



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

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## **Statement on “Russia’s on-going aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”**

As for delivery by the Delegation of Ukraine  
to the 1148<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,  
1 June 2017

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Yesterday, the Ambassadors, Permanent Representatives of the OSCE participating States completed a visit to Ukraine, where they had the opportunity to see with their own eyes the results of the Russian military aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as well as consequences of the ongoing shelling of the UAF positions and residential areas by the hybrid Russian forces, on which we have been informing the Permanent Council at every meeting since its beginning in spring 2014.

The Russia-backed illegal armed formations continue violating ceasefire, more than 300 times in the previous week, more than one quarter of which was from the Minsk-proscribed heavy weapons. On 25 May, as confirmed by the SMM, government-controlled Krasnohorivka (21 km west of Donetsk) has been shelled from 152mm artillery “from an east-south-easterly direction” (areas controlled by the militants): a hospital and a number of residential buildings were targeted. Three days later, the hybrid Russian forces have once again opened fire at the same residential areas in Krasnohorivka using 82-mm and 120-mm mortars, 122-mm and 152-mm artillery, tanks and Grad-P system. The attack continued almost 90 minutes and damaged 29 buildings, including a hospital, a school and a university campus. Most buildings and infrastructure (water and sewage pipeline) were destroyed or heavily damaged. Eight civilians suffered injuries. The SMM confirmed in its report of 30 May that the artillery rounds were “fired from an easterly or south-easterly direction”.

We condemn the deliberate and indiscriminate shellings from heavy weapons regularly delivered by the Russia-backed illegal armed formations to residential areas of Donbas. One hundred Ukrainian servicemen perished and more than eight hundred were wounded only since the beginning of 2017 in their efforts to protect the civilian population affected by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. We again call on Russia to exercise its responsibility in implementing the Minsk agreements, in particular their security provisions on comprehensive ceasefire, withdrawal of forces

and full access of the SMM for monitoring. The urgency of a comprehensive and sustainable ceasefire as the necessary prerequisite for further progress in implementation of the Minsk agreements has been, in particular, underlined in the meeting of the “Normandy Four” at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers, which took place in Berlin on 30 May.

The responsibility of the Russian Federation for the conflict and its role to restore peace and stability has been unequivocally stressed by G7 leaders at the Summit in Taormina on 26–27 May. We appreciate the readiness expressed by G7 in the joint declaration “to take further restrictive measures in order to increase costs on Russia should its actions so require” and we endorse the reiterated position that “the duration of sanctions is clearly linked to Russia’s complete implementation of its commitments in the Minsk Agreements and respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty”.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

The special responsibility of the Russian Federation, as a party to the conflict and a party to the Minsk agreements, to implement its undertaken commitments has been regularly underscored in the meetings of the Permanent Council. We recall that the Minsk agreements envisage an active monitoring and verification role of the SMM, which must have the necessary conditions for performing its functions in safety and security, as provided by the Mission’s mandate.

We regret that all the appeals delivered by the OSCE participating States to the Russian side to put an end to the threats, harassment and intimidation demonstrated by its hybrid forces in Donbas towards the civilian unarmed SMM monitors were left without any response. We still have not heard a single word of condemnation from the Russian delegation to the OSCE of those threats of illegal armed formations, not to mention any practical steps made by the Russian side to remedy the situation. The SMM weekly report of 24 May is very illustrative in this regard, as it highlights the Russian side at the JCCC “indicating the neglect of their task to assist in ensuring security for the SMM and other civilians”, continuing “to query facts established by the SMM – such as doubting the SMM’s observation of an UAV Orlan-10 instead of ensuring that the SMM’s monitoring is free from harassment and obstruction” and providing a false information on the mines.

The Russian officers at the JCCC have also refused to facilitate the SMM’s freedom of movement after the Russia-backed Donetsk militants delayed the SMM at an entry-exit checkpoint near Oleksandrivka on two separate occasions, as stated in the SMM daily report of 27 May. As have been recorded before on the regular basis, such lack of responsibility and unwillingness of the Russian side to react have once again emboldened the illegal armed formations, which enjoy total impunity of their actions: two days later, at the same checkpoint near Oleksandrivka “an armed and apparently intoxicated” militant delayed the SMM, as confirmed by the relevant SMM report.

