

PC.DEL/1494/16  
4 November 2016

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1117th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

3 November 2016

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The security situation in south-eastern Ukraine is cause for the most serious concern. The Ukrainian armed forces continue to shell civilian objects. On the evening of 27 October, concentrated shelling of Makiivka claimed the lives of two civilians and injured a dozen others. The chief physician at the municipal hospital was killed, and a child was seriously injured. The monitors from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) established that the fire came from large-calibre artillery (122 mm) from a north-westerly direction, in other words from Ukrainian armed forces' positions in Avdiivka. There were no military targets nearby. At a videoconference of the participants in the Trilateral Contact Group on 29 October, the Ukrainian Government told the same old story about the militia shelling its own lines.

We trust that the working group set up by the Contact Group to investigate the incident in Makiivka will establish who was responsible for this war crime and see that they are brought to justice.

Between 24 October and 1 November, SMM monitors documented nine specific instances of shelling of residential districts controlled by the militia. In addition to Makiivka, Donetsk was also subjected to repeated artillery strikes. Three civilians were injured. A woman was injured in Oleksandrivka. Houses were destroyed by Ukrainian armed forces' fire in Kominternove, Pervomaisk, Zaitseve, Yasynuvata and Smile, and the suburbs of Novokyivka were also hit.

The overall number of violations of the ceasefire regime is growing. The Ukrainian security forces do not even hide from the SMM monitors, as they used to in the past. It is evident from the Mission's reports that it is mainly the Ukrainian armed forces firing on militia-controlled territory. Over the weekend, a camera in Shyrokyne recorded 124 salvos from the west. The monitors saw the Ukrainian security forces firing from Lomakyne (21 salvos), Lebedynske (35 salvos) and Orlivske (23 salvos).

Under these circumstances we urge the SMM to speed up the preparation of a consolidated report on the shelling of towns and villages in Donbas and the destruction of civilian infrastructure throughout the conflict.

We note that the security zone is being pumped full with military equipment. Between 24 October and 1 November, the monitors discovered 86 artillery systems belonging to the Ukrainian armed forces in Tarasivka, Kostiantynivka, Popasna, Novohnativka, Anadol, Oleksandropil, Yahidne, Bohdanivka, Romanivka, Donske and Stupochky. The SMM counted more than 80 Ukrainian armoured personnel carriers in the security zone during the past week. Regular deliveries of Ukrainian military equipment by rail via Kostiantynivka (Donetsk region) and Rubizhne (Luhansk region) have been recorded. According to the SMM, between 24 and 31 October more than 200 units of Ukrainian weaponry were massed just outside the boundaries of the withdrawal lines.

Against this background, the number of restrictions on the freedom of movement of the monitors in the security zone in the territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces has increased sharply. The SMM notes that recently the Ukrainian security forces were responsible for the majority of obstacles for the monitors outside the disengagement areas. I would reply to colleagues who want the SMM to report significant movements of weapons and military equipment that you need only keep a close watch on the supply routes of the Ukrainian armed forces' units in the immediate vicinity of the security zone and you will have an abundance of such data. It is there now; it's just that for some reason it is not given due attention.

I should like to point out to our distinguished partners from the United States of America and Ukraine who are interested only in the SMM's freedom of movement at the Ukrainian-Russian border that everything is in order there. Last week, between 24 October and 1 November, the monitors visited the checkpoints at Izvarino, Marynivka, Uспенka, Ulianivske, Dolzhanskyi, Chervonopartyzansk, Novoborovytsi and Krasnodarskyi on 15 occasions without experiencing any restrictions. No military movements at the border were recorded by the monitors, as has been the case for the past two and half years.

The lack of progress in the disengagement of the parties' forces and the demining of the agreed areas is due to the impunity of the Ukrainian commanders and the so-called volunteers. The Ukrainian armed forces are not responding to the daily reports by the militia of their willingness to begin the withdrawal of their forces in Stanytsia Luhanska. Yesterday, the Ukrainian Government once again put paid to the start of the withdrawal. The references to some kind of explosions in the disengagement area every seven days are absurd.

In other areas along the line of contact, there are reports of the Ukrainian armed forces attempting to seize additional territory, building fortified zones and moving to forward positions. In the report of 1 November, the SMM confirmed that a Ukrainian armed forces' checkpoint had been moved 3 km to the south-east in the Lebedynske-Berdianske area. The creeping seizure of new territory by the Ukrainian armed forces needs to be prevented. This establishes a clear basis for a dramatic escalation of the conflict.

The SMM notes the inability of the Ukrainian Government to solve the problem of internally displaced persons, who in October were once again evicted from their temporary

places of residence for financial reasons. People are forced to hold out in cellars and derelict buildings. The situation is worst in the Odessa region.

The situation regarding freedom of the media and journalists' rights continues to deteriorate, and this is something that the SMM has also drawn attention to. The Mirotvorets website is still operating, and radicals threaten and harass representatives of the media whom they do not like. Russian language and culture are being squeezed out of the media space, and a unified point of view, including a distorted history, is being imposed on people. Those who do not agree with the authorities' actions are persecuted for political reasons. Hundreds of people are being illegally kept in pre-trial detention facilities and the Ukrainian Security Service's secret prisons. There is evidence that they are being subjected to torture and degrading treatment.

In conclusion, we should like once again to recall that there is no alternative to the implementation of the Minsk agreements for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Unfortunately, there are forces in Ukraine who are not interested in a settlement. There are various reasons – demands from outside the country, a desire to obtain additional income from corrupt “grey” arrangements, and nationalistic fervour.

Our common task, and I mean only those who are truly interested in peace in Ukraine, is to exert an influence on the situation in Kyiv to ensure that common sense in the interests of all citizens of Ukraine prevails over short-term ambitions. We know that such influence can be exerted. It is time to gather the stones you have cast away.

We need to move forward steadily on the path towards a peaceful settlement on the basis of the Minsk Package of Measures – in its entirety and in the proper order. In that context, we support the idea of drawing up a road map for further steps. In our opinion, the “Steinmeier formula” on the procedure for the entry into force of the law on the special status of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions needs to be implemented. We call on the Ukrainian Government to stop blocking the entry into force of the amnesty law and to get to grips with a reform of the constitution that takes into account the interest of the inhabitants of Donbas. We draw attention to the need to avert the humanitarian disaster facing the population of south-eastern Ukraine and prevent the further isolation of that region from the rest of the country. To that end, the Ukrainian Government should completely lift the humanitarian blockade and begin to implement its social commitments. In other words, our Ukrainian partners finally need to take the implementation of their commitments seriously, commitments adopted by President Petro Poroshenko on 12 February 2015 and endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202 on 17 February 2015.

Thank you for your attention.