



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 774 Vienna, 10 December 2014

EU Statement on the Security Situation in around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States remain deeply concerned about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine in some parts of which shelling has intensified over the past week causing further military and civilian casualties, and damaged civilian buildings and infrastructure.

As witnessed by the SMM, Russian-backed separatists continue to concentrate heavy weaponry, and use it offensively, in particular around Donetsk airport, in a persistent attempt to consolidate control and gain strategic advantages. This further destabilises the situation, and grossly violates the Minsk agreements.

We therefore urge all parties to: show utmost restraint; implement fully and without further delay their commitments under the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum; and reengage with a view to finding a peaceful sustainable solution based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this respect, we take due note of all efforts to arrange a stable ceasefire along the line of contact and the initiative of President Poroshenko a "day of silence" to be observed on 9 December.

It is clear that little can be achieved without the Russian Federation's genuine commitment and constructive engagement. The Russian Federation needs to assume and exercise its responsibilities. The inflow of weapons, equipment and troops from across the Russian border must be halted. Equally, we call for the withdrawal of any illegal and foreign forces, mercenaries and military equipment from eastern Ukraine.

We are also seriously worried by acts of armed violence against the SMM. This includes shooting at its personnel and UAVs, as well as attempts to impede activities by restricting the free movement of its monitors.

We remind all involved of their responsibility for ensuring a safe environment for SMM monitors and equipment, including UAVs, and for free and unrestricted access, including to all parts of Donetsk and Luhansk in accordance with the SMM mandate.

Furthermore, the European Union calls on all parties to respect international humanitarian principles and protect civilians and infrastructure from fighting, and to facilitate the work of international humanitarian organisations. The humanitarian impact of the crisis on the civilian population should not be exploited for military or political ends. Assistance should be delivered through appropriate channels in agreement with the Ukrainian authorities.

We note with regret that yet another unauthorised convoy, bearing the inscription “Humanitarian help from the Russian Federation”, was dispatched on 30 November by the Russian Federation to eastern Ukraine, and are of the opinion that once again fundamental international humanitarian principles have not been observed. This way of proceeding constitutes a breach of Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The European Union reiterates its strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will not recognise it. The European Union stands firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and calls upon the Russian Federation to do likewise.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND** and ALBANIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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

** Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.