



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council No. 1308 Vienna, 31 March 2021

EU INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

In connection with the PC decision on the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, the European Union and its Member States would like to make the following interpretative statement under the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure:

1. The European Union welcomes the adoption of the decision to extend the mandate of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in its entirety and thank the Swedish Chairpersonship for its dedication and efforts in facilitating this extension. The SMM has a vital role to play in the implementation of the Minsk Protocol, the Minsk Memorandum, and the package of measures for implementation of the Minsk Agreements towards a sustainable political solution based on the full respect for OSCE principles and commitments.
2. We recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces since February 2014 and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, which we will not recognise. We further reiterate that the SMM mandate covers the whole of Ukraine, including illegally annexed Crimea and the Ukraine-Russia state border.
3. We call on all sides to provide safe, secure and unhindered access for SMM

monitors and SMM technical assets in all of Ukraine and we regret that Russia-backed armed formations continue to systematically deny access for the SMM to certain parts of Donetsk and Luhansk. Threats directed towards SMM monitors and other impediments to their work and the operations of their technical equipment are in violation of their mandate and must be stopped. We underline that the operational, security and financial consequences of all obstructions must be assessed. Those responsible for any wilful damage, destruction or loss of SMM UAVs and other assets should be held accountable, both politically and financially.

4. We reiterate the importance that the SMM budget is financed by the highest possible share of assessed contributions, while allowing for extra-budgetary contributions to enable continued support from partners.
5. We express our gratitude to all members of the SMM for their dedicated service under difficult and dangerous conditions.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.