



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1015 Vienna, 4 September 2014

EU Statement on the Violation of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine

The European Union condemns the increasing inflows of fighters and weapons from the territory of the Russian Federation into eastern Ukraine as well as the aggression by Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil, as stated by the European Council on 30 August 2014. The Council expressed its extreme concern by the ongoing and increasingly intense fighting in Ukraine and continued to strongly condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea. It called upon the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw all its military assets and forces from Ukraine. It reiterated the urgent need for a sustainable political solution based on the respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence.

The EU underlines the importance of implementing President Poroshenko's peace plan without delay. The first step should consist of a mutually agreed and viable ceasefire, the re-establishment of Ukrainian control over its border, and an immediate halt to the flow of arms, material and military personnel from the Russian Federation into Ukraine. There should also be an urgent release of all hostages held by the illegally armed groups as well as of the prisoners detained in the Russian Federation. Moreover, the EU reiterates its call for immediate, safe and unrestricted access to the MH17 crash site as part of a cease-fire.

We call on all parties to support and facilitate without delay the work of international humanitarian organisations, in accordance with international humanitarian law and principles. The humanitarian impact of the conflict on the civilian population should not be exploited for political or military ends. The EU calls on all contributors, including the Russian Federation, to support the

international relief effort led by the United Nations, in full recognition of the Ukrainian Government's role as a first responder. We also recall that any unilateral military actions on the part of the Russian Federation in Ukraine under any pretext, including humanitarian, is considered by the EU as a blatant violation of international law.

We reiterate that it is the activities of the armed pro-Russian separatists that are the root cause of the serious human suffering experienced by the civilian population in parts of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts.

Mr Chairman, on 30 August, the European Council expressed its readiness to take significant further restrictive measures, in light of the evolution of the situation of the ground. It requested the Commission to urgently undertake preparatory work, jointly with the European External Action Service, and present proposals for consideration within a week. It requested the Commission to include in its proposal a provision on the basis of which every person and institution dealing with the separatist groups in the Donbass will be listed.

The EU once again expresses its support for the valuable efforts of the OSCE and its Chairmanship. We continue to support the OSCE-facilitated Trilateral Contact Group and its efforts to create conditions for a mutually-agreed and viable ceasefire, in line with President Poroshenko's Peace Plan. We encourage the parties to urgently make tangible progress, including at its next planned meeting on 5 September, and express our hope that the recent conversation between President Poroshenko and President Putin will contribute to this.

We reiterate our support for the use of the full potential of the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM), including an effective and comprehensive monitoring of the Russian-Ukrainian border. We underline the importance of ensuring safety and access for SMM staff. We welcome the use of UAVs, and we expect them to add value to the SMM's reporting. We encourage the Chairmanship, OSCE Secretariat and SMM to ensure that UAVs will be in operation as soon as possible in eastern and southern Ukraine. We also call for expansion of the

OSCE Border Checkpoint Observation Mission in order to contribute to an effective, comprehensive and bilateral control of the Russian-Ukrainian border.

We welcome that ODIHR has begun preparations for a comprehensive monitoring of the parliamentary elections scheduled for 26 October in anticipation of an official invitation. We welcome the arrival of the new Project Coordinator in Ukraine, Vaidotas Verba, and continue to appreciate the important efforts of his office, including in regard to elections and working with civil society, and the activities of the OSCE's autonomous institutions in regard to Ukraine.

We express our continuing support for the Representative on Freedom of the Media in expressing concern for the safety of journalists covering the crisis in and around Ukraine. We are appalled by the death of the Russian photographer Andrei Stenin in eastern Ukraine and call for all killings and attacks on journalists to be investigated.

Mr Chairperson, the EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to recognise these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

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 countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, 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 the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.