

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Permanent Council No 1052****Vienna, 14 May 2015**

EU Statement on Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments

The European Union welcomes the forthcoming meetings of the four working groups under the Trilateral Contact Group of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chairmanship. These meetings should contribute to a political process towards the full implementation of the Minsk agreements based on OSCE principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. We encourage the sides to continue their work and to demonstrate the political will to make the working groups effective. We reiterate our support to the ongoing efforts of the Normandy format in facilitating the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about the continued and increasing fighting in parts of eastern Ukraine. We particularly note the SMM's reports about ongoing ceasefire violations in Shyrokyne and around Donetsk airport. The build-up of Russian troops next to the Ukrainian border and information about continued inflow of military equipment and personnel into Ukraine from the Russian Federation add to concern. We reiterate that any attempts by the Russia-backed separatists to gain control of additional territory will seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution.

We reiterate our call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements. We underline the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. We also expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full. The ceasefire must be respected, heavy weapons withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment as well as mercenaries removed from the territory of Ukraine. We once again call on the Minsk signatories to provide SMM with the full baseline information that would allow for credible verification of the

withdrawal of heavy weapons. We recall the European Council Conclusions of 19-20 March in all their elements, in particular those linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its border remains essential.

We strongly condemn the incidents threatening the safety and security of the OSCE monitors, including the direct firing at SMM personnel on 10 May. We urge all parties to ensure safe, full and unhindered access for the SMM to all parts of the conflict areas, including those controlled by the Russia-backed separatists, also in the border area with Russia.

Mr Chairman, the EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We once again urge Russia to recognise by acts these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country LIECHTENSTEIN, 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.