



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 853th FSC Plenary Meeting

(17 May 2017 at 10.00, Hofburg)

(Agenda item 2)

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Colleagues,

With an interest and hope, Ukraine awaits the next meeting in the Normandy format which is considered as an instrument for mobilizing a global solidarity with Ukraine in the process of resolving the crisis in and around Ukraine. To prepare the meeting President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine reached an agreement with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to conduct bilateral negotiations in Berlin at the end of the week. As has become known a new President of France Emmanuel Macron recently hold talks with the Chancellor of Germany. Among the topics of their negotiations were expected to be the issues of the Normandy format and Ukraine. In his comments President Poroshenko pointed out that there are many new conditions that must be taken into account in the Normandy format. The President reminded that Russia recognized fake documents of the so-called «DPR» and «LPR» at the state level, “confiscated” property of the Ukrainian state and individuals in the occupied territories, besides, the ruble zone in the occupied territories is being expanded. Ukrainian side underlined also the necessity of approving the roadmap of the Minsk process.

Distinguished Colleagues,

We can't help today recalling the tragedy of May 13 in Avdiivka when 4 civilians were killed and 1 wounded as a result of shelling of a private house by the 122 mm artillery shell by militants from the direction of settlement Spartak, controlled by pro-Russian militants. Because of this cynical military crime of the occupants two children became orphans. This tragic incident is one of the clear indications of lack of security situation improvement in Donbas. Unfortunately, the past week has not become an exclusion in the general trend of preparation of the hybrid Russian forces to further violent activities.

If we refer to SMM reports they can easily dispel doubts who actually starts shooting first. According to the daily Report of 13 May, on the evening of 11 May the SMM camera at the “DPR”-controlled Oktiabr mine (Donetsk city) recorded 16 projectiles in flight from east to west, followed by one projectile in flight from west to east.

On the same evening the SMM camera in Shyrokyne (20km east of Mariupol) recorded, in sequence, three tracer rounds of unknown weapons in flight from east to west, and only after that four tracer rounds in flight from west to east.

One more example, on the night of 11 May the SMM camera in government-controlled Stanytsia Luhanska recorded, in sequence, two heavy-machine-gun tracer rounds in flight from south-south-east to north-north-east.

These three cases with legibly described sequences of shelling clearly shows that the pro-Russian militants, provoking the UAF, are the first to begin shelling, thus constantly violating the reached agreements on armistice.

During the reported period the hybrid Russian forces have violated ceasefire **about 330** times, more than one third of which was carried out by the Minsk-proscribed weapons, mostly mortars. The past week *took lives of 2 Ukrainian servicemen and 4 civilians. 22 soldiers and 6 civilian were wounded.*

Distinguished Colleagues,

According to the competent bodies of Ukraine, a supply of the armored equipment to the 3rd separate motorized infantry brigade of the 1st Army Corps of the hybrid Russian forces has been recently completed. During the last month, this brigade has received about 20 infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers and 6 tanks. Another 8 armored vehicles are coming soon.

While training of the operators of the antitank missile systems being intensified, militants have started use of this kind of weapon more frequently. Intensified training and weapons supply are being carried out with the active assistance by instructors and commanders of the regular Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in firing grounds, including in the vicinity of the settlement of Mospine (Donetsk region).

Moreover, the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces plans to supply four patrol boats – project 12150 “Mongoose” and project 12200 “Sobol” – to the so called “DPR Azov flotilla” in June 2017.

As our Russian counterparts have been doing on numerous occasions at the previous FSC meetings we would like to mention today the topic of “discipline” in hybrid Russian forces, or, to be precise, its lack among the occupants. The commanding officers of the both Army Corps of the hybrid Russian forces in Donbas are concerned by the extremely high level of incidents connected with the operation of the military equipment. According to reports by the so called “law enforcement agencies” and “military police” of the “DPR/LPR”, the military wheeled and tracked vehicles are involved very often in numerous road incidents. For instance, in the 1st AC almost one third of the incidents take place in military parking lots and motor pools. On the bases of an assessment of the situation militant commanders came to a conclusion that a lack of professionalism of drivers and vehicles’ teams and a low level of military discipline and conduct are the reason of majority of the incidents. Half of them were associated with the alcoholism and numbers of other violations of military and criminal codes.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The Delegation of Ukraine has reiterated many times before our deep concern regarding continuous presence of Russian military equipment and its illicit supply to Ukraine. In this regard, it is worth having a look at the recent SMM reports which read the following. On 11 May in Brianka (in the security zone near Luhansk) the SMM saw one stationary armoured artillery reconnaissance vehicle (SNAR-10) based on armoured personnel carrier (APC) (MT-LB) chassis.