The intimidations, restrictions and impediments for the SMM monitors taking place in non-government controlled areas of Donbas with the full consent of the Russian side are taking new forms, as the SMM patrols faced the necessity to stay in the queue with other cars at the checkpoints controlled by the militants from certain

areas of Donetsk region, which puts SMM patrols at risk of being caught in crossfire and completely contradicts the provision of safe and secure access throughout Ukraine envisaged by the Mission's mandate. It is hardly surprising that the Russian side of JCCC has once again refused to facilitate the issue despite the SMM's relevant request.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

The escalating aggression of the hybrid Russian forces towards the SMM monitors is due to the fact that the Mission continues to register daily the violations of the Minsk agreements by the illegal armed formations even under significant restrictions, experienced by the SMM in the non-government controlled areas of Donbas, and with the operations limited to patrolling on hard surfaced roads after the tragic incident of 23 April near non-government controlled Pryshyb.

The SMM cameras in Avdiivka, Shyrokyne, Oktiabr mine and other locations continue to record rounds in flight from the occupied areas of Donbas targeting the positions of the UAFs. The SMM patrols continue to launch the UAV flights to monitor the heavy weapons violating the withdrawal lines in Donbas. Immediately after one of such flights, the illegal armed formation from Donetsk exhibited an aggressive attitude towards the SMM patrol near non-government controlled Yakovlivka (10km north of Donetsk) on 27 May. We witness the ongoing efforts of the hybrid Russian forces to blind the monitors, those brave women and men who deserve our full and unwavering support to implement their mandate agreed by all OSCE participating States, including the Russian Federation.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

The efforts to prevent the monitors from highlighting a real security situation on the ground in Donbas are combined with the ongoing unwillingness of the Russian Federation to uncover its logistical support provided to the militants through the uncontrolled segment of the Ukraine-Russia state border. Ukrainian side continues to register numerous wagons, carriages and cisterns with ammunition, fuel and lubricants arriving to Luhansk, Rovenki and Dovzhansk train stations in occupied areas from the territory of the Russian Federation. The intensity of illegal trade and supplies between Russia and its proxies in Donbas can be demonstrated by the SMM reports on patrols' short visits at the border crossing point in Uspenka (73km south-east of Donetsk), where in only 30 minutes the SMM observed 65 trucks standing in a queue to exit Ukraine.

Under these circumstances, it should not come as a surprise that "those in effective control continued to deny the SMM the necessary security guarantees to open patrol bases closer to border areas", as stated in the SMM Weekly report of 24 May. We join the rhetorical question of the SMM on the reasons why the security guarantees in areas far from the contact line remain to be not provided.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

In the meetings of the Permanent Council we dedicate significant attention to the gross human rights violations by Russia in the illegally occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol. The Russian occupation authorities continue their efforts to erase the identity of ethnic minorities and their symbolic in Crimea, including Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. On 30 May, a Crimean Tatar Amethan Yusupov was fined by the so called “court” in Bakhchysarai only for the use of Crimean Tatar flag.

Russia’s campaign of persecutions and intimidations of any dissenting voices in the occupied Crimea continues. There are no signs of relaxation of repressive policies, as we could witness yesterday, on 31 May, in the preliminary hearing in the so called Simferopol “court”, where the trumped-up case of the Deputy Chairman of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Ilmi Umerov, was considered. All the four defense’s motions were denied by the Russian occupation court. The next hearing will take place on 7 June, and we will continue to closely monitor this process. We also encourage the OSCE Chairmanship and relevant OSCE Institutions to be seized of the developments in the occupied Crimea and use all instruments at the disposal of the Organization for effective responses.

We urge the Russian Federation to fulfill its international commitments and obligations, in particular as a party to the Minsk agreements and as an occupying power in Crimean peninsula, to stop the aggression and to reverse the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which remains an integral part of Ukraine.

In conclusion, I would like to inform the Permanent Council that the Command of the Ukrainian Armed Forces gave the order to cease fire from any weapons since midnight of 1 June till midnight of 2 June 2017. However, in case of any threats from the militants to the lives of servicemen and civilians or the attempts to move the contact line , the Ukrainian Armed Forces are entitled to deliver a response fire.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**