



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine  
at the 782-nd FSC Plenary Meeting  
(11 March 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Minsk package of measures of 12 February contains as its first provision the agreement on strict compliance with the ceasefire regime as of 00.00 hours of 15 February 2015. The Ukrainian forces ceased fire at agreed time and have strictly abided by the ceasefire since then. They have not used arms except for cases of self-defence.

However, in clear breach of the Minsk agreements of both September 2014 and February 2015, the illegal armed groups, with direct support of the Russian regular armed forces, have not yet observed the comprehensive cease-fire as of February 15. They launched a broad full-scale offensive on Debaltseve, plunging this city into humanitarian catastrophe. This blatant violation of the Minsk agreements cost lives of at least 22 Ukrainian servicemen.

The militants continue shelling positions of the Ukrainian forces as well as civilian locations using tactics of “*disturbing fire*” and undertake infantry and tank attacks trying to push Ukrainian forces away from their positions. In total, since February 15, Russia-backed militants have shelled Ukrainian positions over 770 times. Intense fighting has been taking place near Mariupol and Donetsk airport. In Donetsk region, militants attack Svitlodarsk, Vodyane, Popasna, Krasnohorivka etc. In Luhansk region, they target Schastya, Stanytsya Luhanska, Zolote, and other locations. During these attacks, militants have used tanks, mortars, artillery, MLRS and other weapons. 64 Ukrainian military have been killed and 341 were wounded as a result of shelling and attacks since February 15.

According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence on 9 March 2015 the Ukrainian Armed Forces completed, in accordance with Minsk agreements, the withdrawal of heavy weapons to new positions which had been earlier prepared. Although the militants claim withdrawal of heavy weapons, we have data that in many cases they perform withdrawal either partially or in a way to strengthen their assault capabilities in other areas. In some cases, they bring heavy weapons back to previous positions. Damaged and broken military equipment is replaced with new or repaired weaponry. A lot of heavy weapons are hidden in the towns.

Militants use the cease-fire to regroup, get reinforcements and relocate to other positions to conduct offensives in the direction of Mariupol, Avdiyivka, Volnovakha, Artemivsk, Popasna, and Schastya. Moreover, leaders of terrorists declare their intention to capture other areas in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Heavy weapons and other military equipment as well as manpower continue flowing from Russia into the east of Ukraine.

Continuous use of heavy weaponry and attempts by the Russia-backed militants to gain control of additional territory constitute a clear breach of the Minsk agreements and seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political solution. The Russian Federation has not yet practically delivered on its obligations under the Minsk agreements, thus impeding the peace process and further eroding the credibility of its statements and declarations.

We note that on numerous occasions the attempts by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to visit the territories under control of so-called DPR and LPR to observe the cease-

fire regime and withdrawal of heavy weapons have been blocked by the militants. This is a serious violation of the SMM mandate, according to which the Mission must work with full and free access to independently monitor and verify, without any external pressure, including in all parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and along the border with Russia.

**Mr. Chairman,**

I would like to draw attention of the Forum to the notification format of Ukraine under the Vienna Document on 6 March 2015 (F-41 № CBM/UA/15/0012/F41/O) on the transfer and use of the advanced Russian weapons in eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian document provides numerous facts of supplies and use by the militants of the latest models of military equipment and armaments during the combat fighting in eastern Ukraine, which are in service of the Russian armed forces (a complete list is provided in the format F-41).

Ukraine stressed in its format that the specified weaponry was never a part of stocks of the former Soviet Union and was not present at the military depots of Luhansk and Donetsk regions. The Ukrainian side drew attention to the active supply by Russia to the terrorist groups in Donbas of ammunition the expiration date of which is finishing soon. By doing so, Russia solves the problem of their utilization.

Ukraine again called on the Russian Federation to immediately stop its aggression against Ukraine, to halt supply of mercenaries, military equipment, weapon and ammunition to the militant groups in the eastern Ukraine, as well as other illegal acts of the Russian armed forces against Ukraine and its citizens.

Ukraine demands from Russia to provide appropriate assurances and guarantees that the above international illegal activities will not recur and compensate the sustained losses.

The response of the Russian side in its Format F-41 (CBM/RU/15/0027/F41/O) on 7 March 2015 again failed, as in previous instances, to provide meaningful substantive reaction.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

The delegation of Ukraine already noted the ongoing violations of the cease-fire by the pro-Russian militants. Let me bring to your attention some facts from the period of 2-10 March:

-on 2 March militants three times carried out attacks with mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and small arms against the ATO forces, located in the settlement of Shyrokinе;

-on 4 March a column of 100 pieces of military equipment with battle tanks, armored personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles moved from the territory of Russia to the town of Horlivka. The militants were ordered to come to Horlivka and receive the military equipment to form a new battle group. Also during the day militants fired 12 times at the ATO positions along the contact line;

-on 7 March there were 18 violations of the ceasefire by militants in Donetsk and Mariupol directions. Tanks were used to attack the settlement of Shyrokinе near Mariupol. The ATO forces successfully rebuffed all attempts of the militants to break through the line of defence of the Ukrainian military. As a result of clashes one Ukrainian serviceman was killed;

-on 8 March pro-Russian militants violated the ceasefire 6 times. In particular, the militants fired from 120mm mortars and rocket-propelled grenades at settlements of Avdiivka, Opytne, Kamenetz and Mayersk. Militants also shelled with mortars the positions of the ATO forces near Shyrokinе. An active aerial reconnaissance was undertaken in the

direction of Mariupol. Over the day the Ukrainian forces registered 10 unmanned aerial vehicles;

-on 9 March militants attacked the settlement of Shyrokyne using mortars and small arms. According to the latest information the Ukrainian forces keep their positions, thus there is no immediate danger for Mariupol.

-on 10 March the illegal armed groups violated the cease-fire 12 times near the city of Donetsk using large-caliber mortars and heavy artillery. The militants shelled with mortars and grenade launchers the settlements of Avdiivka, Opytne and Pisky. In addition, the terrorists fired at the city of Avdiivka with 152-mm artillery systems, which, according to the Minsk agreements, should have been withdrawn from the contact line.

It is important to note that the leaders of the illegal armed groups in Donbas use the introduced cease-fire to continue to upgrade the combat readiness of the strike groups. To date, they have managed, with Russia's support, to setup a unified command structure of the so-called "Army of Novorosia". Despite the division of the occupied territories on so-called "DPR" and "LPR", the irregular military forces are already rebuilt with a clear structure, allowing for operational and administrative management based on a single plan and concept. During the cease-fire the military of the Russian Federation continued reorganizing and reinforcing the militant forces, additional units of the Russian mercenaries were transferred to Donbas and a single system of command was introduced to establish an efficient army.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Ukraine continues to see a political solution as the only way out of this conflict. We urge Russia to exert its influence over the militants to stop their deadly hostile actions, to strictly observe the cease-fire and fulfill their commitments under the Minsk agreements, as the only effective means for a peaceful sustainable solution based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We urge Russia to start implementing the Minsk agreements as it committed to do in September 2014 and on 12 February 2015. Russia and the separatists it backs must halt their offensive activities, put in place a genuine ceasefire, withdraw heavy weapons, allow the SMM unfettered access throughout all of Ukraine for meaningful OSCE monitoring and verification, including along the Russian-Ukrainian border.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**

