



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 989TH FSC PLENARY MEETING**
(20 October 2021)

Agenda item 2, General Statements, on the subject of “Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea.

A regular meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group was held on 13 October 2021 in the format of a video conference. According to the report of the Chief Monitor of the SMM, cases of obstruction of the Mission's activities by Russian armed formations have become more frequent. Among them: restrictions on freedom of movement, attempts of radio suppression of the control channels of the OSCE SMM surveillance UAVs, etc.

We are determined that the establishment of additional OSCE SMM Forward Patrol Bases in the temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions will enhance SMM monitoring capacity, including in the immediate vicinity of the uncontrolled areas of the Russian-Ukrainian border. The urgency of establishing the Forward Patrol Bases is growing as the Russian side had blocked the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Monitoring Mission at the Russian checkpoints "Gukovo" and "Donetsk".

During the TCG meeting, the Ukrainian delegation reiterated that the basis for the settlement of the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict is the implementation of the decisions of the Normandy Summit, as well as of all Minsk agreements.

Having said that, I would like to bring to your attention serious acts of provocation on the part of the armed formations of the Russian Federation and its mercenaries.

On 13 October, a group of three men with armband “JCCC”, announced as a demining group, entered Zolote disengagement area from non-government-controlled territories and started carrying out the reconnaissance of the abandoned positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, including by conducting photo and video recording. The group advanced in the government-controlled area for more than 70 m from the contact line.

Moreover, the group had no demining equipment.

Those illegal activities conducted by the group violated the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire of 22 July 2020, prohibiting offensive, reconnaissance and sabotage operations

After the group was informed of the violations and after ignoring demands to end these illegal activities, one of its members, Andrii Kosiak, was detained, two others escaped. Kosiak Andrii had a military ID, which included information about his Russian passport issued in the Rostov region in 2020. He was carrying a pistol with two filled magazines as well as maps of Ukrainian Armed Forces' positions.

Furthermore, it has been found that he joined the Russian armed formations in 2014, participated in military actions against the Ukrainian Armed Forces, including by firing mortar at the positions of the UAF near Popasna and Zolote. In particular, his phone contained video footage of shelling of the UAF positions.

This is yet another evidence of the misuse by the Russian Federation of the JCCC mechanism to cover its own illegal activities, including within the disengagement areas. SMM regularly reported about members of the Russian armed formations wearing armband "JCCC" as well as about the containers and underground structures constructed within the disengagement area. The Ukrainian side on numerous occasions, including during the TCG meetings, protested against such illegal activities.

The Russian Federation has to undertake efforts ensuring that such incidents will not repeat in the future as well as to return its representatives to the JCCC.

It is also unacceptable that the Russian side uses the case of detention of Andrii Kosiak to further intimidate the SMM staff in the TOT.

On October 15, a protest was arranged in front of the SMM premises in Donetsk. A group of SMM observers was blocked at a hotel by members of the Russian occupation forces. It was told that they would not be released until the release of the mercenary, who had been detained by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the area of Zolote on 13 October.

We are compelled to note that the Russian occupation forces have resorted to hostage-taking. The detention of international observers by armed individuals is a sign of international terrorism. The hostage-taking of OSCE monitors is not only a systemic undermining of the SMM's mandate. In conjunction with the closure of the OSCE mission at the Russian border crossing points "Donetsk" and "Gukovo", this fact is evidence of a consistent and deliberate policy of the Russian Federation aimed at ousting the OSCE from the occupied territories.

Mr. Chairperson,

The activities of the OSCE SMM is a basis for impartial monitoring of the situation in the area of the armed Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Whereas Moscow's main interest is to keep supplying illegally and unimpededly weapons, military equipment, ammunition, regular troops and mercenaries to the temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

In particular, during September 2021, more than 5,000 tons of fuel, new consignments of weapons and ammunition, including anti-tank guided missiles, shells for multiple launch rocket systems, rounds for rocket-propelled grenades, anti-tank and anti-

personnel mines, cartridges for heavy machine guns and sniper rifles were delivered to the units of the Russian occupying forces by rail and road.

The Russian Federation also continues delivering its deadly cargoes under the pretence of the so called "Humanitarian convoys". It was repeatedly reported that among the so called "humanitarian cargoes" there were those not of a humanitarian but of a military nature.

The most recent case occurred on October 14, when the Russian Federation once again ignored the previously expressed repeated warnings of Ukraine and without its official consent, in violation of Ukrainian law, conditions and modalities of delivery of humanitarian aid, illegally sent the 103rd so-called "Humanitarian convoy" of the Russian Federation. The convoy entered Ukraine through a section of the Russian-Ukrainian state border not controlled by the Government of Ukraine, through the Russian border checkpoints "Donetsk" and "Matveyev Kurgan".

We condemn Russia's practice of sending so-called "humanitarian convoys" and urge Russia to stop committing illegal actions against the sovereignty of our state and to strictly abide by international law and legislation of Ukraine.

We urge the Russian Federation to end its aggression against Ukraine, reverse its illegal occupation of Crimea, de-occupy parts of Donbas, and restore freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, through the Kerch Strait and in the Sea of Azov. Russia must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of its armed forces, mercenaries, armed formations and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.