



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No 1125

Vienna, 20 December 2016

EU statement on “Russia’s Ongoing Aggression against Ukraine and Illegal Occupation of Crimea”

Final (190 words)

1. The European Union is deeply concerned by the recent further deterioration of the security situation in eastern Ukraine, exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation and resulting in further casualties, including the reported loss of five Ukrainian servicemen during intense fighting near Svitlodarsk on December 18. The past weekend alone, the SMM noted some 3600 explosions and the frequent use of Multiple Rocket Launch Systems.
2. We call on all sides to take immediate steps to reverse this deterioration. The sides have on numerous occasions recommitted themselves to the ceasefire. It is high time they abide by their commitments. This must go hand-in-hand with a full and verifiable withdrawal of Minsk-proscribed weapons, complete disengagement and humanitarian access, and full, safe and unhindered SMM access throughout Ukraine, including along the Ukrainian-Russian State border. We urge the sides to agree to concrete steps to this end at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group tomorrow.
3. Yesterday, the European Council prolonged the restrictive measures targeting specific sectors of the Russian economy until 31 July 2017. We recall that the duration of these measures remains linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, and the EFTA country NORWAY align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.