



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 57-th Joint FSC-PC Plenary Meeting**

(21 May 2014 at 10.00, Hofburg)

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,

I take the floor to share information concerning latest development on security and military situation around and inside Ukraine, which, from my perspective, deserves attention of this joint FSC-PC plenary meeting.

Ukrainian side took note of the statement issued on 19 May 2014 by the Kremlin's press-service related to the President's Putin order to the Russian Minister of Defence to return the troops, which participated in the military exercises alongside the borders with Ukraine, to the areas of their permanent stationing. Real steps of the Russian side in this connection are still pending further verification and confirmation.

According to the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation from 21 to 25 May 2014 in the areas close to Lipetsk, Voronezh and Ryazan, Russian Air-Forces will conduct military exercises "Aviadarts - 2014". With reference to the Russian MoD general public was made aware that during these exercises combat use of missile-launchers, air-bombs and cannons against land-based targets as well as the overcoming of the air-defence systems of the eventual adversary would be tested. These plans cause deep concern in Ukraine. Taking into consideration the scenario of these exercises, military troops and means involved, combat use of modern weapons close to the border with Ukraine by the country, which has already committed an act of aggression against Ukraine and illegally annexed part of its sovereign territory, such actions of the Russian Federation are seen by Ukraine as provocative and an attempt to escalate tension on the eastern borders of Ukraine and in the region in general.

Holding these exercises with such specific tasks close to the borders with Ukraine on the day of Presidential elections in my country confirms that the Russian Federation continues efforts of further destabilisation of situation, especially in the eastern regions of Ukraine, and undiminishing pressure on the Ukrainian people. In its statements issued on 15 and 19 May the MFA of Ukraine resolutely called upon the Russian Federation to stop provoking instability, immediately withdraw units of the Russian Armed Forces from Ukrainian border and start implementing its obligations in accordance with the Geneva Agreement of 17 April 2014. As official information about these military exercises appeared on the web-site of the Russian MoD, yesterday Ukraine activated mechanism, stipulated by the Chapter III of the VD and requested the Russian Federation to clarify the purposes of the exercises and provide data concerning numbers and character of the troops and military equipment involved. It is expected that this information will be provided by 16.00 CET on 22 May 2014.

Mr.Chaiman,

On 17 May six heavy vehicles KAMAZ and UAZ broke from the Russian territory through the state border with Ukraine near Krasnyi Luch of Luhansk oblast. Following this incident 2-3 pieces of portable anti-tank grenade launchers "Muha" manufactured in the Russian Federation reportedly appeared on terrorist's road blocks inside Sloviansk and Kramatorsk. Russian border control officials who participated in a bilateral meeting with

their Ukrainian counterparts in relation to this border incident, acknowledged the fact that group of people from Chechen Republic and Dagestan escorted on these vehicles the aid to the “local people at the East of Ukraine”, sent by the President of Chechen Republic R.Kadyrov. Russian border guards informed that they allowed the passage of this convoy from their part of the state border, as instructed by “higher levels”.

In view of dramatic deterioration of the situation on the state border of Ukraine with the Russian Federation resulting from the activities of trans-border organised criminal groups, the MFA of Ukraine on 17 May 2014 sent relevant note to the Russian side. It was stressed that such incidents on the shared state border became regular, which threatens the life of civilians in the border areas and Ukrainian border guards. The Ukrainian side proposed to carry out immediately a set of common measures on the shared state border and in the adjacent areas aimed at stabilizing the situation. Absence of reaction from the Russian side will be considered by Ukraine as a violation of the obligations, stipulated in the relevant bilateral agreements. Ukraine called on the Russian Federation to renew as soon as possible constructive cooperation between border guard authorities of the two countries with a view to normalize the situation and prevent further violations of the state border.

On 18 May Ukrainian military servicemen, participating in the anti-terrorist operation prevented the intention of terrorists to shoot at the military air-field in Kramatorsk from man-portable air-defence missile system. Ukrainian military servicemen identified, disarmed and arrested the group of terrorists which possessed this dangerous weapon and were prepared to use it. The role, status of these persons, as well as restrictive measures against them will be a matter of investigation and a court decision. The type of the MANPADS seized is not a military issue of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Taking into consideration the above information there is an urgent need to stop illicit transfers of weapons, which include grenade-launchers and MANPADS, to the terrorist groups in the East of Ukraine and we call on all partners to undertake necessary measures in this respect.

Distinguished colleagues,

We noted information provided by representative of the Russian verification unit concerning the number of military equipment and weapons deployed on certain military facilities close to the state border with Ukraine, which was presented during 754-th FSC Plenary meeting on 14 May 2014. In this context let me draw your attention to the information about concentration and activities of the Russian Armed Forces alongside its border with Ukraine, provided by the Delegation of Ukraine during the 52-d joint FSC-PC meeting on 7 April, 53-d joint FSC-PC meeting on 17 April, 54-th joint FSC-PC meeting on 30 April,

Discussion of the relevant data presented during those joint FSC-PC meetings, in which the Russian Federation, to our deep regret, decided not to participate, allowed to conclude that increase in number of military equipment and weapons of the Russian Federation close to the borders of Ukraine poses considerable threat to our national security, taking into account the illegal annexation of the integral part of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and continuous effect of the Decree “On the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine”, adopted by the Federal Council of the Russian Federation on 1 March 2014.

In order to dispel Ukrainian security concerns it is important to pursue de-escalation by revoking the mentioned decree of the Federal Council of the Russian Federation, by ensuring the return of the Russian troops from the borders with Ukraine to their permanent bases, in accordance with the orders issued by the Russian President on 19 May 2014.

In this context, we keep urging the Russian Federation to provide for military transparency to contribute to trust and confidence in the OSCE area which have been severely damaged by its annexation of the sovereign Ukrainian territory of Crimea as well as by concentration of its military forces in the vicinity of the eastern Ukrainian borders.

Maximizing genuine security dialogue and cooperation within the FSC, as well as joint FSC-PC meetings, requires to adhere to the letter as well as to the spirit of all relevant politico-military commitments and obligations including in the framework of the Vienna document.

We continue to view it as critically important that international observers are invited to verify the situation on the ground in areas of current concentration of Russian troops close to the Ukrainian borders, as well as what measures are taken in preventing supplies of weapons to terrorists, acting on Ukraine`s territory. Verification mechanisms stipulated in the Vienna Document should be used consistently, effectively and fully to ensure military transparency and predictability in each and every region of the OSCE.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.