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**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 754-th FSC plenary meeting**
(14 May 2014 at 9.30, Hofburg)

ENGLISH only

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,

Against the background of annexation of the integral part of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, continuous effect of the Decree “On the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine”, adopted by the Federal Council of the Russian Federation on 1 March 2014, security and military situation around and inside Ukraine remains tense and unpredictable.

We have taken note of the presentation yesterday at the 1-st plenary meeting of the 64-th Session of the Open Skies Consultative Commission by the representative of the Russian Verification Centre, in particular that there is no dangerous concentration of weapons and military equipment on number of military facilities.

However, according to the commander of the National Guard of Ukraine S.Poltorak the Russian Armed Forces are continuously engaged in active redeployment of troops and provocative behavior close to the state border with Ukraine. The number of troops remains practically unchanged, the aircrafts attempt to penetrate into Ukrainian airspace, trying to create an atmosphere of nervousness among our military servicemen and boarder guards. The Ukrainian side realizes that such movements of the Russian troops are aimed at generating confusion and discomfort and is ready to react adequately.

Ukraine is also aware that part of Russian armored equipment close to the state border with Ukraine is painted in colors characteristic to the UN peace-keepers. In this context we emphasize that peacekeepers may be deployed only in accordance with the decision of the UN Security Council. Under any other circumstances these troops will not be seen as peacekeepers, but military forces of an aggressor. Ukraine will consider any their intervention as a military aggression and will react accordingly.

On 7 May at the border control point “Izvaryne” an unlawful breach of the Ukrainian border took place, as pro-Russian gunmen threatened force to allow armoured vehicle “Tiger” - allegedly the gift to the Luhansk separatists from member of the Russian State Duma V.Zhirinovskiy - to enter the territory of Ukraine. Besides, the most recent period was marked by attempts to block border control units, assaults on border patrols, hampering the work of the border guards. The border guards prevented several attempts of unlawful trans-border transfer from the Russian territory of weapons, extremist literature and separatist`s insignia carried.

There is sufficient evidence indicating that unlawful actions undertaken by citizens of the Russian Federation are organized and coordinated by the Russian authorities and their intelligence services.

We urge the Russian side to stop provoking deterioration of the situation on the state border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, to prevent infiltration of extremists, terrorists and saboteurs onto the Ukrainian territory.

The illegal armed groups with Russian operatives at their core continue to operate in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts committing terrorist acts, crimes of murder, hostage-taking and abduction, sowing fear and uncertainty among the population. The groups are well-armed, equipped and trained. To provide you with some evidence that terrorists in Donetsk oblast are armed from abroad, let me point out the information of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine concerning the grenade-launchers RPG-26, which were found at the road-blocks near Sloviansk after terrorists used them in an attempt to escape from this city. The numbers of these RPG-26s (254-1-93), 1993 being the year of their manufacture, have never been registered in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and thus came from abroad.

The illegal armed groups of terrorists continue to attempt to seize administrative buildings and attack the law-enforcement and military personnel. In an assault on Mariupol`s City Police Station, carried out by gunmen on 9 May 2014, six police and military servicemen were killed, among them the

chief of State Road Inspection in Mariupol. The chief of the City police was abducted and, after negotiations, released two days later with severe injuries of broken skull, broken ribs, internal bleeding which necessitated surgical operations.

Yesterday the Ukrainian military suffered one of the deadliest single days in its history. Seven soldiers were killed in an ambush by terrorists armed with heavy weapons nearby Kramatorsk. We strongly condemn these criminal acts committed by pro-Russian terrorists, express our sincere condolences to the families of the deceased and once again urge the Russian Federation to stop supporting terrorism in eastern Ukraine.

It should be emphasized again in this forum that actions of Ukrainian internal security forces and servicemen are carried out with maximum restraint to avoid civilian casualties and are targeted against illegal armed groups that commit terrorist acts and crimes threatening life and safety of population and the functioning of the regions of the east of Ukraine.

In this context let me draw your attention to the collective appeal by the servicemen of the National Guard of Ukraine to the people of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Those servicemen are reservists – teachers, engineers, businessmen. They were called to duty to protect security of citizens, to protect from attacks of individuals, which illegally seized weapons. They fight criminals, who rob people, disrupt their normal life, deny children`s access to the schools and kindergartens.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating our call to the Russian Federation to execute verifiable withdrawal of troops from the state border with Ukraine, to voluntarily host inspections under the Vienna Document to effectively dispel concerns about the Russian military activities along the borders with Ukraine, to revoke the authorization on the use of Armed Forces on the Ukrainian territory, to undertake meaningful steps in implementing de-escalatory measures in accordance with the agreed Geneva Statement of 17 April 2014. The means to solve the crisis in and around Ukraine is the renewal of fulfillment by the Russian Federation of norms and principles of international law and OSCE principles and commitments which remain flagrantly violated by this participating State.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.