



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine**  
**at the 946<sup>th</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting on Russia's ongoing aggression against**  
**Ukraine**

(13 May 2020, Hofburg)

(Agenda item 3, General Statements)

**Mr. Chairperson,**

**The Russian Federation continues its illegal transfer of weapons, military equipment and ammunition through the uncontrolled, by the Government of Ukraine, 409 km segment of Russia-Ukraine border. It recently delivered dozens of trucks with ammunition and armored vehicles to the Donbas region of Ukraine.** According to the Ministry of defense of Ukraine, Russia continues to supply arms, ammunition, and other military equipment to the occupation troops on the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions across the border sections beyond the control of the Ukrainian Government.

During the month of April 2020 more than 20 units of armored vehicles, more than 30 trucks with ammunition and fuel have been delivered from the Russian Federation. At the same time, despite the complication of the sanitary and epidemiological situation, the rotation of regular officers at the command positions in 1st Army Corps (Donetsk) and the 2nd Army Corps (Luhansk) does not stop. Moreover, the number of mercenaries arriving from the Russian Federation for performance of active duty within the units of the Russian-occupation forces continues to increase.

**The delegation of Ukraine continues to share incontrovertible evidence of the direct participation of the Russian Federation in hostilities in eastern Ukraine. Russia has been also actively deploying sniper groups** to the conflict area which were enhanced by mercenaries, who returned from sniper training conducted in training centers of the Southern Military District of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Special mobile sniper groups use civilian cars and circulate all over the contact line, targeting Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel and in turn trying to further destabilize the situation.

**The Ukrainian Joint Forces recently have established yet more evidence of direct involvement of servicemen of the Russian Occupation Forces in the war in Donbas. They obtained detailed information on activity of a sniper unit**

**of the Federal Security Service** of the Russian Federation in Ukraine in February 2020. We will provide that detailed information to the delegations during the next FSC Plenary meeting.

**Russian occupational forces remotely mine the area in the Donbas, using POM-2 mines.** In the area of responsibility of the task force "North" of the JFO (Luhansk direction), observers of engineering reconnaissance units recorded the fact of ejecting antipersonnel mines POM-2, by means of portable mining tools. This type of ammunition (POM-2) is prohibited by the Ottawa Convention of 1999, which prohibits uncontrolled fragmentation anti-personnel mines. As Ukraine is a signatory of the treaty and upholds its commitments therein, there is only one other possibility of how such mines could have been obtained.

POM-2 is placed in a cassette of four pieces, each of which is placed in a metal cylinder. The process of their installation is carried out by means of remote mining tools. After the mine falls to the ground, the process of bringing it into a combat position begins with the help of six elastic blades, which place the ammunition vertically. A cross is fired from above the body, from which four anchors fly off in different directions, pulling a thin nylon thread. After a person comes in contact with the thread, there is an explosion. – **SEE 3 SLIDES AND VIDEO.**

According to the Ukrainian military, two mines from the cassette, as recorded in the video, went into combat position 30-40 meters from the enemy's trench, and the other two flew over Ukrainian observers at a distance of 150 meters. Such ammunition is manufactured in the Russian Federation. Before installation, the ROF removed all the numbers from them so that it is impossible to establish their origin.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

The Russian leadership, like the Russian delegation to the OSCE and the Forum, insistently refuse to recognize the direct participation of their regular military personnel - officers and generals - in the 1st (Donetsk) and 2nd (Luhansk) army corps in Donbas. We have repeatedly demonstrated to the delegations in the Forum, information about these Russian so-called "ichtamnets". Today, we want to share with you, information about high-ranking Russian officials, Russian citizens who, under the cover of various not very convincing cover stories, today control and manage the terrorist formations in eastern Ukraine. – **SEE 12 SLIDES.**

### **Mr. Chairperson,**

**The situation in the Donbas region of Ukraine remains volatile** due to the ongoing reluctance of the Russian Federation to cease hostilities and put an end to the conflict it started and sustains. **According to the Weekly Report 18/2020 of 5 May 2020 (For the period 27 April – 3 May 2020)**, compared with the previous week, the SMM recorded about 15% more ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (about 5,200 ceasefire violations, including approximately 1,800

explosions), compared with the previous week (about 4,600 ceasefire violations, including approximately 900 explosions).

