

Daily Report 299/2020

16 December 2020¹

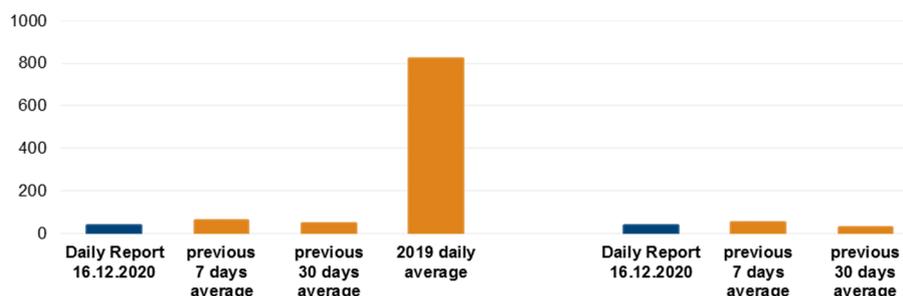
Summary

- The SMM recorded 31 ceasefire violations in Donetsk region. In the previous reporting period, it recorded no ceasefire violations in the region.
- The Mission recorded eight ceasefire violations in Luhansk region. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 21 ceasefire violations in the region.
- A man was injured by the detonation of an explosive object in Slovianoserbsk, Luhansk region.
- The SMM continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske and observed a calm situation inside all three.
- The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable the construction of and repairs to critical civilian infrastructure.
- The Mission continued following up on the situation of civilians, including at a checkpoint of the armed formations in Donetsk region and three entry-exit checkpoints and two checkpoints of the armed formations in Luhansk region.
- The SMM visited two border crossing points and monitored areas close to the border with the Russian Federation outside government control in Donetsk region.
- The SMM observed a calm situation in southern Kherson region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted.*

Ceasefire violations²

Number of recorded ceasefire violations³

Number of recorded explosions⁴



¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 15 December 2020. All times are in Eastern European Time.

² For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, the SMM camera in Petrivske was not operational, and heavy fog obscured the observations of almost all other SMM cameras along the contact line.

