



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT AT THE SPECIAL SESSION ON “ENSURING SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THE OSCE REGION IN LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE”

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires a.i. Jens F. Reinertsen
to the Annual Security Review Conference,
Vienna, 28 June 2016

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Russia’s occupation of Crimea and actions in Donbass have posed a fundamental challenge for European security. In facing this challenge, the OSCE and its conflict prevention toolbox has proven its relevance. We fully support all parts of the OSCE’s efforts in Ukraine, and highlight especially the Trilateral Contact Group and the SMM.

The situation on the ground gives cause for grave concern. The parties must immediately and as a first step adhere to the ceasefire, withdraw heavy weapons, and disengage from the contact line. Political commitments must be translated into action. This will enable full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We condemn the deliberate obstructions and blinding of the SMM. The rebels are responsible for the vast majority of intimidations, freedom of movement restrictions, and destruction of technical equipment. The response from the parties and the JCCC to these incidents have been disappointing. Ukraine, Russia, and the separatists it backs must ensure the safety and security of SMM monitors and hold perpetrators accountable.

We are also concerned by the separatists’ manipulation of the public perception of the SMM, through media campaigns and choreographed demonstrations.

Eliminating the above-mentioned impediments would significantly strengthen the OSCE’s work in Ukraine. It is especially important to allow the SMM unhindered access to the border areas and to establish patrol hubs and bases close to the border.

Mr Chairman,

We welcome recent discussions on the OSCE’s potential contribution to security for local elections in accordance with the Minsk package. We believe that the OSCE should be ready to contribute, within its area of expertise, if called upon. We look forward to the chairmanship’s perception paper and further elaboration of the planning process.

We agree with Canada that we should issue a clear message, underlining the SMM’s civilian, unarmed nature.

Mr Chairman,

The SMM's also has a large potential for contributing in the preparation of local elections in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk through increased reporting on human rights and fundamental freedoms. Such reporting would pave the way for elections, through providing valuable information for discussions in the Normandy format, in the Trilateral Contact Group, as well as for ODIHR's Needs Assessment Mission. We underline in this connection the SMM's mandated task to report not only on restrictions on its freedom of movement, but also on "other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate".

Mr Chairman,

Crimea remains occupied and illegally annexed by Russia. The international community is cut off, and the OSCE's potential contribution to peace and security remains untapped. Crimea must be returned to Ukraine immediately. Pending its return, the *de facto* authorities must allow full and unimpeded access for international observers, including all parts of the OSCE.

Thank you, Mr Chairman