

## Germany and France

### **Statement on the recent attack against equipment of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine**

Berlin / Paris, 1 November 2018 – Following the downing of a Long Range UAV of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) in Eastern Ukraine, Germany and France issued the following statement:

“Germany and France, as members of the Normandy format, strongly condemn the destruction of the SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle (LR UAV) in the early hours of 27 October near Nyzhnokrynske, in an area not controlled by the Ukrainian government, close to the Russian-Ukrainian border, and recall that those responsible of attacks perpetrated to the SMM’s personnel and equipment should be held accountable.

Evidence collected by SMM suggests Russia and the separatists it backs bear responsibility for the targeting and downing of the LR UAV, blinding the mission at this particular spot.

In recent weeks, the SMM’s UAV, while being heavily jammed, observed on multiple occasions convoys entering Ukrainian territory across a non-official border crossing point from Russia into Ukraine. Before the loss of communication, the SMM UAV spotted a surface-to-air missile system.

This downing is a severe incident that stands in clear violation of SMM’s mandate as adopted by all OSCE participating States. It constitutes an inadmissible culmination of continued interference, intimidation and restriction of SMM monitors’ work, who act as eyes and ears of the international community on the ground.

While all 57 OSCE participating States have committed to the SMM mandate, Russia, having signed the Minsk Agreements and being a member of the Normandy Format, bears a particular responsibility to ensure the free, safe, secure and unimpeded access for the OSCE monitors and their equipment.

The security and safety of the SMM monitors and its equipment is of utmost importance to us and always on the agenda of our discussions within the Normandy Format. We remind the sides that they have committed under the Minsk agreements to ensuring effective monitoring and verification of the ceasefire and heavy weapons withdrawal by the SMM across the entire conflict area.”