

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
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AT THE 1003rd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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**On the situation in Ukraine and violations of the norms of international
humanitarian law by the Kyiv authorities**

Mr. Chairperson,

At past meetings of the Permanent Council, our colleagues have said that the election of Petro Poroshenko was opening a new page in Ukrainian history. We also had hopes. They were not justified. We see neither encouraging steps to build a truly nationwide dialogue nor efforts towards a peaceful settlement.

On the contrary, the punitive operation is only intensifying as the inauguration approaches. We see the indiscriminate use of military aircraft, artillery and tanks in residential areas. What sort of restraint were you talking about, colleagues? In winter, you demanded that Viktor Yanukovich not use the army and withdraw the Berkut units from Kyiv. You should demand the same now from all those in the Ukrainian leadership who are responsible for the ongoing bloodshed. Russia is the only country demanding an immediate end to the punitive operation which makes the prospect of a peaceful resolution to the crisis through political dialogue even less likely and deepens the division between the Luhansk and Donetsk provinces on the one hand and the rest of Ukraine on the other.

All who support the punitive operation make themselves accessories to the murder of civilians in Ukraine. The number of civilian casualties continues to rise. On 2 June, there was a barbaric attack by Ukrainian aircraft on the building of the Luhansk Regional Administration. There were 13 victims, mostly women. Dozens were wounded. These facts have been confirmed by Special Monitoring Mission observers and have even been reported in the Ukrainian media. Finally, it was also confirmed by a CNN team that brought a military expert to the scene yesterday. Verkhovna Rada deputies are speaking of the bombing as a crime. Take a look at YouTube and you will see images of dying women and elderly people torn to pieces during the shelling of Luhansk. If they have managed to remove the images, we have copies. We are ready to show them to all those with strong nerves. The absurd version that our Ukrainian colleague is attempting to use to cover up war crimes does not hold water though because craters from the bombing can still be seen in the ground.

If you still believe that there are no radical extremists in Ukraine, read the comments left by the “progressive youth” under these images. You would only bomb a city centre during the day perfectly aware that unarmed people would be killed if you wanted to scare and terrorize civilians in the east of Ukraine. This is not just a punitive but an openly terrorist operation, the conscious destruction of one’s own people. It must end immediately.

Yesterday, reports emerged that in Krasnyi Lyman, which had been occupied by the National Guard, 35 wounded militiamen had been shot dead in the local hospital.

As a result of the actions of the Kyiv authorities, several towns in eastern Ukraine are now on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe. There is not enough food or medicine, there is a shortage of water and there have been power cuts. There are reports of ambulances being shot at. Residents, especially children, are having trouble leaving the besieged towns. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Russian and Ukrainian Red Cross expressed their deep concern on 2 June at the humanitarian situation in the region, which requires urgent humanitarian assistance.

On 28 May, we sent Ukraine a note requesting urgent humanitarian aid for the residents of eastern Ukraine. However, Kyiv completely ignored the topic. In fact, our request was refused. The need to provide urgent humanitarian aid to civilians remains a very pressing concern. We urge the Ukrainian authorities, on the basis of universal norms of human morality, to address the provision of assistance to those who desperately need it. It is vital that we deliver food and medicine quickly, start looking for those who have disappeared and organize humanitarian corridors. We demand that all parties to the conflict ensure that Red Cross staff and volunteers can carry out their humanitarian role unhindered.

According to Russia’s Federal Migration Service, the number of refugees from Ukraine crossing the Russian border into Rostov province reached 7,000 on 3 June, and on 4 June the figure stood at 8,300. Yesterday, 151 children arrived at the refugee camp there. We are trying to provide temporary facilities for them in Rostov province. A state of emergency has been declared there. The capacity of the existing facilities is clearly insufficient.

We are particularly concerned by the situation with the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission observers who are being held hostage, some of whom are Russian citizens. They must be freed immediately. Clearly, it would be much easier to solve this problem if the Ukrainian authorities were to create the necessary conditions and end the punitive operation.

