



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°814 Vienna, 16 March 2016

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#### EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

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The European Union and its Member States would like to start by thanking you, Madame Chair, and your able team for the successful work and leadership as FSC Chair in the past three months. We found the Security Dialogue discussions useful and much appreciate your efforts on the successful High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar which was without doubt the major event of your Chairmanship and a valuable opportunity for high-level military dialogue, to increase transparency and thereby confidence among participating States. We look forward to working with the incoming Polish Chairmanship in the next trimester.

Madame Chair, please allow us to return back to the security situation in and around Ukraine.

Two years on from the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation, the European Union and its Member States remain firmly committed to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We reiterate that we do not recognise and continue to condemn this violation of international law as well as the principles and commitments of the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter. It remains a direct challenge to international security, with grave implications for the international legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of states. We remain committed to fully implementing our non-recognition policy, including through restrictive measures in line with UNGA Resolution 68/262. We reaffirm our deep concern at the military build-up and the deterioration of the human rights situation in the Crimean peninsula. On the former, we urge the Russian Federation to refrain from such activity, including in relation to its Black Sea fleet, and act responsibly in order to build confidence and security. Furthermore, we call on the de facto authorities to fully comply with both international law and international norms. We recall our

unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to reverse moves that contravene these principles.

We welcome the most recent decisions of the Trilateral Contact Group on 3 March on mine action and the cessation of live-fire training exercises within the 30 km security zone and urge all sides to fully implement these political commitments on the ground. We also welcome the Foreign Ministers' meeting in the Normandy Format in Paris on 3 March and urge the Trilateral Contact Group and subordinate working groups to build on it by making tangible progress towards a sustainable consolidation of the security situation and a political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments.

As a first and urgent step, action by all sides is needed to stabilize the deteriorating security situation, ensure full military disengagement and consolidate the ceasefire. We regret that the past few days were again marked by a continuous high level of ceasefire violations. We remain deeply concerned by the continued use of mortars, artillery and MLRS and reiterate our call on all sides to unconditionally and verifiably withdraw all Minsk-regulated weapons and to cooperate fully with the SMM. The establishment by 30 April of an Incident Prevention Response Mechanism, to identify and address security concerns by any party in a timely manner, as called for by the N4 Foreign ministers in Paris would be a concrete step to help to sustain the ceasefire.

Full implementation of the Minsk agreements requires that the SMM has full, safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, including along the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We deplore that considerable restrictions continue to occur, especially in areas not under the control of the Ukrainian government. Despite repeated assurances of cooperation, SMM patrols are still denied passage, delayed or provided with only conditional access in separatist-held areas by armed men citing orders from superiors. SMM UAVs are also frequently targeted by jamming. This is in contrary to the Minsk agreement's spirit and letter. All restrictions must be lifted without further delay.

We remain firm in our call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments, in order to achieve a sustainable political settlement of the conflict, based on full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists it backs to meet their commitments. The duration of the EU's economic sanctions against Russia is linked to the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The ceasefire must be respected, all heavy weapons and those weapons comprised in the Addendum of 29 September must be withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential. We reiterate our concern about information regarding the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia, including the latest report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members 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.