



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to Ambassador Gyorgy Varga,  
Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission  
at two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,  
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1334<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,  
2 September 2021

**Madame Chairperson,**

Let me welcome Ambassador György Varga back to the Permanent Council and thank him and his team for the work done under difficult conditions created by the host State.

Unfortunately, on the categorical demand by the Russian Federation the duration of the regular mandate of the Border Observer Mission was shortened twofold. We regret that in view of this the Mission has faced significant administrative consequences. As it is mentioned in the Chief Observer's report, the time pressure caused by the two-month mandate period prevented the CO to concentrate on such a crucially important priority as maintaining the operational capability.

This situation clearly indicates that Russia as a party to the conflict is not interested in having comprehensive and unbiased monitoring at the border and is bent on continuing fueling the conflict to achieve geopolitical goals.

The BOM's activities have significantly contributed to the OSCE's efforts to ensure permanent monitoring and verification along the respective segment of the Russia-Ukraine border, as envisaged by the Minsk agreements. Despite the restrictions and other difficulties artificially created by the host country (limited area of movement, "blind spots", ban on use of technical means etc.), the Mission continues to keep us informed about movements through the two out of eleven BCPs along the segment of the Russian-Ukrainian border entirely controlled by Russia on both sides.

Since the deployment of the Mission in 2014, it has observed a total of almost forty thousand people in military-style outfit, hundreds of thousands of trucks, dozens of thousands of cargo minivans and trains. All this begs the question: how does this correspond with the international commitments undertaken by Russia under the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept, in particular to enhance the security of travel documents, reduce the threat of terrorism, transnational organized crime, illegal migration and smuggling and trafficking in weapons, drugs and human beings?

On 12 August, the Mission observed the hundredth so-called «Russian humanitarian convoy» arriving from Russia. Every single of them entered the territory of Ukraine in breach of international law and Russia's commitments as an OSCE participating state. Regrettably, the Mission's mandate doesn't allow to perform any inspection of the contents of these «convoys». In this regard, we note with concern Russia's continuous attempts to hide the real content of the deliveries.

Taking into account the fact that the data reported by the Mission relates to the results of monitoring at only two official BCPs out of eleven along the 409km segment of the border beyond the control of the government of Ukraine, one can only imagine the magnitude of the flow of mercenaries and military equipment illegally sent by Russia to eastern Ukraine.

It should be noted in this connection that the SMM extensively reported on the presence in the temporarily occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine of Russian military and military-type equipment, including electronic warfare systems, 122mm multiple launch rocket systems, surface-to-air air missile systems, self-propelled howitzers and 122mm towed howitzers and others.

The Russian Federation continues keeping silence when asked by participating States to explain how the sophisticated weapons and military equipment, used exclusively by the Russian Armed Forces or produced in Russia, made its way to Ukraine. It is obvious that such equipment crossed the border at places where there are no border crossing facilities at all or where there is a lack of comprehensive OSCE monitoring.

**Madame Chairperson,**

The abovementioned facts provided by the BOM and the SMM, especially against the background of the latest deteriorating developments in the conflict zone, serve us, OSCE participating States, as a reminder on the critical importance of transparency at the Russian-Ukrainian border.

We would encourage the Chairmanship once again to keep organizing regular informal consultations involving representatives of TNTD and CPC of the OSCE Secretariat and the SMM in order to seek ways to increase transparency at the state border between Ukraine and Russia, which would allow the OSCE as an impartial actor to ensure effective monitoring, verification and reporting as well as implementation of the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept.

We call on Russia to return to constructive approach in this regard. Extending the mandate and expanding the OSCE presence at the entire length of the respective segment of the border would be a step on the right direction in terms of achieving progress in the politico-diplomatic, peaceful resolution of the conflict.

**Thank you, madame Chairperson.**