



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1343 Vienna, 4 November 2021

EU Statement on “Russia’s Ongoing Aggression against Ukraine and Illegal Occupation of Crimea”

1. Madam Chair, the European Union regrets the increasingly volatile security situation along the contact line. The SMM is reporting a marked increase in the presence of heavy weapons and ceasefire violations concentrated in, and close to, the Petrivske and Zolote disengagement areas as well as escalations in other places at the contact line. The worrying rise in the number of ceasefire violations since October last year illustrates the deteriorating security situation.
2. We again express our regret about the heavy toll that the conflict is taking on the civilian population. So far in 2021, the SMM has confirmed 79 civilian casualties, including 15 fatalities. 28 of these casualties were caused by shelling, 10 by small-arms fire and 41 by mines. In addition, the SMM has confirmed damage to 125 civilian properties and infrastructure sites this year. The number of reports about killed and wounded Ukrainian servicemen is also increasing. It is of utmost importance that the sides adhere to the ceasefire and agree on an updated demining plan, as decided in the Normandy Summit in Paris, in order to improve the lives of the civilian population.
3. The safety and security of the SMM is our top priority. We therefore deplore the unprecedented restrictions against the SMM’s freedom of movement in the non-government controlled areas of Ukraine and regret that SMM UAVs continue to experience multiple instances of GPS signal interference. It is also regrettable that on 27 October, an SMM patrol was delayed in exiting the non-government controlled area of the Luhansk region by 98 minutes at the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge by members of the Russia-backed armed formations. Such actions, together with the recent events in the non-government controlled area of the Donetsk region where SMM patrols were unable to leave their premises for over a week are in flagrant violation of the SMM’s

mandate. The SMM must have safe and unhindered access to the entire territory of Ukraine, including the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula. We urge Russia to use its considerable influence over the armed formations it backs in order to lift the impediments to the SMM's work.

4. We remain deeply concerned about the frequent reports about the presence of Russian military equipment in eastern Ukraine. These reports underline the need for greater transparency about what is happening at the Ukraine-Russia State border currently not controlled by the Ukrainian government. Given its decision to close down the Border Observation Mission, further actions are needed from Russia in order to prove its commitment to permanent monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian state border and verification by the OSCE, as well as the establishment of security zones in the border areas, as stipulated in point 4 of the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014. As a signatory of the Minsk agreements, Russia has clearly accepted its binding responsibility to the peaceful conflict settlement. We call on Russia, as a party to the conflict, to act constructively within the Trilateral Contact Group and to implement the Minsk agreements in full.
5. The EU condemns the sentencing of four Crimean Tatars to lengthy prison terms by a Russian military court in Rostov-on-Don on 29 October. We also deplore that a so-called "court" in illegally annexed Crimea extended the detention of Crimean Tatar leader Nariman Dzhelyal and two other Ukrainian citizens until 23 January 2022 on the basis of unfounded charges. In addition, on 1 November, another 19 people were detained when they had gathered to observe the court proceedings against Crimean Tatars Rustem Emiruseinov, Arsen Abkhairov and Eskender Abdulganiev in the Crimean peninsula, illegally annexed by Russia. We call on Russia to immediately release all unlawfully detained or convicted Ukrainian citizens. Russia must comply with international law and end all human rights violations and abuses in the illegally annexed Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as also stated in the joint declaration of the International Crimea Platform adopted on 23 August in Kyiv.
6. The EU remains firm in its call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full in order to achieve a sustainable political solution to the conflict in line with OSCE principles and commitments. We call

on Russia to fully assume its responsibility in this regard and to use its considerable influence over the armed formations it backs to meet the Minsk commitments in full. Respect for these principles and commitments must be restored. We again call on Russia to immediately stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the armed formations, and we remain deeply concerned about the presence of Russian military equipment and personnel in areas held by Russia-backed armed formations. The duration of the European Union's sanctions against Russia is linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements.

7. The EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to uphold these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilising the situation and reversing moves that contravene these principles. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces since February 2014 and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which we will not recognise. The European Union will remain committed to fully implement its non-recognition policy, including through restrictive measures.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, and ALBANIA*, the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.