



Permanent Mission of Ukraine  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine**  
**at the 836<sup>th</sup> FSC Special Meeting**  
(23 November 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)  
(Agenda item 1)

**Madam Chairperson,**

Ukraine notes with regret that the current security situation in the conflict-affected areas of Donbas remains of great concern. Regular ceasefire violations by the Russian hybrid forces, often with the use of heavy weapons, remain the daily reality. The Russian modern weaponry continues to be registered in use in the occupied part of Donbas.

Ukraine's commitment to full implementation of the Minsk agreements starting with the immediate security provisions is not reciprocated by Russia, leading to continued violence of high intensity, loss of life and destruction.

The SMM earlier confirmed the completion by both sides of disengagement of troops to the agreed positions in the settlements of Zolote and Petrivske. At the same time we remain concerned about situation in the third disengagement area near Stanytsya Luhanska. The combined Russian-separatist forces over weeks have continuously shelled positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in this area of disengagement of forces preventing due implementation of the Framework Decision. The Ukrainian side views these armed provocations by Russian hybrid forces in the agreed areas of disengagement as violation of the initial provisions of the Framework decision that require full ceasefire.

**Madam Chairperson,**  
**Distinguished colleagues,**

Over past week the combined Russian-separatist forces have opened fire on the positions of Ukrainian military with an average intensity of **23 times per day**. Despite the provocations, the Armed Forces of Ukraine strictly observed requirements of the Minsk agreements. Violation of the silence regime by militants took place in all directions along the contact line, most of them at night time in the Mariupol sector. The militants continue to multiple shellings of the Ukrainian positions, including with the use prohibited by the Minsk agreements of 152mm and 122mm artillery systems, 122mm MRLSs BM-21 "Grad", 120mm and 82mm mortars, battle tanks and infantry fighting

vehicles. **3 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 15 wounded** during the last week.

We witness the escalation as the combined Russian-separatist forces continue to receive on the permanent basis military equipment, ammunition and fuel materials from Russia. New facts of replenishment with military personnel, weapons and equipment, ammunition and fuel for the combined Russian-separatist forces in the occupied territories have been registered. On 21 November an echelon from Russia delivered: - to the railway station of Ilovaisk 6 wagons with ammunition; - to the railway station of Kharzysk 7 cisterns with fuel and 4 wagons with spare parts for battle tanks. The SMM is still being prevented from setting up planned Forward Patrol Bases in separatist-held areas, such as in Amvrosivka and Antratsyt, which would be a necessary step towards giving the SMM better conditions for monitoring, including in border areas.

There are plenty of evidences of Russia direct involvement in the war on the east of Ukraine presented by the SMM OSCE, Ukrainian Ministry of Defense as well as by investigative NGOs. While Russian officers and soldiers have been pretty cautious and carefully cover up their combat involvement, they still leave traces. A recent thorough analysis was made by a group of investigators searching through different sources – websites, videos, social media posts and other sources – to find traces and present findings. They have identified servicemen from 75 Russian military units sent to Ukraine on the orders of their command. It contains 165 documented incidents. Each record in the database has a link to the detailed investigation behind the case. One video contains information on the overview of the modern Russian weaponry in Donbas (for more details see website: <http://newsyou.info/na-vostok-ukrainy-voshli-75-podrazdelenij-putinskoj-armii-video>).

### **Madam Chairperson,**

The deep concerns of Ukraine and the international community over the situation in the Crimean peninsula stem from numerous facts of the policy of repressions and intimidations, which remains the main tool of the Russian occupation authorities. At the last FSC Meeting we drew attention of the Forum to the arrests of the Ukrainian citizens in the Crimea on allegation of terrorist activity of the so-called "sabotage and reconnaissance group", headed by Mr. Shtyblikov. The Russian security service (FSB) assigned the role of "subversive agents" to experts from well known Nomos Center, a scientific research NGO that functioned in 2003-2014 in Sevastopol. Regretably, this fabricated process is not over. On 21 November another two so-called "Ukrainian saboteurs" were arrested in the occupied Crimea. Both were arrested and detained last week, but it has become known only this Monday. Russia has argued that the former Ukrainian military officers Oleksiy Stogniy and Gleb Shabliy were associated with "Shtyblikov group", which remains under illegal detention in the Crimea. According to the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the so-called "Ukrainian saboteurs" have long been

completed their military service. These reserve officers were on the peninsula before the Russian occupation, lived there, have families and engaged in business. No need to look for conspirology or something special. The FSB simply comes to the military commissariat, which stores personal files of reserve officers, raises them and publicly «appoints» as the Ukrainian saboteurs former Ukrainian military, which stayed in the Crimea after its illegal occupation. Corrupt logic of the Russian Federal Security Service drives to view the former Ukrainian servicemen as potential saboteurs and terrorists. But their only fault, or more trouble, that they decided to stay with their families in the occupied territory. Lawyers have not been allowed to the detainees. The so-called “confession” of the detained Ukrainians was most obviously extorted, given the visible signs of physical influence. We reiterate our call on Russia to stop regular practice of detaining Ukrainian citizens as hostages for blackmailing Ukraine and immediately release those who have already been illegally detained.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

We find it deeply worrying and unacceptable that the SMM continues to experience problems with its freedom of movement and access in the occupied areas of Donbas. Our particular concerns stem from the fact that such impediments are often linked to the attempts to conceal the concentration of forces and presence of the heavy weapons in the vicinity of the contact line.

The OSCE SMM to Ukraine continues to register an unacceptable situation when significant limitations are imposed on the international monitors in the occupied areas to impede proper monitoring and distort the real situation on the ground. Access of SMM observers is denied or hindered. 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. Such restrictions breach the agreed mandate of the SMM and its ability to report objectively on the situation on the ground. It remains absolutely essential to seek that Russia delivers on its commitment on the SMM’s full freedom of movement.

Security will remain fragile if the SMM continues to experience significant problems with its freedom of movement and access in the occupied areas of Donbas. As follows from the SMM reports, the situation in the area has not been improved and remains marked by high statistics of denials of access. It is unacceptable that the OSCE monitors often face intimidations and threats from the Russian hybrid forces.

**Madam Chairperson,**

We expect from the Russian Federation to implement without delay the necessary initial steps of the Minsk agreements: securing ceasefire, withdrawal of weapons, and full freedom of movement for the SMM for effective monitoring. These important steps are an exact reflection of

immediate measures as agreed by Russia in the Minsk package. The decisions taken in Moscow led to the conflict in Donbas, consequently it requires decisions in Moscow to stop the conflict and progress to resolution.

We urge 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, Madam Chairperson.**