³ Including explosions

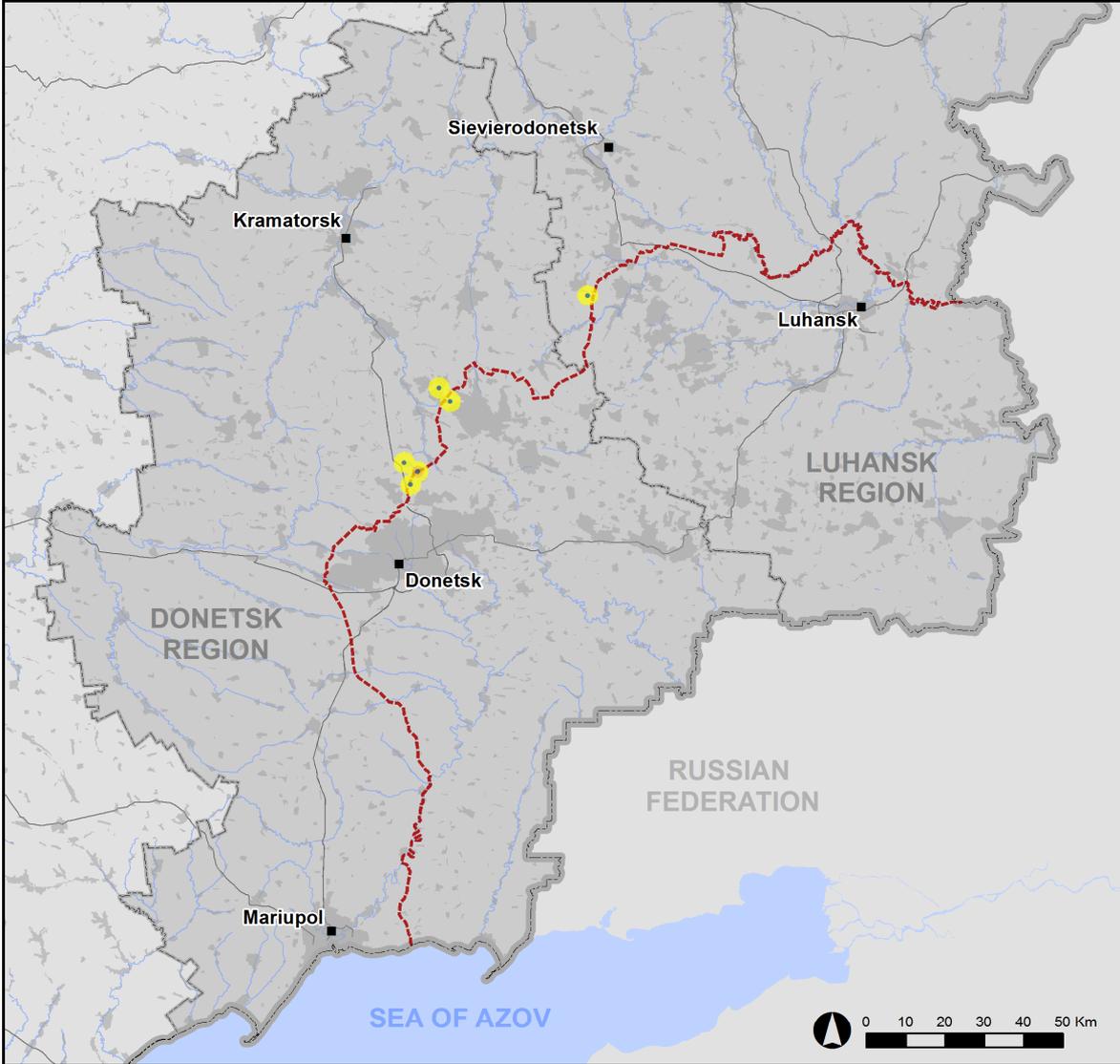
⁴ Including from unidentified weapons

Map of recorded ceasefire violations

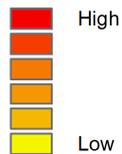


Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Ceasefire violations observed by the SMM 15 December 2020



Ceasefire violation concentration



- Explosion
- Settlement

..... Estimated line of contact

Sources: Administrative Boundaries - OCHA; Roads, Rivers - OpenStreetMap; Sea - VLIZ (2005). IHO Sea Areas; Other - OSCE.

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 37N

This map is provided for illustrative purposes only. Its content is not warranted to be error-free and does not imply endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE SMM.

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In Donetsk region, the Mission recorded 31 ceasefire violations, all undetermined explosions, three-quarters of which occurred during the day on 15 December at northerly directions of Yasynuvata (non-government-controlled, 16km north-east of Donetsk), including four near the Donetsk Filtration Station (DFS) (15km north of Donetsk) (see below). In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations in the region.

In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded eight ceasefire violations: five undetermined explosions in an area south-east of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk) and three bursts of heavy-machine-gun fire, assessed as a live-fire exercise, outside the security zone. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded 21 ceasefire violations in the region, all undetermined explosions.

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 3,722 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 1,729 explosions, 118 projectiles in flight, 51 muzzle flashes, 41 illumination flares and 1,783 bursts and shots).

Man injured by the detonation of an explosive object in Slovianoserbsk, Luhansk region

The SMM followed up on reports of a man injured by the detonation of an explosive object on 27 September in Slovianoserbsk (non-government-controlled, 28km north-west of Luhansk).

On 14 December, a man (in his forties) told the Mission over the phone that, on 27 September, he had been fishing on the Siverskyi Donets river bank near Slovianoserbsk and had stepped on an object which had subsequently exploded. He said that as a result he had lost the lower part of his left leg.

On 29 September, staff at a hospital in Slovianoserbsk told the SMM over the phone that, on 27 September, a man (in his forties) had been admitted with injuries consistent with those caused by the detonation of an explosive object and that he had been provided first aid and subsequently transferred to a hospital in non-government-controlled Luhansk city. On 1 October, the SMM spoke on the phone with a staff member (woman, age undetermined) of a hospital in Luhansk city who told the Mission that, on 27 September, a man with blast injuries had been transferred there from a hospital in Slovianoserbsk (see [SMM Daily Report of 15 December 2020](#) for a similar case in the area).

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske⁵

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

While positioned near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), the Mission heard two undetermined explosions at an assessed range of 3-5km west-north-west, assessed as controlled detonations of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Near the checkpoint, the SMM saw four members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them), two of whom twice walked inside the area to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned.