We fully support the work of the OSCE observers, who are gradually improving the completeness and objectivity of the information they provide, in spite of the clear challenges. We once again call on the leadership of the Special Monitoring Mission and the Conflict Prevention Centre to spend less time censoring internal mission reports intended for the participating States. We need the hard truth, and what is more in all the regions where the Mission is working. We know that there are attempts to silence it. It is now high time for those responsible for writing reports for the media to get to work as well. This is not the first time we have spoken of this, with a view to ensuring that these press releases are balanced and do not create the impression that the OSCE supports the version of events of only one of the parties to the conflict, namely the Kyiv authorities. Amongst other things, this worsens the attitude of the people in the south-east to the OSCE observers themselves, who find themselves in a dangerous situation.

We are convinced that freeing the hostages would be helped by a clear and unambiguous call from the OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretary General and the leadership of the Special Monitoring Mission for an immediate end to all hostilities by all sides in order to move towards a dialogue on the basis of the Geneva agreements and the OSCE road map. We remind you that according to the Special Monitoring Mission's mandate one of the observers' tasks is to establish contacts on the ground and facilitate dialogue.

We have not heard anything recently about the prospects of a national dialogue as provided for by the Geneva statement and the Swiss road map. Instead of real constitutional reform, there is imitation. Round-table talks have shown the need to include in the discussions of the draft constitution and other laws regional representatives who have a real influence on the situation on the ground and not just convenient partners for the authorities, who, by the way, appoint the partners themselves. The demand of the international community for "inclusive, transparent and accountable" constitutional reform has still received no response.

We would ask the Ukrainian ambassador to comment on the reasons for recalling from the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe the draft amendments to the constitution that had been sent there for evaluation. It appears that constitutional reform in this form lacks the support not only of the public but also of certain branches of power.

There is also a problem with the implementation of other Geneva agreements. The Kyiv authorities, in this case I mean the Mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko, are unable to control the situation in the capital. Attempts to clear the Maidan and adjacent buildings have come to nothing. There are even more cases of banditry, robbery and raids throughout the country, including in Dnipropetrovsk.

Mr. Chairperson,

A record of the crimes committed in Ukraine is being carefully kept and those responsible will be brought to account, including for the use of prohibited means and methods of waging war, in particular inhumane weapons. On the whole, over the past few months in Ukraine, there have been many cases and events that require careful and, more importantly, independent investigation. We have heard nothing about the sniper affair. The Council of Europe international group to facilitate the investigation of human rights violations still has not been able to work properly. We still do not have answers to the questions we have asked previously regarding the detention of the group of Vienna Document military inspectors.

We are still awaiting details on the investigation of the tragedies in Odessa and Mariupol, the deaths of Andrey Mironov and Andrea Rocchelli, and the use of heavy weaponry that led to the deaths of unarmed people in Donetsk, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Luhansk and other towns. It is vital to urgently address the reports regarding the shooting of wounded people in the hospital in Krasnyi Lyman.

We once again urge Kyiv to implement the Geneva agreements and the road map proposed by the Swiss Chairmanship. We hope that Mr. Poroshenko will be able to use this historic chance to shift the situation onto a political footing and stop the worsening spiral of violence. If the President-elect cannot formally issue such an order then he can at least speak

out publicly for a peaceful settlement. Every day of hostilities will only deepen the rift between the authorities and the people. Even through the propaganda of the Kyiv media, people throughout Ukraine and around the world are coming to better understand that the National Guard and militants from various structures sponsored by private individuals, and now also some army units are not fighting against mythical Russian special forces but against the residents of Ukraine themselves.

Important political meetings are currently in progress in France. In this regard, we urge our Western colleagues, first and foremost the United States, to use their influence on Kyiv not to encourage violence, but to truly de-escalate the situation through dialogue. We cannot turn Ukraine into a new Syria or Libya.

Thank you for your attention.