

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1049th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 April 2015

**On the situation in Ukraine and the need to implement the
Minsk agreements**

Mr. Chairperson,

On 28 April, the ministers for foreign affairs of the OSCE Troika sent the parties to the Ukrainian conflict a clear signal that the crisis can be resolved only through peaceful means and that the political process should be advanced without delay. This requires the implementation in good faith of the Minsk agreements. We fully support this call and trust that it will at last be heeded in Kyiv.

The Minsk agreements of 12 February are extremely specific. They establish a clear sequence of steps that need to be taken by the parties. Kyiv is violating this sequence in attempting to interpret it in its own way. Attempts to portray the situation as though the Ukrainian authorities are implementing everything are unfounded. We see this in the reports by the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). The statements and actions of the Ukrainian leadership itself attest to this.

We are seriously concerned at the intensification of the shelling. Over the past month, the intensity of the ceasefire violations has more than doubled. There are reports of a massing of weapons on both sides of the line of contact. Despite the efforts of the SMM and the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC), the clashes in Shyrokyne continue. On 26 April, the SMM recorded 413 shots from various types of weapons, which were fired by Ukrainian military units towards insurgent-controlled territory. This is a question of responsibility.

We are outraged by the massive shelling of Horlivka by Ukrainian security forces from Maiorsk and Dzerzhynsk, as a result of which one civilian was killed and seven were wounded, a water pipeline was destroyed and eight gas substations were damaged. According to the JCCC, the security forces were using 152 mm calibre guns and 82 mm calibre mortars, which are subject to withdrawal under the Minsk Package of Measures. The SMM monitors who visited Horlivka were also able to see this for themselves. Furthermore, the security forces fired on Horlivka despite the fact that there is a JCCC observation post there and its

Russian and Ukrainian officers spent over two hours attempting to negotiate a ceasefire. This once again raises questions as to the extent to which Ukrainian armed units can be controlled.

This is a dangerous trend. It was the resumption of the massive shelling of towns in Donbas that resulted in a dramatic exacerbation of the situation and in active hostilities this winter.

We call on the SMM to be more responsive to information on ceasefire violations provided by the JCCC. We support the efforts of the Mission and the JCCC, in particular efforts to de-escalate the situation around Shyrokyne and establish a permanent monitoring presence there. We firmly believe that this important initiative can be realized if the parties take a responsible approach. According to our information, the insurgents are ready to do this. It is important to finally reach agreement on an addendum to the Minsk agreements regarding the types of equipment to be withdrawn – all types of tanks, artillery and mortars of up to 100 mm in calibre. Changes have already been made to the draft at least seven times.

We welcome the SMM's active work in stepping up patrols in particularly tense areas, the use of technical equipment and efforts to establish local truces. We believe this is an important deterrent.

We note that obstacles to the freedom of movement of the OSCE monitors in the security zone persist. The stopping of monitors at Ukrainian checkpoints – however much our United States colleagues may attempt to convince us it is “temporary” – is quite sufficient to enable heavy weapons to be redeployed or concealed.

Let me give you just one example. On 21 April, the Dnipro-1 battalion detained a team of monitors at its checkpoint near the village of Lebedynske for 90 minutes under the pretext of checking their documents.

We draw attention to the inadmissibility of the continuing practice of verifying monitors' nationality. Since 20 April, there have been 16 such cases in the last ten days alone. In that connection, not a single SMM patrol has been allowed into Volnovakha, Hranitne, Novoaidar and Makarovo for over a month now without their passports being checked. The security forces do not conceal the fact that they have instructions from the leadership to do this.

We regard this as a direct violation of Ukraine's commitments to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of the SMM monitors. These incidents should be stopped immediately.

We are carefully following the articles appearing in the Ukrainian media, which make the SMM monitors out to be foreign spies. The spreading of knowingly slanderous rumours is inadmissible. This threatens the security and safety of the monitors. Unfortunately, despite our calls, the Ukrainian media continue to reprint defamatory material, which contains personal details about monitors from Russia, the United States of America and the Netherlands.

The continuing presence in the security zone of the so-called Right Sector, Tornado, Azov, Donbas, Aidar and other volunteer battalions and, more importantly, their actions, pose a serious problem. They are most active in the sabotage of ceasefire agreements, not to

mention well-known instances of legal and criminal excesses, as a result of which civilians suffer. There are reports in the Ukrainian media about the authorities taking steps to bring these formations under their control. We would be grateful to the Ukrainian representative for more detailed information in this regard. We also believe that the SMM, too, could shed some light in its reports on the situation regarding the so-called volunteer battalions.

We reiterate our concern at the information regarding the sending of foreign armed formations, instructors and military equipment to Ukraine. It seems that those countries that are doing this do not consider themselves bound by the Minsk Package of Measures, despite the fact that it was approved by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202. Such actions not only add fuel to the fire, but are also contrary to the spirit of the Minsk agreements.

We regard the unwillingness to put a decisive stop to the actions of Ukrainian security forces, primarily the volunteer battalions, in the security zone as a deliberate attempt by Kyiv to avoid launching the political process and direct dialogue with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk – and this is a core principle of the Minsk agreements. The Ukrainian authorities are deliberately jeopardizing the prospect of dialogue in the working groups by declaring that they do not recognize the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk as fully fledged participants in the Contact Group. This also concerns the organization of elections, the conduct of constitutional reform, the exchange of prisoners, the removal of the financial and economic blockade, the provision of humanitarian aid to the region's population and other issues requiring special measures.

For our part, we take this process most seriously. The President of Russia has appointed his Special Representative to the Contact Group for resolving the situation in Ukraine, an experienced diplomat who is very familiar with the subject of crisis resolution, Mr. Azamat Kulmukhametov. Three weeks ago, the Russian representatives and experts for work in all four subgroups were appointed. Luhansk and Donetsk have sent their representatives. We welcome the appointment of the OSCE representatives too. We fully share the OSCE Troika's view regarding the need for an immediate start of the work of the subgroups.

Thank you for your attention.