



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 772 Vienna, 26 November 2014

#### **EU Statement on Russian Unusual Military Activities**

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The European Union and its Member States remain deeply concerned about increased levels of violence in parts of eastern Ukraine resulting in numerous civilian and military casualties as well as in further aggravation of the humanitarian situation. The persistent attacks of Russian-backed separatists against a number of strategically important areas under governmental control continue to bring about escalation in grave violation of the ceasefire and the Minsk Agreements.

We note in this respect the SMM observation of a significant increase in the amount of heavy weaponry, manned in most cases by professional military without insignia as well as of equipment and men in camouflage with Russian Federation flag patches and other badges on them.

This is a particularly worrying development, which may explain the increase in violence, bearing also in mind the significant number of persons in military-style clothing crossing the border in both directions as being witnessed for several weeks by the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk.

We are compelled to call once again on the Russian Federation to fully assume its responsibilities with a view to avoiding further re-escalation of hostilities, including by preventing any movement of military, weapons or fighters from its territory into Ukraine, and withdrawing any troops, weapons and equipment under its control from Ukraine, as well as by exercising its influence to ensure that the separatists implement in good faith the obligations assumed in Minsk.

All parties must now show utmost restraint, strictly abide by their commitments under the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, and re-engage towards finding a peaceful sustainable

solution to the crisis based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We recall in this respect the important role of the OSCE SMM in supporting the implementation of the Minsk agreements. We are however deeply concerned about its work having been severely hampered by the effective grounding of its UAVs following sophisticated military-style jamming as well as by recent cases of shooting in the direction of its personnel. These incidents are completely unacceptable. We remind all parties concerned of their responsibility for the safety of the SMM monitors and their equipment and for free and unrestricted access throughout Ukraine, including all parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

The European Union reiterates its strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and will not recognise it. The European Union stands firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and calls 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.

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\* 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.