⁵ Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

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

Anti-tank mines in Zaitseve and mine hazard signs near Yasynuvata, Donetsk region

On 14 December, an SMM mid-range unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) again spotted 24 anti-tank mines laid across as well as 5m north and south of a road near residential houses on Poperechna Street, in a government-controlled area of Zaitseve (50km north-east of Donetsk), all assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed.

On 15 December, on the northern edge of Yasynuvata, the Mission saw for the first time two red triangular mine hazard signs with skull images on them, attached to trees on the northern side of the road.

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.

SMM facilitation of construction and repairs to critical civilian infrastructure

The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction of a power line between government-controlled Lopaskyne (23km north-west of Luhansk) and Lobacheve (17km north-west of Luhansk), repairs to a water conduit between government-controlled Raihorodka (34km north-west of Luhansk) and Lopaskyne, and demining activities near government-controlled Heivka (27km north-west of Luhansk), Hirske (63km west of Luhansk) and Myrna Dolyna (67km north-west of Luhansk).

The SMM continued to facilitate the operation of the DFS. While positioned about 2km south of Vasylivka (non-government-controlled, 20km north of Donetsk), the Mission heard four undetermined explosions assessed as within a 5km radius of the station.

Situation at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints

In Donetsk region, the Mission noted that checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk) was closed.

In Luhansk region, the SMM noted that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) near Stanytsia Luhanska was operational, with pedestrians queuing to travel in both directions.

The Mission also noted that the EECPs near Zolote and Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk) were operational but that the corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations south of the disengagement area near Zolote and 3km south-east of the bridge in Shchastia remained closed.

Border areas outside government control

While at a border crossing point near Uspenka (73km south-east of Donetsk) for about 25 minutes, the Mission observed eight cars (including six with “DPR” plates), a covered cargo truck (with “DPR” plates) and eight people (five women and three men, mixed ages) entering Ukraine. The SMM also saw two cars (including one with “DPR” plates), a covered cargo truck (with “DPR” plates), six buses (including five with “DPR” plates) and four people (two women and two men, mixed ages) exiting Ukraine. While there, the Mission also observed workers using three excavators and two concrete mixers.

While at a border crossing point near Ulianivske (61km south-east of Donetsk) for about 25 minutes, the SMM observed no cars or pedestrians entering or exiting Ukraine. While there, it also saw one worker operating an excavator,

The Mission also visited areas near the border with the Russian Federation outside government control near Novoivaniivka (57km south-east of Donetsk) and Novoielanchyk (53km south-east of Donetsk) and observed a calm situation.

Security situation in southern Kherson region

On 13 and 14 December, the SMM observed a calm situation at checkpoints near Chaplynka (77km south-east of Kherson) and Kalanchak (67 km south-east of Kherson), as well as in areas near Skadovsk (62km south-east of Kherson), Lazurne (62km south of Kherson) and Zaliznyi Port (62km south-west of Kherson), along the Black Sea coast.

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

*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, 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 Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (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 15 December 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:

