



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 792 Vienna, 17 June 2015

EU Statement on the Unusual Military Activities of the Russian Federation and the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States reiterate our strong support for all diplomatic efforts, including the Trilateral Contact Group and the Normandy format, aimed at achieving a sustainable political solution to the crisis in and around Ukraine which must be based on full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

We remain deeply worried by the continuing significant deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in some parts of Donbas. The Russia-backed separatists' attack on Marinka on 3 June constitutes the most serious violation of the ceasefire regime since the signature of the Minsk agreements in February. Despite the warnings of the international community that renewed intense fighting risks unleashing a new spiral of violence and human suffering, the SMM continues to observe large concentrations of military hardware in areas controlled by the separatists.

Such negative developments are coupled with continued incompliance of the sides with their commitments under the Minsk agreements to withdraw all heavy weapons from the exclusion zone and increasing number of ceasefire violations along the line of contact, in particular around Donetsk airport and in the vicinity of Shyrokyne.

We reiterate that any attempts by the separatists to gain control of additional territory will be a gross violation of the Minsk agreements and seriously undermine all efforts promoting sustainable political resolution. The ceasefire must be fully respected and all heavy weapons withdrawn and kept in storage sites open to regular verification by the SMM. The implementation of the Minsk agreements, to which all sides have declared their commitment, can only succeed on the basis of such a ceasefire, permanent withdrawal of heavy weapons and regular and effective monitoring and verification. We underline Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. We also expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full.

Furthermore, we reiterate that effective and comprehensive monitoring of the Russian-Ukrainian state border should be an integral part of a sustainable political solution, which fully upholds OSCE principles, and re-establishes Ukrainian control over its sovereign territory, including the border. We regret that the separatists continue to prevent the SMM from gaining full access to the border areas. We call on Russia to use its influence with the separatists to ensure the SMM has unfettered access and the necessary security

conditions to permit full and effective monitoring of areas of Ukraine's border not currently under its control.

In this context, we deeply regret that so-called 'humanitarian convoys' from Russia continue to enter Ukrainian territory without the consent of the Ukrainian authorities and in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as without fundamental international humanitarian principles being observed.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about the build-up of Russian troops next to the Ukrainian border and in Crimea as well as the ever growing evidence of the longstanding direct involvement of active military personnel of the Russian Federation in the fighting in eastern Ukraine. Against this background, we reiterate our call on Russia to withdraw all heavy weapons and its armed formations, military equipment as well as mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine in line with the Minsk agreements.

Madam Chairperson, we take note of yet another Ukrainian request for an explanation of Russian unusual military activities, including numerous cases of violation of the Ukrainian airspace by Russian UAVs conducting reconnaissance flights, circulated under reference number CBM/UA/15/0053/F10/O. We take this occasion to urge Russia once again to stop any violations of Ukrainian airspace and to contribute to restoring security, trust and confidence in the OSCE region by making full use, both in letter and spirit, of all relevant OSCE politico-military instruments.

The European Union reiterates its commitment to fully implement its policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. We stand firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and call upon the Russian Federation to do likewise.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND** and ALBANIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

** Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.