



Permanent Mission of Ukraine  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine**  
**at the 823<sup>rd</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting**  
(15 June 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)  
(Agenda item 2)

**Mr. Chairman,**

Ukraine with a great concern assesses the current situation in the conflict-affected areas of Donbas, where combined Russian-separatist forces have significantly intensified their aggressive activities. Sharp deterioration of security situation on the ground was in the focus of phone talks on 6 June, held by the Presidents of Ukraine and France and the German Chancellor. The three leaders agreed that establishing security in Donbas in line with the Minsk agreements remains a primary task and must be at the core of the joint international efforts.

Over the past week the Russian hybrid forces were very active in the areas of Horlivka and Avdiivka, where the pro-Russian mercenaries persisted in defying the Minsk agreements. As a result, the industrial area of Avdiivka resembles a lunar landscape of funnels and craters. Just imagine - during one night a plot of land 50 to 50 meters was targeted by up to 400 shells. The first artillery battery of 152mm self-propelled guns fired from Makiivka, second - from Spartak (area of the Donetsk airport), and third - from the Donetsk residential sectors.

The SMM reports and information from Ukraine's military staff portray an extremely worrying picture with the number of ceasefire violations being on the rise and heavy weapons, in particular mortars and towed high calibre artillery being widely used by the combined Russian-separatist forces. They deliberately provoke violence by intensifying shellings and direct attacks on the Ukrainian positions, sniper fire and activities of their subversive groups along whole contact line. The positions of Ukraine's army were shelled with an average intensity of 21 times per day. 6 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 36 were wounded during the second week of June.

The ability of the SMM to duly monitor the situation is significantly limited. Until now the SMM cannot recover the wreckage of its UAVs which had been shot down in the occupied areas. The power supply to SMM's repeater in the Donetsk city maintains disconnected since 20 May. As a result, the SMM remote monitoring equipment in the so-called "DPR"-controlled areas at the Donetsk airport and towns of Avdiivka and Yasynuvata are disabled. We have not registered any steps from the Russian part of JCCC to restore the operation of these devices.

Proceeding from the holiday ceasefire agreement of 29 April 2016 and witnessing considerable worsening of security situation, the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) conducted a video-conference on 10 June, addressing ceasefire violations along the contact line. The participants have agreed that a full and objective investigation of these violations is needed which will be discussed at today's (15 June) meeting of the TCG in Minsk with the participation of the OSCE SMM. The sides further agreed to immediately take all necessary measures for a complete ceasefire, in order to facilitate the investigation.

Despite undertaken effort, the combined Russian-separatist forces continue to maintain a high intensity of provocations in the last days, as registered by the SMM. They continue to resort to a deliberate cynical practice of shelling from residential areas, as again confirmed in the SMM report of 13 June.

Despite the reached agreements the combined Russian-separatist forces continue to receive on the permanent basis military equipment, ammunition and fuel materials from Russia. According to information of the ATO staff of 12 June, a convoy of 5 trucks with ammunition for battle tanks and 122mm calibre multiple-launch rocket systems "Grad" arrived from Russia in the town of Khartsyzk, Donetsk oblast. A train with railway platforms delivered in Khartsyzk 6 battle tanks, 4 infantry fighting vehicles, three 152-mm self-propelled guns as well as fuel, lubricants and ammunition. It is evident that the illegal armed formations would not have been able to constantly provoke, shell and escalate the conflict unless they received permanent replenishment of ammunition and logistical support from Russia across the border not currently under Ukrainian control. These supplies must stop and this depends on the Russian authorities, which have not so far showed readiness for de-escalation. The issue of permanent OSCE monitoring at the border and establishing security zones in border areas of Ukraine and Russia, as agreed in Minsk, has critical importance for progress on peaceful resolution.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

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. For instance:

- on 8 June armed the so-called "DPR" members did not allow the SMM to proceed to the east of "DPR"-controlled Oleksandrivske (south-east of Donetsk);

- on 9 June near Dokuchaievsk, so-called "DPR" members insisted that the SMM took an alternative route in order to reach the village;

- on 10 June an armed men delayed the SMM at a checkpoint near so-called "DPR"-controlled Verkhnoшыrokiyske (north-east of Mariupol) for

nearly 20 minutes, asking for the patrol plan, vehicle permit and personal documents of the patrol members;

-on 12 June in the vicinity of the so-called “LPR”-controlled border crossing point Sievernyi, an “LPR” member did not allow the SMM to proceed further to the border crossing point.

Faced with numerous disturbing developments over the past month we fully concur with the conclusion that there is a deliberate strategy of “blinding” the SMM in the occupied areas of Donbas. As a result, the SMM is intentionally deprived of a possibility to monitor and report about the real situation in consistency with its mandate.

The recent developments over the past month and the SMM reporting show that Russia and its proxies are still far from fulfilling the three initial provisions of the Minsk agreements, which are crucial for progress on implementation of other aspects of the documents. The comprehensive and long lasting ceasefire, withdrawal of all heavy weapons and free and unfettered access of the OSCE SMM throughout the militant-controlled area, must be secured as agreed basis for implementation of other provisions. We expect the Russian Federation to deliver on these commitments.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In the interests of advancing peaceful resolution in the east of Ukraine we urge 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 illegal armed formations.

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 Minsk agreements. Re-establishing control on the Ukrainian-Russian state border remains critical.

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, Mr. Chairman.**