



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO THE REPORTS  
GIVEN BY AMBASSADORS KINNUNEN AND ÇEVİK

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen  
at the Permanent Council, Vienna, 17 February 2022

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

Like others before me I thank Ambassadors Çevik and Kinnunen for their reports to the Permanent Council, and also for the valuable work they and their teams continue to carry out. We are indeed proud of the work being done, not least under the present circumstances. Ambassadors, we encourage you to continue the focus on fulfilling your mandates, on the integrity and operationality of the work and on staff security.

Mr. Chair,

Ambassador Çevik's report is a testimony to the importance of the SMM and its mandated task: to contribute to reducing tensions and to help foster peace, stability and security in Ukraine, as well as to monitor and support the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments. This is done in an impartial manner, as described by Ambassador Çevik.

We take note that the reporting period was characterized by a volatile security situation, with a higher number of average daily ceasefire violations recorded until 22 December last year, compared to the previous 126 days. We welcome the decrease in ceasefire violations following the 22 December meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, where participants expressed their strong determination to fully adhere to the 22 July 2020 Measures agreement. This can be repeated. Norway calls on all parties to show the political will to seek a durable ceasefire.

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We share the SMM's concern about the increase in the use of Minsk proscribed weapons and condemn the presence of heavy weapons in and near residential areas. We regret the marked increase in the number of civilian casualties due to shelling, as well as damage to civilian objects and infrastructure.

We witness with great dismay that the movement of civilians across the contact line continues to be severely restricted. We call for a full re-opening of the existing crossing routes in order to restore people's ability to live their lives without being unduly hindered by closures and restrictions.

Again, we urge all parties to enable the SMM to fulfil its mandate by providing unhindered access to all parts of Ukraine's territory. Targeting of the Mission's assets and technical means of observation, which are essential to its operations, must be stopped.

Mr. Chairman,

The threatening security situation in and around Ukraine is alarming. Norway is deeply concerned by the Russian Federation's large-scale military build-up, and found it wise and timely that the OSCE Secretary General provided participating states with Early Warning this week.

Norway calls on Russia to de-escalate and to engage in dialogue, constructively and in good faith, through all available channels, including those evoked last week under the Vienna document chapter III. Norway also supports the OSCE Chairmanship's Renewed European Security Dialogue initiative.

It remains a major obstacle that Russia falsely seeks to portray the conflict in Eastern Ukraine as an internal, Ukrainian conflict. The Minsk agreements, signed by the Russian Federation state that the TCG consists of representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE. It is important that all three parties engage constructively in its work aimed at ending the conflict through a political settlement and implementation of the Minsk agreements. Norway supports ambassador Kinnunen's efforts to reinvigorate the talks of the TCG and find that it is high time that the meetings can take place face-to face.

As has been confirmed during the meeting, the Russian State Duma has voted in favour of Russian recognition of the so-called "people's republics" in Donetsk and Luhansk. Norway is concerned, as this would jeopardise the Minsk process and seriously undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Norway upholds a European security order based on international law and national sovereignty. These principles have repeatedly been invoked by Russia in our discussions. Norway calls on Russia to respect these principles when it comes to Ukraine.

Thank you.