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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1192nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 July 2018

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The “harvest ceasefire” has resulted in a significant reduction in exchanges of fire at the line of contact. It needs to be strengthened and made sustainable. Even so, between 1 and 10 July, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) recorded sporadic violations of the ceasefire regime. In most cases, the firing came from the Ukrainian armed forces and was aimed at militia positions. Houses were damaged in Dokuchaievsk and Yasynuvata as a result of shelling on 1 and 4 July. The security forces destroyed 120 hectares of cereal crops in the southern Donetsk region.

In order to prevent a fresh escalation, there is a need not only for monitoring but also a mechanism to ensure that disciplinary measures are taken against offenders. The Ukrainian Government should restrain the hotheads in the Ukrainian armed forces and punitive battalions. Orders prohibiting the use of weapons by all of Ukraine’s security structures need to be published at last, copies transmitted to the SMM, and those guilty of violations brought to justice. We support the proposals by the Chief Monitor of the SMM, Mr. Ertuğrul Apakan, and his deputy, Mr. Alexander Hug, for strengthening the ceasefire regime at the line of contact.

The Ukrainian Government needs to implement the Trilateral Contact Group’s (TCG) Framework Decision on Disengagement of Forces and Hardware. The Ukrainian armed forces have occupied the disengagement areas in Zolote and Petrivske and repeatedly disrupted the disengagement of forces in Stanytsia Luhanska. At the TCG meeting on 11 July, the Ukrainian representatives once again circumvented the disengagement question. The Ukrainian Government has challenged the SMM data on the most recent violation of the ceasefire regime at the Stanytsia Luhanska site. Previously reached agreements are being blatantly sabotaged.

We call on the Ukrainian armed forces to withdraw their military equipment from the line of contact. Between 1 and 10 July, the SMM counted 64 units of security forces’

equipment in violation of the withdrawal lines. Ukrainian Uragan multiple-launch rocket systems have been deployed in the immediate vicinity of the disengagement areas. There is hardware right next door to schools in Artema and Troitske. Ukrainian soldiers are billeted in homes in Pisky. The Ukrainian armed forces have conducted live-fire exercises in Orikhove-Donetske in violation of the TCG decision of 3 March 2016. A new minefield has been discovered near the village of Vodiane.

The implementation of the political provisions of the Minsk Package of Measures in line with the concept of parallel steps approved by the Normandy format leaders at the summits in Berlin and Paris remains an indisputable requirement for a lasting settlement of the conflict. However, the Ukrainian Government has done nothing so far to implement it. It is blocking the negotiations in the TCG Working Group on Political Issues. The question of including the Steinmeier formula in the law on the special status of Donbas hangs in the air. The law on so-called reintegration has created the legal preconditions for a military solution in Donbas. The Ukrainian Law on Education deprives the Russian-speaking population of the right to study in their native language and undermines the relevant provision of the Package of Measures on linguistic self-determination. The Ukrainian Government must be given a clear signal regarding the need to start fulfilling its obligations.

A range of humanitarian problems require an urgent solution. In addition to the global issues of restoring the trade and economic ties that have been severed and lifting the transport blockade, the Ukrainian Government is preventing issues that are important for the local population from being resolved. Ukraine's negotiators in the Trilateral Contact Group are blocking the adoption of a decision on the start of repairs to the bridge in Stanytsia Luhanska, despite confirmation by the SMM of the urgency of the situation there. The wooden ramp is damaged, and people spend hours queuing on the Ukrainian side of the line of contact. There have been cases of people dying while queuing.

Mr. Chairperson,

Instead of attempting to resolve the conflict with fellow citizens in Donbas, the Ukrainian Government continues trying to impose a bogus Russophobic paradigm of "Russian aggression" on its own society and foreign partners.

The cleansing of the media landscape continues. The head of RIA Novosti Ukraine, Kirill Vyshinsky, remains in custody. On 10 July, the Ukrainian border service refused to allow another journalist into the country – British citizen John Warren Graham Broderip. The Ukrainian State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting has imposed sanctions on 12 Russian publishing houses and sites. As of 10 July, 184 book titles were included in the "stop list". Under the pretext of "repeated violations of standards", the programme "Good Morning, Country" has been taken off the air. It was on this programme that the leader of the *Batkivshchyna* (Fatherland) party, Yulia Tymoshenko, said that Petro Poroshenko was planning to disrupt the presidential election in the country by escalating military action in Donbas. Where is the response from the United States of America and the European Union? Where is the response from the OSCE executive structures?

The Verkhovna Rada has begun to consider the draft law on countering threats to national security in the media space, which proposes to legalize the blocking of information resources without a court order. This contravenes the provisions of Ukrainian and international law regarding the rights of citizens to access information and to freedom of

expression of views and beliefs, erodes public control over government action and reduces the possibility of public discussion.

We are surprised that all these facts, just like manifestations of radical nationalism, were not properly assessed at the European Union-Ukraine summit in Brussels, including the notorious Law on Education, which does not take into account the recommendations by the Venice Commission. The fact that the final statement was full of anti-Russian references far removed from reality merely encourages the Ukrainian Government to continue sabotaging its commitments under the Minsk agreements. Such an approach is hardly conducive to a prompt settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict.

Thank you for your attention.