



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°933 Vienna, 27 November 2019

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson, the EU and its Member States are encouraged by the progress in the three disengagement areas and we commend Ukraine for the renovation of the bridge near Stanytsia Luhanska which will greatly facilitate civilian passage through the contact line, especially for the elderly who suffer most from the current circumstances. We deplore however the fact that the security situation in the conflict areas continues to be highly volatile, as reported by the SMM, with severe consequences for the civilian population living near the contact line. We are very concerned that ceasefire violations persist at elevated levels.

We welcome the agreement to hold a summit of the Normandy Four on 9 December in Paris. We hope that this meeting will result in concrete measures aimed at putting an end to the violence and to further ease the suffering of civilians. The summit has the potential to constitute an important step in the peaceful resolution of the conflict, in full respect of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. President Zelensky and his administration have shown the political will to negotiate an end to the conflict. We call on Russia to act likewise.

Mr. Chairperson, any impediments to the SMM's work, including attempts to destroy SMM's assets, which continue mainly in areas controlled by Russia-backed armed formations, are unacceptable. The SMM must have safe, secure, unconditional and unimpeded access to the entire territory of Ukraine.

We regret that Russia continues with so-called "humanitarian convoys", now on a weekly basis, some of which are entering military compounds, in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as of fundamental international

humanitarian principles. We once again call on Russia to join an international mechanism for the delivery of humanitarian aid and to desist from its current practice, which is incompatible with basic principles of international law.

We remain firm in our call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full in order to achieve a sustainable political solution to the conflict in line with OSCE principles and commitments. Respect for these principles and commitments must be restored. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the armed formations it backs to meet these commitments in full. We reiterate our deep concern regarding information about the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the conflict zone. We call on Russia to immediately stop providing financial and military support to the armed formations. The ceasefire must be respected. All Minsk-regulated weapons must be withdrawn. All foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries must be removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential.

We recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to recognise these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilising the situation and reversing moves that contravene these principles. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces since February 2014 and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which we will not recognise. We continue to call on Russia to ensure unhindered and free passage to and from the Sea of Azov in accordance with international law. We express our deep concern about the ongoing large-scale militarisation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia, which continues to impact the security situation in the Black Sea region and beyond.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.