



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to Ambassador Gyorgy Varga,
Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission
at two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border**

As delivered by Ihor Lossovskyi,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1242nd meeting of the Permanent Council,
3 October 2019

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes Ambassador György Varga, the Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission at two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his written report and today's presentation.

We continue to note that the Mission operates in difficult and restrictive conditions, which make it impossible to deliver comprehensive monitoring at the «Gukovo» and «Donetsk» BCPs because of significant restrictions on the freedom of movement within the BCPs, that had been imposed by the Russian authorities. We take note of the so called “recommendation” of the host country, that the border observers even do not have the right to interview by-passers, nor to hold conversation with them inside the BCP area.

In spite of limited mandate, small size and significant restrictions imposed by the Russian authorities, the Mission provides information exposing Russia's support for its armed formations in Donbas. While Russia committed itself to withdraw its military, mercenaries and fighters from Donbas, their illegal flow into Ukraine continues. Thanks to the Observer Mission's report we can find that during the reporting period 253 crossings of people in military-style outfits from Russia into Ukraine and back were observed.

We should not have any illusions why the Russian Federation, one country among 57, has been objecting since 2014 to the expansion of the geographic scope of the Mission and to enabling monitoring between the border crossings of the 409 km Ukrainian-Russian state border segment which is for now controlled on both sides by

the Russian authorities. In addition to previously observation of an illegal entering and exiting Ukraine from Russia by the military convoys via a dirt track where there are no border crossing facilities, the OSCE SMM in Ukraine continues to observe such kind of transfers. Regular Russian military convoy spotted by this Mission on the night of 22 August near the Manych and it became the ninth since August 2018. Thousands of pieces of weaponry and the modern exclusively Russian military equipment, including the «Tirada-2» satellite communication jamming complex spotted by the SMM in several occasions during this year and a surveillance radar system “Kredo-M1” spotted by the SMM on 3 of May and 6 of June, all arrived to the occupied parts of Donbas from the territory of the Russian Federation.

Abovementioned facts continue to confirm Russia’s illegal supplies through the uncontrolled segment of the border, which are used to support its armed formations in Donbass.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russian citizens acting as foreign terrorist fighters or mercenaries continue to fight against the Ukrainian authorities in the occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine in Russia-instigated conflict. A fraction of them is revealed by report of the OSCE Observer Mission at two BCPs, in particular recording 26 ambulances and five funeral service vehicles crossing the border in both directions. But the Russian Government carefully conceals Russian casualties in the conflict in Donbass.

The Observer Mission`s report testifies that since 2014, operated only at the two BCPs among eleven, the Mission has observed the movement of more than 38 thousand people in military style outfits, 600 ambulances, 114 funeral service vehicles and 84 so called “humanitarian convoys” that were transferred by the Russian government to Ukraine in violation of my state`s sovereignty and territorial integrity. The last of such convoys was observed just this month.

We note with concern Russia’s continuous attempts to hide the real content of the deliveries and dismissal of an international mechanism, envisaged by the Minsk agreements. Russia, as the occupation administration in the temporarily occupied part of Donbas, bears full responsibility for the security, humanitarian and ecological situation there.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia`s ongoing aggression against Ukraine continues to breach the Minsk agreements as well as the OSCE principles and commitments, in particular regarding sovereignty and territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers, border security and combating terrorism.

The violence, perpetrated by the Russian armed formations in the Donbas region of Ukraine, underlines the imperative of comprehensive border monitoring in connection with continued flows of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the non-government controlled areas of Donbas. We emphasise the utmost relevance of the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014 whereby the signatories committed themselves to ensure permanent monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian border and

verification by the OSCE with the creation of security zone in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. This is a very clear commitment, co-signed by Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE, but which has not yet been realized in view of Russia's opposition.

Ukraine encourages the Chairmanship and the Secretariat to intensify efforts with the aim of practical implementation of this crucial commitment relating to the border and border security zone with the use of all available OSCE assets and instruments.

In conclusion, we once again thank Ambassador György Varga and his able team for their dedicated work and wish every success in their future activities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.