



Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7311th meeting

Wednesday, 12 November 2014, 2.30 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Quinlan (Australia)

Members:

Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
Chad	Mr. Mangaral
Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
China	Mr. Wang Min
France	Mr. Delattre
Jordan	Mr. Omaish
Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
Nigeria	Mr. Laro
Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

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The meeting was called to order at 2.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, Assistant Secretary-General ad interim for Political Affairs; Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine; and Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Ambassadors Apakan and Tagliavini, who are joining today's meeting by video teleconference from Kyiv.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen.

Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen: My briefing today will focus on two specific issues: political developments in Ukraine and the latest developments related to the conflict in the east of the country. I will also provide a brief update on the United Nations activities in relation to Ukraine.

On 26 October, Ukraine held its early parliamentary elections. Although there was no voting in Crimea and the parts of Donbas under rebel control, elections were held throughout the rest of Ukraine in a manner that Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) observers welcomed as largely upholding democratic commitments. Yesterday, 11 November, the Central Electoral Commission announced the official results of the elections.

Discussions are under way for the formation of a Government, and we are hopeful that the leading coalition will be committed to the rapid implementation of the comprehensive political, legal and economic

reforms to which the Ukrainian authorities have committed themselves. Clearly, the ability of the leading coalition to work constructively alongside the opposition bloc will also be key for the unity and stability of Ukraine. We also hope to see an urgent start of a comprehensive national dialogue to rebuild cohesion and address all outstanding critical national issues.

On 2 November, rebels in Donetsk and Luhansk held their own elections, in defiance of the Ukrainian Government, which were deplored by many in the international community, including the Secretary-General. These elections have been condemned by the Ukrainian authorities as being outside the framework of the Ukrainian Constitution and law. Following the elections, the rebels have engaged in inflammatory rhetoric, declaring themselves as de facto independent from Ukraine and threatening to expand the territory under their control. A full mobilization, including the creation of local armies and security forces, was also announced. In response, President Poroshenko has proposed that Parliament revoke the law providing for three years of greater autonomy or special status for the rebel-controlled areas that had been offered as fulfilment of a key tenet of the Minsk protocol. Also, on 5 November, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk announced that pensions and subsidies would be halted to areas under rebel control.

On 3 November, hostilities in the east reignited, with the potential to further undermine the Minsk agreement. Currently, the security situation in Donetsk and Luhansk almost rivals the period immediately preceding the ceasefire agreement of 5 September. Citing credible threats from the rebel leadership that it would launch a new offensive, on 4 November, President Poroshenko ordered army reinforcements to key cities in southern and eastern Ukraine. Reaffirming that Kyiv sees no military solution to the conflict and that it would not attempt to retake rebel areas held by rebel force, the President's stated objective is to protect Ukraine's territory from any further incursions.

This past weekend, particularly on the night of 9 November, hostilities were reported to be at their worst in months, with a heavy exchange of artillery and shelling in and around Donetsk. A similar level of fighting was reported today. Lives continue to be lost daily, including those of two schoolchildren as a result of shelling in Donetsk on 5 November.

The upsurge in fighting comes amidst regular reports from the OSCE of an influx of large convoys of heavy weapons, tanks and troops flowing into rebel-held areas. In that connection, there is no doubt that a failure to secure the Russian-Ukrainian border is a factor that continues to impede the path to peace. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate in parts of Donbas. With the onset of harsh winter conditions, the number of internally displaced persons is expected to increase. If there is a return to full-scale fighting, the numbers could grow exponentially.

While Ambassador Apakan will brief members in more detail as to the situation on the ground, one thing is clear — the ceasefire of 5 September is under continuous and serious strain. If the prevailing hostilities continue, the Minsk agreements could undoubtedly be in jeopardy. Further consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group with rebel representatives have not been scheduled, while the self-proclaimed leaders of the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics have reportedly signalled that they would not participate in future consultations, appointing persons of lesser authority in their place. Ambassador Tagliavini will be providing further details on that issue.

Yet, while these agreements have been breached in various respects and are fragile, it is critical to note that no side has unilaterally abrogated them. In recent days, there have been some small, albeit positive steps toward implementation, such as a meeting between the general staff of the Russian and Ukrainian military on a line of delimitation. Although no agreement was reached at that time, subsequent meetings are reported to soon take place. What my predecessor, Assistant Secretary-General Fernández-Taranco, said in his most recent briefing to this Council on 24 October (see S/PV.7287) remains valid today. It is incumbent on all actors to fulfil their responsibilities and refocus their efforts towards full implementation of the Minsk agreements, and it is incumbent on all of us to assist them.

