



Daily Report 260/2020

31 October 2020¹

Summary

- The SMM recorded no ceasefire violations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 30 ceasefire violations in Donetsk region and nine in Luhansk region.
- The SMM continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable repairs to and the operation of critical civilian infrastructure.
- SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicles spotted new trenches and trench extensions on both sides of the contact line in southern Donetsk region.
- The SMM continued following up on the situation of civilians amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including at an entry-exit checkpoint in Luhansk region and a checkpoint of the armed formations in Donetsk region.
- The Mission observed a public gathering in front of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine in Kyiv.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted.*

¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 30 October 2020. All times are in Eastern European Time.

Ceasefire violations²

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded 30 ceasefire violations, including 29 undetermined explosions.

In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission reported nine ceasefire violations, all undetermined explosions.

The last time the SMM reported no ceasefire violations was on 23 October (see [SMM Daily Report 24 October 2020](#)).

Following agreement reached at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group on 22 July regarding additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, from 00:01 on 27 July until the end of the reporting period, the SMM has so far recorded a total of 1,945 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 614 explosions, 31 projectiles in flight, 16 muzzle flashes, 23 illumination flares and 1,261 bursts and shots).

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske³

While positioned in government-controlled areas of the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), the Mission observed a calm situation.

Near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), the Mission observed five members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them), some of whom walked inside the disengagement area up to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned, on two separate occasions. The SMM also saw a car carrying at least two passengers (men, age unknown) enter the disengagement area from the south on road T-1316 and drive north and then return.

At the checkpoint of the Ukrainian Armed Forces on the area’s northern edge, the Mission observed five military trucks and saw 13 soldiers and a Ukrainian Armed Forces representative of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) exit the disengagement area at its northern edge. At the same checkpoint, the SMM saw 26 workers, seven trucks and a bulldozer.

About 300m south of the area’s southern edge, the SMM saw about 25 workers working on metal constructions, one of which was assessed to be for use as a bus station.

While positioned in three locations near the **disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), the Mission observed a calm situation.

Withdrawal of weapons

The Mission continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum and the Package of Measures and its Addendum.

² For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, the SMM cameras in Petrivske and Berezove were not operational.

³ Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁴

During the past weeks, SMM unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) spotted new trenches and extensions to existing trenches in areas between Vodiane (government-controlled, 94km south of Donetsk) and Uzhivka (non-government-controlled, 96km south of Donetsk).

On 10 September, in a field about 2.5km south-east of Vodiane, an SMM long-range UAV spotted a 45m-long trench extension, assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces (not visible in the imagery from 5 August 2020).

On 21 September, in a field about 3.2km west of Uzhivka, an SMM long-range UAV spotted for the first time an 80m-long trench extension (not seen in imagery from 5 August). On 26 September, an SMM long-range UAV spotted for the first time a 60m-long trench (not seen in imagery from 2 September) connecting the abovementioned 80m-long trench and an existing trench that was previously reported to have been extended by 50m and 20m (see SMM Daily Reports of [28 August 2020](#) and [1 September 2020](#)). All of these trenches were assessed as belonging to the armed formations.

SMM facilitation of repairs to and operation of critical civilian infrastructure

The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction work south of the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote (see above), north of Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk), and near Vesela Hora (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), south of the bridge in Shchastia.

It also facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable railway inspection, maintenance and vegetation clearance near Vilkhove (government-controlled, 22km north-east of Luhansk); inspection, maintenance of and repairs to power lines in Pryshyb (non-government-controlled, 34km north-west of Luhansk); repairs to water infrastructure near Pankivka (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk); maintenance of road T-1316 near Zolote – north and south of the disengagement area – and of road H-21 south of Shchastia; and demining of road T-1316 near Zolote, of road H-21 near the bridge in Shchastia and of agricultural fields between government-controlled Hirske (63km west of Luhansk) and Orikhove (57km north-west of Luhansk).

Near the checkpoint of the armed formations about 2.5km east of Vesela Hora, the SMM saw about 45 workers with heavy machinery building metal constructions and setting up booths assessed as for future use as hangars and passport control points. The Mission also saw some of the workers roofing metal structures assessed as for future use as pedestrian corridors and carrying out electrical works. About 1.5km south of the checkpoint, the Mission saw seven workers with heavy machinery repairing road H-21 and clearing bushes on both sides of the road.

The SMM continued to facilitate the operation of the Donetsk Filtration Station (15km north of Donetsk).

⁴ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Measures taken at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints to counter the COVID-19 pandemic

In Donetsk region, the SMM saw that a checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km southwest of Donetsk) was operational.

While at the checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka, at around 9:00 and 14:50, the Mission saw a total of 30 people (mixed genders and ages) queuing to travel towards government-controlled areas.

In Luhansk region, the Mission noted that the entry-exit check point (EECP) in Stanytsia Luhanska remained non-operational.⁵

SMM monitors public gathering at Constitutional Court of Ukraine

On the morning of 30 October, in front of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on Zhylianska Street in central Kyiv, the Mission observed a peaceful gathering of between 1000 and 1500 people (mixed genders and ages). The participants were expressing messages critical of a recent anti-corruption-related decision of the Constitutional Court. The SMM saw about 500 representatives of law enforcement at the site.

The SMM continued monitoring in Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Dnipro, Kharkiv and Chernivtsi.

*Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate

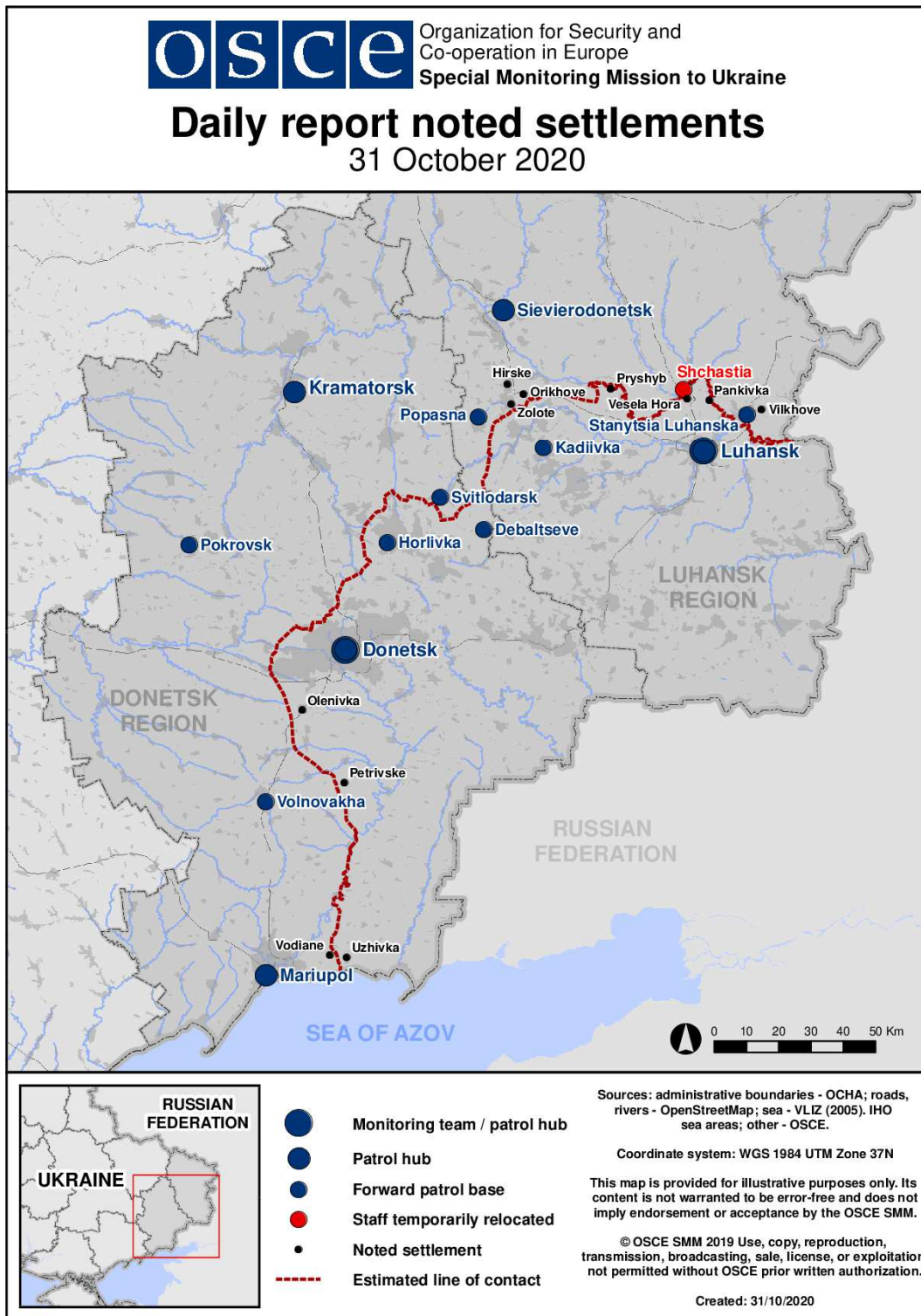
The SMM's monitoring and freedom of movement are restricted by security hazards and threats, including risks posed by mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other impediments – which vary from day to day. The SMM's mandate provides for safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. All signatories of the Package of Measures have agreed on the need for this safe and secure access, that restriction of the SMM's freedom of movement constitutes a violation, and on the need for rapid response to these violations. They have also agreed that the JCCC should contribute to such response and co-ordinate mine clearance. Nonetheless, the armed formations in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions frequently deny the SMM access to areas adjacent to Ukraine's border outside control of the Government (for example, see [SMM Daily Report 30 October 2020](#)). The SMM's operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions remain restricted following [the fatal incident of 23 April 2017 near Pryshyb](#); these restrictions continued to limit the Mission's observations.

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians' movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines, UXO and other obstacles.

⁵ Notice about the EECP's temporary closure from 15 October to 31 October 2020 was published on the website of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 13 October. On 28 October, Ukrainian Armed Forces published on their official Facebook page that the temporary closure of the EECP had been extended until 15 November 2020.

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions⁶



⁶ The SMM is deployed to ten locations throughout Ukraine – Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipro, Chernivtsi, Luhansk and Kyiv – as per Permanent Council Decision 1117 of 21 March 2014. This map of eastern Ukraine is meant for illustrative purposes and indicates locations mentioned in the report, as well as those where the SMM has offices (monitoring teams, patrol hubs and forward patrol bases) in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. (In red: a forward patrol base from which SMM staff have temporarily relocated based on recommendations of security experts from participating States, as well as SMM security considerations. The SMM uses the premises during daylight hours and also patrols in this settlement during daylight hours.)