



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1013 Vienna, 14 August 2014

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

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The European Union would like to thank the Swiss Chairmanship for convening this meeting of the Permanent Council during the summer recess which was necessary to discuss the latest developments with regards to the crisis in and around Ukraine as well as the OSCE's role in pursuing a peaceful solution.

We remain concerned about the continued deterioration of the security situation in parts of eastern Ukraine, and along the borders with the Russian Federation. We urge Russia to stop the increased flow of weapons, equipment and militants across the border and to withdraw its additional troops from the border area. We are disturbed by reports of intensified cross-border shelling and violations of the Ukrainian airspace by the Russian Federation. All of these run counter to efforts aimed at de-escalating the crisis in and around Ukraine. 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. We warn against any Russian military actions in Ukraine, under any pretext, including humanitarian.

In this context, the European Union expresses its increasing concern regarding the humanitarian impact of the on-going conflict in parts of eastern Ukraine and especially the civilian casualties. We call for respect of international humanitarian law and for humanitarian organisations to be supported and facilitated in their present efforts to deliver the assistance to the population in need. We appeal to all sides to the conflict to ensure a safe passage for civilians to leave the areas of conflict and appeal to the Russian Federation to use its influence with illegal armed groups to this effect.

While acknowledging that the OSCE is not a humanitarian organisation, we believe the SMM could play a facilitating role in a multinational humanitarian effort endorsed by the

Government of Ukraine, together with international humanitarian organisations, in particular the ICRC. In this context, we underline the need for all sides to ensure safety and security of all personnel engaged in delivering humanitarian assistance.

We underline once again the need to address the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, in full respect of international humanitarian law and principles and with the clear consent of Ukrainian authorities. In this respect, we reiterate the EU's readiness to increase its support to the Ukrainian government-led humanitarian response efforts as well as to humanitarian partners. On 11 August the President of the European Commission welcomed the willingness of the President of Ukraine to seek international humanitarian assistance. In this vein, president Barroso announced that the European Commission would take this week an emergency decision on additional humanitarian support as a contribution to the UN-led international response plan.

We recall that on 31 July the European Union adopted a package of significant restrictive measures targeting sectoral cooperation and exchanges with the Russian Federation in accordance with the European Council Conclusions from 16 July. It is meant as a strong warning: the illegal annexation of territory and deliberate destabilisation of a neighbouring sovereign country cannot be accepted in 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe. The European Union remains ready to reverse its decisions when Russia starts contributing actively and without ambiguity to finding a solution to the Ukrainian crisis, including based on its own commitments undertaken in the Geneva Joint Statement of 17 April and the Berlin Declaration of 2 July.

Mr Chairperson, we would like to take this occasion to reiterate the EU's support for the peaceful settlement of the crisis in and around Ukraine, the need to implement President Poroshenko's peace plan without further delay and the urgent need to agree on a genuine and sustainable ceasefire by all parties on the basis of the Berlin Declaration of 2 July with the aim of restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity.

To this end, we recall the continued EU support to the efforts by the OSCE through the Special Monitoring Mission, Border Checkpoint Observation Mission, and the OSCE facilitated Trilateral Contact Group in their efforts at creating conditions for a ceasefire. We also reiterate the importance of effective border control, including through OSCE observers, and the swift release of all hostages.

We welcome the deployment of OSCE observers to two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, as a limited first step towards implementation of the 2 July Berlin

Declaration. We call for the implementation of all its elements, including access to Ukrainian border guards to participate in monitoring activities at these two checkpoints.

We restate our support for the OSCE SMM work and highly appreciate its efforts in the aftermath of the downing of the Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 in Donetsk. We reiterate our call for all OSCE monitors to have safe and free access throughout Ukraine to fulfil their mandate.

Mr Chairperson, the EU stands firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, 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 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, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

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\* 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.