Numerous convoys of the Ukrainian military hardware, observed by the OSCE monitors moving away from the line of contact, served as a solid proof of Ukraine's commitment to de-escalation and implementation of reached agreements. The SMM reported that it had access to government heavy weapons storage sites and that those sites contained all of the weapons expected to be there. The SMM had enjoyed freedom of movement and access on the government-controlled territory.

Ukraine has adopted the legislation on the special order of self-governance in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and specified the territory of its application. We have laid ground to holding local elections in those areas, which, as agreed by all sides in Minsk, must be held in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation and the OSCE/ODIHR standards.

The Ukrainian authorities have shown resolve in achieving decentralization of power and spearheading the efforts on Constitutional reform in a transparent and inclusive manner. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine voted last week in support of constitutional amendments which, in particular fully meet our commitments under the Minsk agreements.

In striking contrast to the continued, concrete steps taken by Ukraine, the Russian Federation until now fails to respect its commitments taken in Minsk. The absence of steps from Moscow does not allow to place de-escalation and peaceful political resolution on a solid and sustainable basis and continues to impede the peace process, thus further eroding the credibility of its statements and declarations.

Throughout the second stage of the FSC annual session of 2015, despite consistent calls from Ukraine and its international partners, the Russian Federation has failed to meet its commitments pursuant to a number of OSCE instruments in politico-military dimension; no practical step was made by the Russian side in line with the Minsk agreements. The Russian military personnel and hardware remain on the territory of Ukraine and are not being withdrawn to Russia. While the level of hostilities appears to have reduced, the attacks and armed provocations by the militants persist as Russia continues to supply them generously with ammunition.

Russia and Russia-backed militants have imposed significant limitations on the SMM to distort monitoring statistics of withdrawal. They continuously deny or hinder access of SMM observers to sites of heavy weapons, prevent SMM from following convoys of heavy weapons. The SMM teams are imposed escorts on their visits. Russia-backed militants do not allow access of the OSCE SMM to the large part of the territory controlled by them, including along the state border between Ukraine and Russia.

Madam Chair,

We note with deep regret that the on-going unwillingness by the Russian Federation and the illegal armed groups, it supports to abide by the commitments, undertaken in Minsk, continues to undermine the efforts for peace.

The ceasefire violations by the illegal armed groups are registered on a daily basis along the entire line of contact. Over the period of **1-21 July** the Ukrainian positions and the residential areas were shelled over **1130 times**. Numerous ceasefire violations are carried out with heavy weapons that must have been withdrawn in line with the Minsk agreements. In its reports the SMM regularly refers to the militants' shellings with larger caliber artillery, GRAD missiles and main battle tanks.

According to the ATO Headquarters, since February 15, Russian military and militants have shelled Ukrainian positions over **7747 times**; **182** Ukrainian military have been killed and **983** wounded as a result of shellings and attacks.

Contrary to its commitments, the Russian Federation continues to send reinforcements, including manpower and hardware, to their proxies in Donbas through uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian border. Moreover, Russia continues to maintain dozens of thousands of its troops at the border.

Let me recall that the Minsk Agreements envisage the withdrawal of foreign troops, mercenaries and weaponry from the territory of Ukraine under OSCE verification. According to the ATO Headquarters, the number of militants amounts to **33 thousand persons**, largely consisting of Russia's citizens. There have been registered **368 battle tanks, 940 armoured personnel carriers, 375 artillery systems** in possession of the illegal armed groups. Russian regular units, acting autonomously, use **512 armoured personnel carriers, 147 heavy artillery systems, 190 battle tanks, 83 multiple launcher rocket systems, and 4 systems Tochka-U**.

Russia continues to violate the Ukrainian airspace for conducting surveillance and reconnaissance of the Ukrainian positions by their military drones.

The illegal practice of sending the so-called “humanitarian convoys” has not been halted by Russia despite the fact that it violates Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and undermines the Minsk agreement on provision of humanitarian assistance based on international mechanism.

Distinguished colleagues,

Let me bring to your attention some facts of continuous violations by the pro-Russian militants, which were registered last week mostly near the settlements of Opytne, Avdiivka, Kirove, Berezove, Yasnobrodivka, Kurdyumovka, Pervomayske Novotroitske, Pisky, Stanytsya Luhanska, Krasnogorivka, Lozove, Mykolaivka etc.

-on 9 July, the SMM observed the aftermath of shelling in Stanytsya Luhanska, noting fresh craters caused by grenade launchers and 82-mm mortars. It also observed one heavily-damaged house;

-on 10 July, the SMM observed more than 600 explosions, double the previous week’s peak. During the day SMM UAVs have noted large concentrations of military hardware in and around Komsomols’ke (76km north-east of Mariupol): 6 main battle tanks (MBT), 41 armoured personnel carriers (APC) and more than 40 military-type trucks. On the following day an SMM UAV spotted a “Strela” surface-to-air missile system in “DPR”-controlled Vesele, just 3km south of Komsomols’ke;

-on 11 July, SMM UAVs – flying over “DPR”-controlled Komsomols’ke – noted an apparent link in the logistical supply-chain underpinning military operations. An SMM UAVs spotted 400-500 wooden crates next to a railway station with approximately 40 military-type trucks parked nearby at what can be assessed to be a drop-off and distribution point;

-on 12 July, in “DPR”-controlled Marynivka (78km east of Donetsk), the SMM observed a minivan with “DPR” registration plates and “Vostok Battalion” insignia, carrying three armed uniformed men, crossing the international border into Ukraine from the Russian Federation. The OSCE observation mission at two Russian checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk estimates that since September 2014 nearly 20 thousand military-clad people crossed into Ukraine only through these two check-points;

-on 17 July, SMM UAVs continued to observe concentrations of military hardware in “DPR”-controlled areas: in Komsomols’ke 7 main-battle tanks (MBT), 24 armoured personnel carriers (APC), 4 infantry fighting vehicles (BTR) and at least 35 military-type trucks. In Bila Kamyanka (52km south of Donetsk) UAVs spotted 2 MBTs. The SMM UAV observation was severely restricted due to the worst electronic interference experienced to date. The SMM assessed the jamming as intentional and of military origin.

Madam Chair,

Numerous attempts since March 2014 to use the FSC mandate and the existing politico-military toolbox to the full extent were undercut by Russia leading to further escalations, threatening not only Ukraine and its people but also peace and security in Europe and the entire European security architecture.

At this final FSC meeting in the second trimester of 2015 we once again urge the Russian Federation to practically commit to the end of violence in eastern Ukraine, withdraw its military units from Donbas, halt reinforcements of its proxies in Donetsk and Luhansk, thus implementing the Minsk agreements it has signed. We call on Russia to use its influence on the pro-Russian illegal armed groups to ensure that the SMM has

unfettered access and the necessary security conditions to conduct full and effective monitoring of areas along Ukraine's border with Russia.

We urge Russia to restore its respect for the norms of international law and the OSCE principles and commitments, to halt its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Madam Chair.