

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1062<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The situation in Ukraine is cause for serious concern. Towns and villages in Donbas are still being shelled and the blockade of the region is becoming ever more severe. Extremists from various volunteer battalions continue their criminal activities. The authorities in Kyiv are doing everything possible to avoid direct dialogue with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk, who have signed the Minsk agreements. It looks like they are intent on revising the Minsk agreements and resolving the crisis unilaterally according to their own script. This is a very dangerous trend.

Point 11 of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements clearly stipulates “carrying out constitutional reform in Ukraine with a new constitution entering into force by the end of 2015 providing for decentralization as a key element (taking into account the specificities of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, agreed upon with the representatives of these areas), as well as adopting permanent legislation before the end of 2015 on the special status of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in accordance with the measures set out in the Note”. There was no agreement with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk regarding “the specificities of certain areas”. Amendments to the constitution have been developed in secret, without broad discussion even with the Verkhovna Rada. It was not deemed necessary in Kyiv to respond to the proposals prepared and submitted by Donetsk and Luhansk. It is not enough to make references to the positive findings by the Venice Commission. The Commission is not assessing whether the constitutional amendments are in line with the Minsk Package of Measures. And this is a matter of principle.

Points 4 and 12 of the Package of Measures stipulate that questions related to local elections will also be discussed and agreed upon with the representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions within the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group. However, the Kyiv authorities have unilaterally, without consulting with the regions, already

announced the date for these elections and have also established preconditions that are not provided for in Minsk II.

Donetsk and Luhansk have also presented proposals in this regard. There is nothing forthcoming from the other side. On the contrary, the legislation recently adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on local elections already provides for the option of refusing to hold elections on territories that are not currently under the control of the Ukrainian authorities.

We see no progress in the implementation of Point 5 on ensuring pardon and amnesty by enacting the law prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons in connection with the events that took place in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

Kyiv's Western partners bear particular responsibility for convincing the Ukrainian leadership to adhere to its commitments. Donetsk and Luhansk are ready for such work.

The most vulnerable groups of citizens are suffering as a result of the Donbas blockade. If Kyiv is turning its back on them, it is up to others to provide these people with the help they need. As regards Russian humanitarian aid to the population of south-eastern Ukraine, representatives of the Russian and Ukrainian ministries and departments concerned are working on possibilities for delivering this aid by rail. Ukraine has prepared a draft "road map" in this regard, which has been carefully examined by Russian specialists. Their comments and thoughts on this were recently transmitted to the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This does not replace the need for urgent measures to alleviate the situation of the people in Donbas – abolishing the strict permit regime, restoring passenger and freight traffic, and resuming deliveries of medicines, food and essential goods.

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) should pay greater attention to this problem and deploy monitors at Ukrainian checkpoints that are hindering the delivery of humanitarian aid and provisions. The regime established by Kyiv is a breeding ground for corruptionists and extortionists. The security forces controlling the passage of people and goods across the line of contact are making a profit from the population's plight.

We trust that a sustainable solution regarding the demilitarization of Shyrokyne will be found soon. If it proves successful, this experience should be extended to other areas along the line of contact before the inhabitants leave these areas for good.

We expect that an agreement will also be reached on the withdrawal of all types of tanks, mortars and artillery up to 100 mm in calibre.

We welcome the efforts of the SMM and the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination to achieve local truces, thanks to which it is possible to put a stop to the shelling of residential areas and infrastructure and carry out repairs and reconstruction work.

Ensuring a complete ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the line of contact is an absolute priority. Then there would be no attacks on houses, kindergartens, hospitals and markets, there would be no shelling of the firing positions of the Ukrainian armed forces either. Unfortunately, so far the shelling is tending to increase. Analysis shows that Ukraine's claim that its forces only engage in return fire is untrue.

The Azov, Aidar and Right Sector armed formations made up of extremists and bandits remain a serious destabilizing factor in Ukraine. They use their so-called patriotic but essentially neo-Nazi slogans to cover up their crimes. Until these groups are eliminated, it will be difficult to ensure implementation of the Minsk agreements. As we have seen for ourselves, they do not follow Kyiv's orders.

As for the events in Mukacheve, this is just one incident, which has had a considerable impact because of the fact that the extremists carried out an attack not in Donbas but in another region. The activities of Right Sector and various Azov and Aidar battalion units conclusively prove that the essence of these illegal armed groups, the disarming of which was already mentioned in the Geneva statement of 17 April 2014, has remained the same despite them being renamed the National Guard. Even the Ukrainian statistics on offences show a sharp increase in the level of crime in Ukraine – the “credit” for this goes to Right Sector members and other Ukrainian security forces. Unfortunately, it is only now that the Ukrainian leadership has begun to talk about the need to disarm these groups and bring them to account.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that the attempts to portray Russia as the guilty party responsible for all of Ukraine's misfortunes are completely absurd. As a rule, things become even crazier on the eve of major international events or whenever the Ukrainian leaders are in search of money. If we were to believe them, it is Russia that is exporting the oligarchy and corruption to Ukraine that the “victorious Maidan government” promised to eradicate last year. Even the Ukrainian population is no longer buying these fairy tales, having experienced for itself all the “benefits” of the new authorities' policies.

Thank you for your attention.