**Members of the illegal armed formations continued to restrict SMM's passage at checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.** They deny the SMM passage at checkpoints along official crossing routes – mostly towards occupied areas – referring to the closure of the checkpoints due to COVID-19. These repeated restrictions again impeded the implementation of the Mission's mandate. At a checkpoint south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge on the only official crossing route in Luhansk region, Russian Occupation Forces (ROF) prevented the Mission from travelling towards government-controlled and occupied areas each time it attempted to do so (in total three and four times, respectively)

In the Donetsk region, members of the illegal armed formations denied the SMM passage towards occupied areas six times at a checkpoint near Olenivka (each time denying the Mission passage towards government-controlled areas) and once at a checkpoint near Verkhnoшыrokivske. The SMM continued to observe the presence of obstacles and mines on roads leading to some of the checkpoints of the armed formations, which impeded the Mission's passage through them. For instance, on 28 April and 2 May, at a checkpoint near Horlivka, the Mission again saw a road barrier which obstructed passage towards occupied areas. At the checkpoint near Verkhnoшыrokivske, on 2 May, the SMM again saw three anti-tank mines on a wooden plank placed in the middle of the road.

**In addition to restrictions posed by mines, the SMM faced restrictions to its freedom of movement on 28 occasions, all but two in occupied areas.** Eleven of these restrictions were recorded at checkpoints of the ROF and related to restrictions due to the COVID-19 outbreak. These restrictions continue to impede the Mission's freedom of movement across the contact line, thus impeding the implementation of its Mandate.

The SMM again noted that checkpoints of the ROF remained closed amid the COVID-19 outbreak. During the reporting period, civilians again told the Mission that they could not cross the contact line to return home after receiving medical treatment. For instance, in Donetsk city, an old man told the SMM that he resided in government controlled Volodymyrivka, and that he had been waiting to return home since mid-April after being released from a hospital in Donetsk. However, since he had no money or a place to stay in occupied areas, he had resorted to sleeping in his car.

**According to the Spot Report 21/2020 of 8 May 2020, Members of the armed formations continued to deny SMM patrols passage at checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.** On 5, 6, 7 and 8 May, members of the ROF again denied SMM attempts to cross into occupied areas along official crossing routes: 5 times in Donetsk region and 2 times in Luhansk region, while further attempts to cross into government-controlled areas were also denied, once in Donetsk region and twice in Luhansk region. On 5 and 8 May, at a checkpoint west of Verkhnoшыrokivske, ROF again denied an SMM patrol passage towards occupied areas, referring to quarantine restrictions due to COVID-19, on one occasion and

stating that the SMM did not have permission to pass on another occasion. On 5, 6, 7 and 8 May, at a checkpoint south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge, members of the armed formations again denied SMM patrols passage towards occupied areas on two occasions, and passage towards government-controlled areas on two other occasions, referring to the closure of the checkpoint due to COVID-19. On 5 and 7 May, at a checkpoint near Olenivka, ROF again denied SMM patrols passage towards government-controlled areas on one occasion, and passage towards occupied areas on another occasion, stating that the SMM did not have permission to pass. On 6 May, at a checkpoint near Oleksandrivka (near Donetsk), ROF again denied an SMM patrol passage towards occupied areas, referring to quarantine restrictions due to COVID-19. On 8 May, at a checkpoint near Horlivka, a member of the illegal armed formation again denied an SMM patrol passage towards occupied areas, stating that the checkpoint was closed. The Mission began facing repeated denials when attempting to cross into occupied areas at checkpoints of the ROF in Donetsk region on 21 March and Luhansk region on 23 March. They restrict the SMM's freedom of movement across the contact line, thus impeding the implementation of its mandate.

**According to the Spot Report 22/2020 of 8 May 2020, armed members of the armed formations stopped an SMM patrol in Horlivka and prevented its departure for almost 3 hours.** On the morning of 8 May, an SMM patrol consisting of 5 Mission members and 2 vehicles located on the south-western outskirts of Horlivka conducted an announced SMM mini-UAV flight. At about 9:20, after the patrol had completed the flight, 4 ROF members (3 of them carrying rifles), approached the patrol. They said that the SMM had no permission to fly its UAV in the area, and did not allow the patrol members to enter their vehicles and leave. Later on, 3 more ROF members, (armed with pistols), arrived in a van and a civilian car, with which they blocked the SMM vehicles' exit route. They asked to take pictures of the monitors' identity cards and of the mini-UAV, which the SMM refused to allow them to do. Then, a ROF member (armed with a pistol) arrived at the site and told the Mission it would be allowed to leave once it complied with the request. While waiting, the patrol members saw several ROF members (3 of them armed with sniper rifles). Only at 12:09, after almost 3 hours, a ROF member said he had received instructions to allow the patrol to leave the area and it returned safely to base. In this regard, we want to reiterate that **these impediments and restrictions by the Russian occupying forces severely violate the agreements reached, and also do not allow the SMM to fully implement its mandate.**

**In conclusion,** we urge the Russian Federation to stop its aggression against Ukraine, reverse its illegal occupation of Crimea, de-occupy parts of the Donbas region of Ukraine, and restore freedom of navigation through the Kerch Strait and in the Sea of Azov. Russia must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including withdrawal of its forces, illegal armed formations and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**