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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1030th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

11 December 2014

**On the situation in Ukraine and violations of the
Minsk agreements by the central authorities**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to note that among the conflicting assessments of the reasons for the Ukraine crisis expressed in Basel, common approaches could nonetheless be discerned. The main point is that there is no military solution to this crisis.

Admittedly the government that came to power in Kyiv in February as a result of an unconstitutional takeover did not subscribe to that point of view. Instead of the promised fight against corruption, a frenetic rearrangement of spheres of influence ensued and the legitimate popular dissatisfaction with the previous authorities was channelled into nationalism. Not political dialogue but brute military force involving heavy weapons and even prohibited types of arms has been used against those in the east of the country who disagree with the new authorities' policy. These actions have resulted in numerous civilian casualties and a huge stream of refugees and forcibly displaced persons, the majority of whom have fled to Russia. Massive violations of the norms of humanitarian law in Ukraine have further deepened the social divide.

After the failure of their military adventure in the east, the central authorities violated the Minsk agreements which, I would recall, provide for the economic regeneration of Donbas, resorting to tactics of economic suffocation by cutting Donbas off from the common financial system and severing supplies of food and medication.

Our colleagues sheepishly call all of this a "complicated situation". Attempts are being made to shift the blame onto Russia itself for inducing Kyiv to bomb cities and destroy vital infrastructure. Such an attempt to distort reality will not wash. Even less helpful is the establishment within the new government of a ministry of information policy which even the Ukrainians themselves are comparing with the Orwellian Ministry of Truth.

Mr. Chairperson,

In Basel, general support was expressed for the OSCE's efforts aimed at helping to resolve the crisis, including through the activities of the Contact Group and the Special Monitoring Mission.

Continuing direct talks between the opposing sides under the auspices of the Contact Group is the most effective way to resolve the situation peacefully. We have hopes for the next meeting in Minsk. We trust that this time the agreements will be put together in such a way that they can be implemented by all parties.

The most urgent matters now are to achieve a lasting ceasefire, end the human casualties and separate the parties' forces, above all the heavy arms. We note some positive developments: a "day of silence" has been declared, and information is being received that withdrawal of the insurgents' heavy weapons from the line of contact is beginning. The OSCE is to monitor this process on both sides of the line of separation. Unfortunately, the insurgents note ongoing fire from the Ukrainian security forces' side, albeit less heavy.

The people of Donbas are dying not only from shelling but also from starvation and lack of medicine. The blockade of Donbas only exacerbates distrust of the parties. It must be lifted immediately and the State's obligations to pay pensions and salaries met in full without delay.

The elections of 2 November, which some colleagues refer to in inverted commas only because they were not held as prescribed by Ukraine, enabled the local authorities themselves to tackle the urgent problems facing the region. Their public statements express their willingness to co-operate with the central authorities and to re-establish the country's common economic and political area. This does not undermine the Minsk agreements – on the contrary, it creates the conditions for their genuine implementation, including security assurances, a programme for economic regeneration and the restoration of the region's viability, and for launching a nationwide political dialogue.

The need for an inclusive national dialogue involving all of the regions and political forces in Ukraine without exception was set forth in the Agreement of 21 February, the Geneva Statement of 17 April by Russia, Ukraine, the United States of America and the European Union and the Minsk agreements of 5 September. Not all of this is yet being implemented. This dialogue must include substantive discussions on the constitutional structure and the overall future of a country where all citizens could live in comfort and safety, where the rights of humans in all their diversity were fully observed and without rampant radicalism and nationalism.

Mr. Chairperson,

With regard to the role of Russia in resolving the crisis in Ukraine, we should like to recall that Russia, unlike many others, is making a real, practical contribution to defusing the crisis. As one of the parties to the negotiation process in Minsk, we are actively helping to arrange and support direct talks between the parties to the conflict. We are promoting the implementation of the Minsk agreements, primarily the most relevant provision – the first point in the Protocol – on stopping the use of weapons. Our military experts are, at the request of Ukraine, carrying out the important task of helping the parties in determining the

boundary lines on the ground and the timetable for the withdrawal of heavy weapons. We are helping with the exchange of prisoners.

In our view, it is vitally important to help the inhabitants of the affected regions, including by sending convoys with humanitarian aid. The Ukrainian customs officials and border guards are always invited to look at these. They inspected the eighth convoy and saw only humanitarian aid. It is a shame that the European Union representative has not noted this. The ninth convoy is also expected to be inspected by them.

At the request of Ukraine, supplies of gas and coal are being restored. Electricity supplies are under discussion.

Of around a million people who were forced to leave the conflict zone, the overwhelming majority have found refuge in Russia.

We expect our Western partners to make every effort in their contacts with the Ukrainian leadership, on which they have a decisive influence, to ensure that events unfold peacefully.

President Petro Poroshenko has stated publicly several times that resuming military action in Donbas is inadmissible. We hope that his words will be backed up by practical steps towards defusing tension and establishing lasting peace in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and with the launch of an inclusive internal Ukrainian political dialogue. The internal Ukrainian crisis cannot be resolved without mutually acceptable agreements reached by the Ukrainians themselves.

Thank you for your attention.