On 13 May the SMM saw a UAV (Orlan-10) flying over the road from Makiivka to Donetsk city. Those two cases are another example among many other cases when sophisticated Russian military equipment registered in the possession of pro-Russian militants.

The SMM continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum, the Package of Measures and its Addendum. One more example of weapons observed in violation of the respective withdrawal lines is recorded in the last SMM weekly report, which says that monitors fixed 273 such occasions (255 in nongovernment controlled areas and 18 in government-controlled areas). Russian officer of the JCCC told the SMM that a letter had been sent to “LPR” and “DPR” members with regard to these and other similar violations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, but did not outline any concrete steps taken to remedy them. In Luhansk city a senior “LPR” member met with the SMM, but did not provide steps to remedy the violations reported by the SMM. In Donetsk city a senior “DPR” member refused to meet with the SMM. According to the SMM, such violations as well as “LPR” and “DPR” officials' behaviour undermine their credibility as signatories of the Minsk Agreements.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The key priority for OSCE today is to insure safe and secure conditions for SMM monitors. A strict commitment to this task was expressed by many delegations especially in the aftermath of the deadly incident held near “LPR”-controlled Pryshyb village on 23 April. Therefore, we cannot but quote some fragments from SMM reports concerning restrictions of the SMM monitors' freedom of movement that envisaged by the SMM Mandate.

The OSCE SMM to Ukraine continues to encounter significant limitations in the occupied areas that impede proper monitoring and distort the real situation on the ground. Access of SMM observers is denied or hindered, the SMM teams encounter threats and intimidations, are imposed escorts and restrictions on their visits. Such limitations and restrictions violate the mandate of the SMM and its ability to report objectively on the situation on the ground.

During 6-9 May, cases of restrictions on freedom of SMM movement by IAF were recorded twice more than on the territory controlled by the UAF.

According to the SMM daily report of 11 May, 2017 two cases of denial of access were registered on 10 May, both on the territory not controlled by the Ukrainian government.

On 11 May, while the SMM attempted to reach the camera site in Petrivske, an armed “DPR” member at a checkpoint demanded the names and gender of the patrol members and insisted on escorting the SMM. The same day armed “DPR” members stopped the SMM at an entry-exit checkpoint south of “DPR”-controlled

Petrovskiy district of Donetsk city and checked the interior of an SMM trailer. After 19 minutes the SMM was allowed to pass.

In accordance with the SMM daily report of 13 May, while the SMM attempted to reach the camera site in Petrivske, an armed “DPR” member at a checkpoint demanded to know the gender of the patrol members.

On 14 May the SMM experienced at least four denials of access, all in non-government-controlled areas of the Donetsk region. On two occasions SMM patrols were not allowed to pass checkpoints in the Petrovskiy district of Donetsk city. Additionally, the SMM was prevented from entering two Heavy Weapon Holding Areas.

According to the SMM daily report of 15 May, on 13 and 14 May 12 cases of denial of SMM access were registered, among them only 2 – in the territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine.

According to the last SMM weekly report of 10 May, during the previous week the Mission’s freedom of movement was restricted 42 times, while only two of those happened in government-controlled areas.

Distinguished colleagues,

As we have stated many times before Ukraine is fully committed to full and faithful implementation of the Minsk agreements. In this respect we call on the Russian Federation to exercise its responsibility in implementing the Minsk agreements, in particular their security provisions on comprehensive cease-fire, withdrawal of forces and full access of the SMM for monitoring. We urge Russia to pull out its forces from Ukraine, halt its support to the illegal armed formations in Donbas region of Ukraine as well as its military build-up along Ukraine’s south-eastern borders.

The conflict instigated and fuelled by the Russian Federation will not be resolved until the Russian forces get out of the territory of Ukraine. Therefore we urge Russia to return to the tenets of the international law, to cease its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.