



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1002 Vienna, 29 May 2014

EU Statement on the Violation of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine

We are alarmed by the increasing violence and intimidation in Eastern parts of Ukraine that has led to many killed and wounded in particular in Donetsk over the last few days. Violent aggression, kidnappings and provocations by pro-Russian separatists are creating a climate of fear, chaos and oppression. Illegal occupation of infrastructure and public facilities are continuing. Reports about trucks carrying weapons and illegally crossing the border from the Russian side are of deep concern. We call for an end to all violence and provocations. We encourage the Ukrainian authorities to continue to pursue their law and order operations in a measured manner.

We express our deep concern about the abduction of civilian observers from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission near Donetsk. We call for their release and ask all parties, in particular the Russian Federation, to use their influence and do their utmost to ensure this, and publicly condemn such acts.

The media freedom situation has deteriorated dramatically in Crimea and the two Eastern regions as reported by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Her comprehensive report published on 23 May mentions more than 300 cases of violence against members of the media since November 2013. And such cases continue to occur. We deplore the killing of an Italian photojournalist and his assistant on 24 May near Slovyansk and call on the authorities to swiftly and thoroughly investigate the circumstances of this attack and to hold accountable those responsible for it.

Mr Chairman, the successful holding of Presidential elections constitutes a major step towards the objective of de-escalating tensions and restoring security for all Ukrainians. We reaffirm our commitment to the Geneva Joint Statement that should further contribute to these objectives. We commend the efforts undertaken so far by the Ukrainian authorities to implement it.

We again call on the Russian Federation to take actions to fully implement the Geneva Joint Statement. The EU expects Russia to use its leverage on the armed separatists to de-escalate the situation in Eastern Ukraine; to continue the withdrawal of its armed forces from the Ukrainian border; and to immediately withdraw the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil. The Russian Federation should as a matter of priority prevent the crossing of separatists and weapons into Ukraine.

All sides should redouble their efforts for a political solution of the crisis and an end to the violence and tension in Eastern Ukraine, including disarmament of all illegal armed groups and amnesty for those who have surrendered their arms voluntarily and have not committed serious crimes.

We commend the role of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in assisting in the implementation of the Geneva Joint Statement and the complementary efforts of the OSCE Chairmanship and other OSCE structures, including the Project Coordinator in Ukraine, while ensuring Ukrainian ownership. We welcome the ratification by the Verkhovna Rada of the Memorandum of Understanding, which is needed to facilitate the SMM's operations and help secure the status of mission members.

We encourage the Ukrainian authorities and the newly elected President to continue to reach out to the population and civil society of all regions of Ukraine, including in the framework of the round tables of national dialogue supported by the OSCE. In relation to this, we welcome the President elect's intention to travel to the Donbas region. Reform efforts need to continue, including as regards the judiciary, the prosecutor's office and the security sector – and the EU stands ready to support them. The rights of persons belonging to national

minorities need to be fully ensured in line with the relevant standards of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE. We welcome the commitment of the Government of Ukraine in this regard.

We note with concern the deteriorating human rights situation in Crimea since its illegal annexation by Russia. The arrest of the Ukrainian film director and civil society activist Oleg Sentsov charged with terrorism in Simferopol on 11 May is a cause for concern.

The EU stands firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to recognise these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, 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+, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidates ALBANIA and 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 and Montenegro 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.