



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 778-th FSC Plenary Meeting
(4 February 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)**

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine is greatly alarmed by the ongoing offensive by the Russia-backed militants in Donbas along the contact line in contempt of the calls for an immediate cease-fire and full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The gangs resort to shellings by heavy artillery of towns and villages in the attempts to expand the territory of their control. We strongly condemn these actions of the Russia-backed militants as they deepen human sufferings and intentionally delay the prospects for peace.

On 31 January the representatives of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts who came to Minsk to meet with the Trilateral Contact Group hijacked the meeting by demanding revision of the Minsk agreements, which is unacceptable.

On 1 February 2015 President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko held a phone conversation with Federal Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and President of France Francois Hollande in which they expressed regret over the absence of progress following the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group in Minsk.

We expect that this destructive behavior will find adequate reaction from the Russian Federation as a signatory of the Minsk agreements to seek immediate progress in their full implementation.

Distinguished colleagues,

The Russian aggression against Ukraine, which resulted in illegal occupation and annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as escalation in Ukraine's east, continues. The consequences of the aggression are grave - thousands of deaths and widespread destructions in Ukraine's Donbas, a serious deterioration of the situation on the Crimean peninsula in the human rights sphere, persecution on political and ethnic grounds are becoming a fact of everyday life in the Crimea under the Russian occupation, a significant damage to European security and principles, which underpin peace and stability.

With regard to the presentation on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies at this Forum made by Ambassador Phillip Griffiths, Head of Secretariat of the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Ukrainian delegation again draws attention of the OSCE participating States to Russia's flagrant violation of the export regime. The illegal international transfers of military goods and equipment from the Russian Federation to the occupied Crimea and across the uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian border to Russia-backed militant groups in the east of Ukraine violate numerous Russia's international obligations. Such illegal transfers include not only small arms and light weapons but also heavy armaments such as armoured trucks and vehicles, armoured personnel carriers, main battle tanks, multiple launch rocket systems, man portable air defence systems.

Distinguished colleagues,

Despite consistent calls from Ukraine and its international partners, the Russian Federation remains in breach of its commitments pursuant to a number of OSCE instruments in politico-military dimension; no meaningful steps were made by the Russian side to enable de-escalation and peaceful resolution of the situation in the east of Ukraine. More and more innocent civilians are paying their lives for irresponsible politico-military adventure of the Russian Federation, aimed at destabilizing Ukraine and undermining its statehood.

Since the last FSC meeting the security situation in Donbas remained very tense and tended to further aggravation. The number and intensity of militant's attacks have significantly increased. The most difficult situation is in the area of Debaltseve and settlements Schastya, Avdiivka, Horlivka, Vuglehirsk, Stanytsya Luhanska and the city of Mariupol. The heinous attack committed by the terrorists against the peaceful city of Mariupol with the use of Grad missiles on 24 January is now followed by continuing attacks with the use of heavy artillery.

Let me bring to your attention some facts of continuous violations by the pro-Russian terrorist groups, which were registered from 29 January till 3 February:

-on 29 January observers of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) reported in different places of "DPR"-controlled areas the movement of tanks, armored vehicles, self-propelled howitzers, and military transport vehicles with towed artillery near the towns of Donetsk, Makiivka, Zuhres and village of Ternove;

-on 30 January as a result of incessant attacks on Debaltseve and Vuglehirsk 3 civilians were killed and 7 people were wounded;

-on 31 January along the entire line of contact, starting from the Luhansk region and ending in the city of Mariupol, in the ATO area, 15 Ukrainian servicemen were killed and 30 wounded;

-on 1 February the pro-Russian terrorist forces continued shelling positions of the ATO forces and settlements. Militants fired at Debaltseve, Nikishino, Chernukhino and Zolote from the artillery systems. 15 civilians were killed and 32 wounded during the past weekend;

-on 2 February four tactical terrorist groups stormed the town of Debaltseve. The militants transferred to Debaltseve up to 1200 soldiers and 50 armored vehicles and continued to strengthen its positions, trying to push out the Ukrainian army from Debaltseve. The attacks on Debaltseve were carried out in two converging directions through settlements of Chernukhino and Vuglehirsk with the aim to force the Ukrainian units to withdraw towards the north. Up to 3,500 militants, 35 tanks, 90 armored combat vehicles of the separatists were involved in active operations near Debaltseve. The action of four pro-Russian terrorist tactical groups was supported by three artillery groups of up to 60 cannons and 32 units of multiple launch rocket systems;

-on 3 February militants continued to carry out attacks on positions of the ATO forces with the use of all kinds of weapons along the entire line of contact. These attacks were aimed at the residential quarters and infrastructure of the settlements in order to put the responsibility on the ATO forces. The villages that border the ATO area remain under the constant fire of pro-Russian terrorist groups.

-during the whole week the pro-Russian terrorist forces continued shelling of the town of Schastya (Luhansk oblast) where the regional power plant is located. The aim of these attacks is to cut off the supply of electricity to the citizens of Luhansk and nearby areas.

Tragically, the Ukrainian citizens continue to lose their lives. **118** civilians were killed and **237** wounded as a result of terrorist acts committed by militants in January 2015 in Donbas.

Mr. Chairman,

While facing this enormous tragedy, Ukraine continues to see a political solution as the only way out of this conflict. We urge the Russian Federation to avoid further escalation of hostilities, to implement fully and without delay its commitments under the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, as the only effective means for a peaceful sustainable solution based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Russia-backed militants together with Russian troops, which continue to remain on our soil, must cease their military actions and stop shelling of civilian areas. We urge immediate cease-fire, withdrawal of heavy weaponry and implementation of other provisions of the Minsk agreements in their entirety. We urge the Russian Federation to cease its illegal supplies of weapons and equipment, and halt the flow of the so called “volunteers” into our sovereign territory through re-establishing effective control at the border under the OSCE monitoring.

We call on Russia to back up its numerous peaceful declarations by practical and immediate steps of de-escalation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.