



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine**  
**at the 820<sup>th</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting**

(18 May 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)

(Agenda item 2)

**Mr Chairman,**

In the last week the security situation in Donbas along the contact line has been deteriorating in comparison with the previous week associated with a holiday period. The combined Russian-separatist forces resume a significant intensity of fire, particularly at night time. These actions aim at provoking the Ukrainian Armed Forces to respond and at blackmailing Ukraine and the international community over the Minsk agreements, instead of their good-faith observance by the Kremlin.

Unfortunately, while Ukraine has acted faithfully on all provisions of the Minsk agreements, the continuous failure by Russia and the illegal armed groups it supports to practically deliver on undertaken commitments has again led to escalation of violence, increased loss of life among Ukrainian military and civilians, destruction and suffering. The Russian command carries out plans to intensify subversive and terrorist activities near Donetsk city. The combined Russian-separatist forces fulfilled a new rotation and strengthen of the advance units in the Sloviansk, Donetsk and Mariupol directions. Since 15 May the security situation in the ATO zone has significantly deteriorated, as again heavy weapons are used against the Ukrainian Armed Forces along the contact line.

Establishment of sustainable ceasefire and security as number one agreed provision of the Minsk agreements were again discussed at the last Normandie Ministerial meeting on 11 May in Berlin. Ukrainian Foreign Minister P.Klimkin laid out in the meeting extensively elaborated and detailed proposals on maintaining the ceasefire, disengagement of forces and verification by the SMM, establishment of security zones around the current hot-spots, increasing effectiveness of activity of the JCCC, implementation of a three-stage plan for permanent SMM monitoring at the Ukrainian-Russian border. Putting to practice these security measures

would lay ground for establishing security in the conflict-affected area of Donbas and pave way to progress in implementation of other aspects of the Minsk agreements. However, their realization depends on the willingness of Moscow to proceed to de-escalation, which it has not been ready to do until now.

It is important to maintain firm position in support of the Minsk agreements and in particular the ceasefire as the first step.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

Last week ceasefire violations by the combined Russian-separatist forces have led to **2 Ukrainian soldiers killed and 13 wounded**. The positions of Ukraine's army were **shelled with an average intensity of 16 times per day**.

The SMM continues to report the unacceptable cases when significant limitations are imposed on the monitors in the occupied areas to impede due monitoring and reporting. Access of SMM observers is consistently denied or hindered; the SMM teams are imposed escorts on their visits, and demanded patrol plans and national passports in advance. Contrary to the SMM mandate and the Minsk agreements, Russia and its proxies do not allow freedom of the SMM's movement in large part of the territory under their control, including along Ukraine-Russia state border.

As an example, on 10 May, in an area 7km west of Dibrovka, Donetsk oblast, an armed so-called "DPR" member stopped the SMM on their way to the border and told them to leave the area - which is less than 4km from the border - immediately. On 13 May, seven armed so-called "DPR" members stopped the SMM in Kominternove, said they could not monitor in the area and told them to leave. The SMM had to leave the area. On 14 May, an armed so-called "LPR" member prevented the SMM from entering a compound in "LPR"-controlled Komisarivka, claiming that the SMM needed a written permission from their superiors in Debaltseve.

On 13 May, the Ukrainian part of the JCCC provided information to the SMM monitors on presence of battle tanks, artillery systems calibre more than 100mm, self-propelled guns, 122mm MLRS "Grad" and 300mm MLRS "Smerch" in the areas of Luhansk, Donetsk, Ternove, Pervomaysk and Mius.

In addition to the military support of militants in Donbas, the Russian leadership continues to allocate significant financial resources to maintain the illegal structures in the occupied areas, in spite of the prolonged stagnation of the Russian economy. According to the competent authorities of Ukraine, at the beginning of May 2016 1.2 billion of Russian rubbles and 382.000 USD in cash were brought to the settlement of

Marynivka in Donbas from the Rostov oblast of Russia to maintain the functioning of the illegal de-facto “authorities” and daily activities of the combined Russian-separatist forces. Also, 35.000 passport blanks were delivered to Donetsk from Russia for registration of Russian citizenship to local persons who are ready to perform military service under the contract in the Russian army. This practice was tested by Russia in other conflict areas.

We remain deeply concerned over the destiny of 115 Ukrainian citizens who are held captive in the occupied areas of Donbas as well as in Russia. We continue to urge the Russian Federation to speed up the release of hostages and illegally detained persons on the basis of “all-for-all” principle. We reiterate that the relevant provision of the Minsk Package of measures apply to all illegally detained Ukrainian citizens, including those in captivity in Russia. We underscore Russia’s responsibility for the life and safety of the Ukrainian hostages it holds, including Nadiya Savchenko, Oleh Sentsov, Oleksandr Kolchenko and others and demand their immediate and unconditional release.

**Mr Chairman,**

While in the OSCE debates we continue to urge the Russian Federation to implement its commitments undertaken in Minsk, according to available information, the Russian military command has completed the structuring of illegal armed formations in the occupied areas of Donbas as per structure of Russia’s Armed Forces. These formations are armed with military equipment and weapons of the Russian army, receive full technical-logistical and financial procurement from Russia’s Defence Ministry, and are subordinate to Russia’s military command on all aspects of their activities. Nearly all command positions in these formations are staffed by military personnel comprising generals and officers of the Russian Armed Forces. Besides, full regular units of the Russian Armed Forces continue to take part in combat action in Donbas against the Ukrainian military under the disguise of the illegal armed formations. Since the beginning of 2016 the combined Russian-separatist forces violated the ceasefire over 6000 times, including over 1300 times with the use of the heavy weapons that should have been withdrawn under the Minsk agreements.

**Mr Chairman,**

The resolution of the conflict in Donbas requires that Russia takes the responsibility for de-escalation and implementing the undertaken

commitments, that Donbas is de-occupied from Russian forces, fighters and mercenaries, as envisaged by paragraph 10 of the Package of measures, that effective control at the Ukrainian-Russian state border be re-established. The militants would not have been able to constantly provoke, shell and escalate the conflict unless they received permanent replenishment of ammunition and logistical support across the border from Russia.

In the interests of peaceful resolution in Donbas Ukraine once again urges the Russian Federation and its proxies to stop military provocations, to withdraw their heavy weapons in a verifiable manner, to stop provision of Russia's weapons, ammunition and logistical support to the militants.

We emphasise the imperative of full freedom of movement for the SMM, establishment of permanent and unhindered monitoring and creation of security zones in border areas of Ukraine and Russia as envisaged by the provisions of Minsk agreements.

As before, we again call on Russia to return to the tenets of the international law, to cease its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

**Thank you, Mr Chairman.**