The human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine has continued its work providing objective and regular reporting on the human rights situation throughout the country and on factors that could negatively affect the social, political and security situation and efforts towards the solution of a crisis. The mission's seventh monthly report will be published on 20 November. In the meantime, the mission is seeking an extension of its presence in the country beyond 15 December.

With nearly 1 million people now displaced by this conflict, both within Ukraine and to neighbouring countries, humanitarian agencies continue to scale up their presence and respond to the growing needs. The United Nations is also leading a comprehensive recovery and peacebuilding assessment to conflict-affected, Government-held areas in eastern Ukraine that also includes participation by the European Union and the World Bank. Finally, in continuation of the Secretary-General's good offices, Under-Secretary-General Feltman is slated to travel to Ukraine again in the near future, pending the formation of the new Government.

In conclusion, the promise of renewal and of renewed energy towards solving Ukraine's problems embodied in the recent parliamentary elections threatens to be overshadowed by the worsening security situation in the east of the country. Nonetheless, the prospect that a new, reform-oriented ruling coalition will be formed, empowering it to move the country closer to a path of peace and stability, provides the avenue for all to support Ukraine out of this debilitating conflict.

With the Minsk agreements in question and uncertainty over how much strain the ceasefire can withstand, we are deeply concerned by the possibility of a return to full-scale fighting. Alternatively, the conflict may simmer this way for months, with sporadic, low-level battles marked by periods of increased hostilities and further casualties. While either scenario would be a catastrophe for Ukraine, a third prospect of concern is that of a frozen or protracted conflict that would entrench the current status quo in south-eastern Ukraine for years or several decades to come.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that none of those scenarios take hold. The only alternative is for the fighting to end so that all Ukrainians can rebuild their lives in a stable and secure country, with Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity preserved. The road to that solution is renewed commitment by all concerned parties to the Minsk agreements and shared responsibility for their full and urgent implementation. The United Nations also stands ready to support that process in any way deemed appropriate.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Apakan.

Mr. Apakan: I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the Council about the current situation in Ukraine.

The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine has operated throughout Ukraine since April and has implemented tasks such as monitoring human rights and basic freedoms, establishing facts and reporting thereon. Its mandate has also included dialogue and consultation, especially at the regional level. The Mission has been designed as a civilian observer mission with a political mandate that has been approved by 57 participating States. The Special Monitoring Mission adapted right from the start to a quickly changing environment.

We welcome the Minsk documents and the efforts to implement a ceasefire. In recent days, however, the level of violence in eastern Ukraine and the risk of further escalation remain high. We have observed ongoing fighting in many locations in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. Artillery and mortar shelling often hit residential areas, causing casualties among the civilian population. Our monitors have on three separate occasions observed convoys of unmarked trucks, heavy weapons and tanks in areas controlled by armed groups.

The ability of the Special Monitoring Mission to monitor the implementation of the Minsk documents, including ceasefire monitoring, poses considerable security and operational challenges to the Mission. It has necessitated an expansion of the Mission to the maximum of 500 monitors, in accordance with our mandate. The Mission currently consists of 266 international Mission members from 42 participating States. Of those, 170 are deployed in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

We have been communicating with all those involved in the process related to the Minsk protocol and memorandum, including the trilateral contact group, Ukrainian authorities, representatives of the general staffs of Ukraine and Russia engaged in the Mariupol Joint Centre for Control and Coordination (JCCC) and representatives of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk. I have been in regular contact with my colleague, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini. A security zone and a contact line would be established by the Minsk memorandum to serve as a reference point for the withdrawal of military personnel and equipment. This has not yet been accomplished. JCCC is a bilateral Ukrainian/Russian initiative and entirely separate from the Special Monitoring Mission, but the Mission will continue to do what it can to help.

However, strong political will is needed to make this structure work. Part of implementing the Minsk documents is also to secure the Ukrainian-Russian State border. The Special Monitoring Mission has been at the border whenever access and the security situation has allowed it, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) stands ready to expand its border monitoring. The stretch of the border beyond the control of the Ukrainian forces is around 400 kilometres long. In order to increase its monitoring capability, the Special Monitoring Mission has deployed civilian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Since the UAVs started flying, on 28 October, they have encountered jamming devices and, on one occasion, were shot at.

I would now like to emphasize the heavy toll that the conflict is taking on the civilian population. There are more than 430,000 internally displaced persons inside Ukraine, including those from Crimea. That deepens the humanitarian crisis, particularly as winter approaches.

