



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No 1005 Vienna, 19 June 2014

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

Mr Chairman, during the last week we have witnessed a further escalation of violence in some parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts that is of deep concern to the European Union. In particular, we condemn the downing of a military plane killing 49 Ukrainian servicemen and crew members near the city of Luhansk on 14 June. Furthermore, we find it completely unacceptable that three tanks crossed the border from Russia into Ukraine on 12 June. Violent aggression and provocations by pro-Russian separatists continue unabated. Killings, kidnappings, intimidation, torture and ill-treatment, other human rights abuses and illegal occupation of public buildings have become everyday events. The abduction of a group of Ukrainian orphans, forcibly taken to Russia by armed groups, even if they reportedly returned to Ukraine, has taken these crimes into a new and disturbing area.

Responding to the recent developments, the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy stated on 14 June, and I quote, "While legitimate force must always be used with restraint, there is no doubt that the Ukrainian Government has an obligation and a duty to restore order within its borders. There is equally no doubt that the armed fighters that are terrorising and disrupting the lives of citizens in Ukraine, are enjoying external support, including arms supply and reinforcement through foreign fighters. As a neighbouring State Russia bears a primary responsibility in ensuring that any such traffic and external support through its borders is immediately stopped. Any other attitude, and public ambiguity in relation to what is happening, is not compatible with Russia's international obligations within the OSCE or the UN", end of quote.

We continue to call on the Russian Federation to publicly condemn the criminal acts of violence and provocations by armed pro-Russian separatists; and call upon these groups to lay down their arms, and halt their criminal activities. Russia should withdraw its support to them and stop interfering in Ukraine. We also reiterate our demand to Russia to withdraw the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil with no further delay.

The escalation of violence takes place against the backdrop of recent positive developments in connection with the inauguration of President Poroshenko. We commend President Poroshenko for presenting a peace plan and note the proposal of a ceasefire as a first step in the implementation of this plan. We welcome contacts between Ukraine and Russia at the highest political level. We urge the Russian Federation to contribute to facilitating an environment conducive to a peaceful settlement and to take concrete steps to that end in accordance with its commitments in the Geneva Joint Statement. We express our hope that the trilateral talks in Kyiv between Ukraine, Russia and the OSCE-Chairmanship will soon achieve results in bringing an end to the violence.

The EU will continue its efforts to assist Ukraine in overcoming the crisis, and in promoting growth and development. We are looking forward to the signing of the economic part of the Association Agreement with Ukraine, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. We express our hope that a compromise will be found that will ensure the resumption of gas supply from Russia. We also expect the Russian Federation to participate in efforts to stabilise the Ukrainian economy.

Mr Chairman, the activities of the armed pro-Russian separatists are the root cause of the serious human suffering experienced by the civilian population in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. Even though many are blocked from leaving their place of residence, the number of internally displaced persons is increasing. We are concerned by the damage to water supply facilities near

Sloviansk that threatens the supply to Donetsk city and surroundings as mentioned in reports by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM).

We continue to strongly condemn the abductions of civilian observers from the SMM in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts that happened three weeks ago. We reiterate our call for their immediate and unconditional release and we commend the SMM leadership for their tireless efforts to this end. We urge all parties, in particular the Russian Federation, to use their influence to assist with this and to publicly call for their release at the highest political level.

We continue to express our strong support to the ongoing efforts of the OSCE and the Chairmanship in Office, in the de-escalation of the situation in Ukraine. The SMM continues to play a crucial role and we look forward to the extension of the Mission's mandate. We call for all OSCE monitors and other OSCE staff to have safe and free access throughout Ukraine to fulfill their mandate.

The OSCE could play an important supportive role in the continuation of an inclusive Ukrainian-led and -owned process of national dialogue with the participation of all relevant stakeholders in all regions. We are looking forward to the timely resumption of this dialogue.

We express our concern about the attack on the Russian Embassy in Kyiv on 14 June. While we note that the Ukrainian authorities have distanced themselves from these acts, we call on them to take all necessary measures to provide adequate protection.

Mr Chairman, 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* and 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, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia 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.