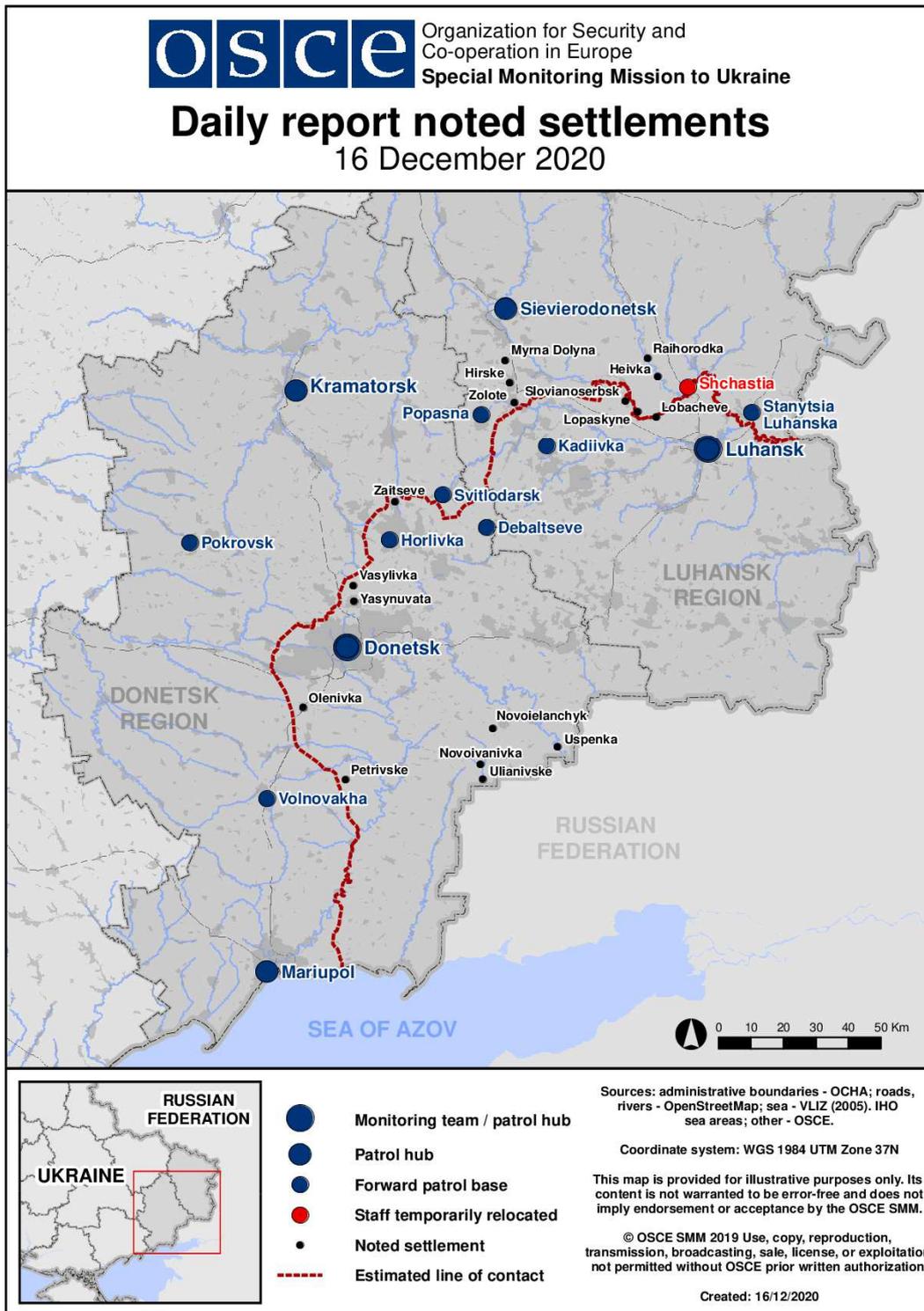
- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians’ movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines, UXO and other obstacles.

Table of ceasefire violations as of 15 December 2020⁶

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, Time
About 1.5km SSE of Vasylivka (non-government-controlled, 20km N of Donetsk)	3-5km W	Heard	4	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 10:41-10:45
About 500m NE of Kamianka (government-controlled, 20km N of Donetsk)	3-5km N	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 10:51-10:53
About 1km NW of the railway station in Yasynuvata (non-government-controlled, 16km NE of Donetsk)	6-8km N	Heard	5	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 12:20-12:23
	6-8km N	Heard	11	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 12:30-12:40
About 2km WSW of Zalizne (formerly Artemove, government-controlled, 42km NE of Donetsk)	3-4km NE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:39
About 500m E of Pivdenne (formerly Leninske, government-controlled, 40km NE of Donetsk)	3-4km SE	Heard	7	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 12:20-12:35
N edge of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km W of Luhansk)	5-8km SSE	Heard	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 20:57-21:00
	5-8km SSE	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 21:55-21:57
SE edge of Novoaidar (government-controlled, 49km NW of Luhansk)	3-5km ESE	Heard	3	Burst	Assessed as live-fire exercise	HMG	15-Dec, 10:27

⁶ The table only includes ceasefire violations directly observed by SMM patrols or recorded by the SMM cameras, and it may include those also assessed to be live-fire exercises, controlled detonations, etc. Details provided – in terms of distance, direction, weapons-type, etc. – are based on assessments provided by monitors on the ground and technical monitoring officers, and are not always necessarily precise. When information is not known (indicated with an “N/K”), the SMM was unable to ascertain such information due to distance, weather conditions technical limitations and/or other considerations. Ceasefire violations recorded by more than one patrol/camera and assessed to be the same are entered only once.

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions⁷



⁷ 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).