

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/1257/21

5 August 2021

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1328th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 August 2021

**On the deteriorating situation in Ukraine and the continued non-implementation by the
Ukrainian authorities of the Minsk agreements**

Madam Chairperson,

The situation in Ukraine still gives no cause for optimism. The country's authorities are stubbornly pursuing a policy that complicates the settlement of the crisis in Donbas and creates ever more risks of division within Ukrainian society.

On 30 July Ukraine adopted its Foreign Policy Strategy. This was announced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dmytro Kuleba, at a briefing following the field meeting of the National Security and Defence Council in Kramatorsk. The document establishes the possibility of resolving the conflict in Donbas by force. Among the foreign policy priorities, almost all are related in one way or another to strengthening the country's military capabilities. Instead of measures aimed at a peaceful settlement of the internal Ukrainian crisis and the achievement of internal national reconciliation, the main goals are ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, countering the aggressive policy of Russia and pursuing membership of the European Union and NATO.

Over in Kyiv, they are once again sparing no effort to blame Russia for Ukraine's inaction in terms of implementing the Minsk agreements.

Attempts to deny the commonality of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples continue as a kind of ideological framework. In his recent article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, Mr. Kuleba set out to refute the points made in the article by Russian President, Vladimir Putin, on the historical and spiritual unity of the peoples of Russia and Ukraine, stating that the Ukrainian Government intends to continue the course of forceful severance of its relations with Russia. However, Ukraine's population does not agree with this anti-Russian vision. Rating Group Ukraine conducted a survey among the country's residents about their attitude to Putin's words. The conclusions drawn in the Russian President's article were supported by 41 per cent of people, and in eastern Ukraine 65 per cent agree with these conclusions. Significantly, there is very considerable support – 44 per cent – among young people (18- to 29-year-olds).

However, the Ukrainian leadership is guided mainly by the views of nationalist circles. The destruction and desecration of the historical heritage continues, with the aim of transforming the identity of

the country's inhabitants. Thus, the authorities in Lviv have come up with another action to eradicate the memory of the fight against Nazism. The monument on the Hill of Glory has already been demolished in that city. Plans are now afoot to destroy war graves at the Marsove Pole (Field of Mars) by dismantling the central element of the memorial, namely the Order of the Great Patriotic War. A note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia was sent to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry demanding that Ukraine comply with its international obligations and national legislation to protect and preserve war memorials. Such obligations are enshrined, among other places, in the Agreement on Perpetuating the Memory of the Courage and Heroism of the Peoples of the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 (of 3 September 2011), to which Ukraine is a signatory. We urge the leadership of Ukraine to stop falsifying history and seeking to deprive Ukrainian citizens of Victory in the Great Patriotic War, a victory achieved through the joint efforts of all the peoples of the Soviet Union.

Tensions remain and are even escalating in the east of the country. According to the reports of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), 1,440 ceasefire violations occurred in Donbas over the past week, including 214 explosions. The SMM was finally able to confirm civilian injuries that had occurred earlier. Two women were injured by an explosion in the Budonivskyi district of the city of Donetsk on 17 July. A total of 49 civilian casualties have been recorded by the Mission since the beginning of this year, 12 of them fatalities.

Residential buildings and other infrastructure facilities regularly come under fire from the Ukrainian army. The SMM monitors spotted damage to a single-storey residential building in the Petrovskyi district of the city of Donetsk. The shelling came from a north-westerly direction, where Ukrainian armed forces' positions are located. Overall, the statistics cited by the Mission since the beginning of 2021 are disappointing: 81 civilian objects have been damaged, including critical systems, residential buildings, schools and hospitals. The overwhelming majority of this destruction has occurred in the territory of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

According to the Donetsk authorities, on 2 August the Ukrainian armed forces opened mortar fire on the northern suburbs of the city. The village of Vesele near Donetsk airport was hit. On the same day, two civilians were injured in the village of Kominternove to the south of Donetsk as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces. Despite the efforts of the militia to use the co-ordination mechanism for quickly establishing a ceasefire, all their appeals were ignored by the Ukrainian side. We would remind you that the use of a co-ordination mechanism on the basis of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination in its current setting (that is, with the participation of representatives of the Ukrainian armed forces and of the armed formations of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions) is provided for in the measures for supporting the ceasefire, which were agreed on by the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) on 22 July 2020. But since then, the Ukrainian authorities have stubbornly refused to implement this element of the arrangements.

The situation at checkpoints for crossing the line of contact remains extremely difficult for the civilian population. The Ukrainian Government is still unwilling to negotiate the parameters for the functioning of these checkpoints with the representatives of Donbas in the TCG. The SMM reported the case of a woman who had her money confiscated by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine while trying to cross the line of contact. What is more, she was detained by the Ukrainian police after having spoken to the OSCE monitors.

Under these circumstances, the SMM has an increasing role in quickly establishing the facts about the security situation in Donbas and also in monitoring the full impact of the socio-economic and transport blockade of the region by the Ukrainian Government. We would remind you that the full resumption of

socio-economic ties, including social transfers such as pension payments and other payments, is explicitly provided for in paragraph 8 of the Minsk Package of Measures.

It is extremely important to ensure balanced monitoring on both sides of the line of contact. The SMM's authority and credibility depend directly on the proper and uninterrupted fulfilment of its mandate. We would point out that it is unacceptable for the Mission to exceed its mandate, in particular by including in its reports information regarding the territories of States bordering Ukraine.

A long-term political settlement of the internal Ukrainian crisis is dependent on efforts in good faith by the Ukrainian Government to find practical ways of implementing the Minsk Package of Measures in direct dialogue with the representatives of Donbas in the TCG. These obligations are enshrined in United Nations Security Council resolution 2202 and have become part of international law. It is important to support the negotiation process and assist the Ukrainian Government and the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk in reaching compromises. We call on all of Ukraine's international partners to bring the necessary influence to bear on the leadership in Kyiv in order to induce it to take real steps to achieve sustainable peace and social harmony in the country.

Thank you for your attention.