



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No 1061
Vienna, 2 July 2015**

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

Last week's Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) was a good occasion to take stock of the crisis in and around Ukraine. We were encouraged by the overwhelming support for restoring respect for the fundamental principles upon which the OSCE is based; principles that we will commemorate next week in Helsinki. Unfortunately, the ASRC was once again a lost opportunity to engage in a genuine and fact-based dialogue about the crisis in and around Ukraine.

We continue to follow the crisis in and around Ukraine with deep concern. We note the continuing fighting in parts of eastern Ukraine, including in and around Donetsk city and Shyrokyne as well as in an increasing number of government-controlled areas in the Luhansk region. The large presence, movement and increasing use of heavy weapons in violation of the Minsk agreements is of particular concern. In this context, we are also concerned by large-scale training activities involving the use of heavy weapons by the so-called "DPR" and "LPR" as reported by the SMM. We reiterate that any attempts by the Russia-backed separatists to gain control of additional territory will be a gross violation of the Minsk agreements and seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution.

We once again underline the importance we attach to the Trilateral Contact Group of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chairmanship. We express our full support for the Chairmanship's new representative Ambassador Martin Sajdik. We welcome the recent meetings of the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups but note with regret that only little progress was made. We note with regret and concern that the meeting of the working group on security, scheduled for today, will not take place. We call on the parties to strengthen their efforts and to show the

necessary political will. We also reiterate our support for the efforts of the Normandy format in facilitating a full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We continue to believe that the full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all parties, based on the OSCE's principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity is the only acceptable political solution. In line with the Minsk agreements the ceasefire must be respected, heavy weapons withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment as well as mercenaries removed from the territory of Ukraine and hostages and illegally detained persons related to the conflict must be released. We underline the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. We also expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists it backs to meet their Minsk commitments in full. In this context we recall the decision by the European Council to extend the EU restrictive measures, in view of Russia's destabilising role in eastern Ukraine.

Mr Chairman, recent SMM reports have drawn our attention to the issue of freedom of movement within Ukraine. We recall that citizens' freedom of movement within a country is a fundamental freedom.

We welcome the SMM's thematic report on freedom of movement to and from the Crimean Peninsula. It confirms that the illegal annexation of Crimea has brought severe implications for its inhabitants. Human rights activists, Crimean Tatars and others have been detained and interrogated, and some have been expelled from the peninsula by the de facto authorities. The report adds to numerous other independent reports presenting a very troublesome situation in Crimea in regard to the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As regards the SMM, we once again call on the parties to ensure safe, full and unhindered access for its monitors to all parts of Ukraine, including to the Crimean peninsula and along the border 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*, 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 the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.