President Porochenko's peace plan and the Minsk documents provide a framework and a road map for the normalization of the situation and for a stable and pluralistic Ukraine. The parliamentary elections of 26 October brought about a new and positive atmosphere. The Special Monitoring Mission will continue to facilitate the dialogue on the ground in order to reduce tensions and promote the normalization of the situation. That dialogue will foster the empowerment of civil society and women.

The security environment remains a significant constraint. The Special Monitoring Mission conducts constant coordination with all its monitors and observers in order to ensure proper security for them. The Special Monitoring Mission's access and freedom of movement remain obstructed, particularly in areas such as Horlivka and south of Debaltsevo and in some other border regions. The Minsk protocol and memorandum do not introduce limitations on the Mission's activities, geographically or otherwise. I must stress that the foundation of all Special Monitoring Mission activities remains the consensus decision of all participating States on the OSCE Permanent Council.

The Special Monitoring Mission will continue to monitor the situation in all of Ukraine, including in the two eastern regions. In eastern Ukraine, the Special Monitoring Mission will monitoring not only the

security zone but also the entire regions of Luhansk and Donetsk up to and at the State border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

While the Special Monitoring Mission continues to facilitate initiatives put forward to reduce tensions and foster peace, a sustainable ceasefire can be reached only by all involved. The Special Monitoring Mission will continue to cooperate with the United Nations, including the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme and UN-Women.

Once again, we need de-escalation and maximum restraint. The Special Monitoring Mission will continue its impartial monitoring and independent objective reporting. We ask all concerned to urgently commit to the full implementation of the Minsk documents, designed to bring peace and stability to Ukraine.

The President: I thank Ambassador Apakan for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Tagliavini.

Ms. Tagliavini: As of this moment, fighting in the eastern part of Ukraine is very probably going on. The two documents signed by members of the Trilateral Contact Group and representatives of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions at the meetings in Minsk — the protocol of 5 September and the memorandum of 19 September 2014 — continue, to our understanding, to be valid and to be binding upon all signatories. Indeed, they are the two ground-laying political and legal instruments on which the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine and other issues related to the ceasefire are being based.

It must be acknowledged that much of the fighting has stopped since the signing of the Minsk documents, but there continues to be fighting at some strategic locations, among which are the city outskirts of the Black Sea port Mariupol and around Donetsk airport. The fighting is severe, involving use of heavy weaponry. It is costing the lives of servicemen and civilians, together with many persons severely injured on an almost daily basis, not to mention the very substantial losses in terms of infrastructure, facilities and personal property. As yet, there are no signs of it letting up — there are many who even fear a worsening of the present situation, as we are receiving reports about a continuing military build up in the conflict zone.

That is, in the briefest of terms, the status of the implementation of the ceasefire as of now. The question is what must be done to overcome the obvious shortcomings. It goes without saying that the central issue now is to make sure that all signatories are keeping their commitments and doing so in good faith and in strict compliance with the agreements in the first place. There is a similar need to carry out other important provisions related to the ceasefire, among which is the full respect for the so-called line of contact, separating the opposing forces and serving as a reference line for the withdrawal of heavy military equipment to an agreed distance back from the line.

I would like to recall that the signatories to the Minsk documents also committed to the withdrawal of all foreign and illegal armed formations, military hardware and militants and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. There is naturally a continued need to strictly observe the political elements of the Minsk commitments as well. In that context, I wish to underline with all clarity that the so-called elections held in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions on 2 November of this year were called unacceptable and invalid by the Government of Ukraine, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a large majority of the international community, while another signatory Power to the two Minsk documents spoke of respecting the expression of will of the population without going any further.

It is clear from the foregoing that the implementation process for the documents signed in Minsk is now at a crossroads. On the one hand, we have achieved progress, with a ceasefire holding long stretches of the conflict area. There has also been no new major military operations since the signing. Among further positive results, I would note the release of hundreds of hostages and illegally detained persons, which needs to be continued.

On the other hand, we are faced with examples of blunt disregard for certain commitments undertaken in Minsk, as we see the continuation of fighting at the number of important places covered by the ceasefire. There has also been a lack of proper understanding of, if not open disregard for, certain political elements of the Minsk documents, as shown by the so-called elections that took place in November in some areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

It is against this background that I repeat my call for strict observance of all the provisions of the Minsk arrangements. I also invite all parties to the conflict to join me in an effort to further develop the peace process by agreeing to additional elements for the implementation and the further strengthening of arrangements signed in Minsk on 5 and 19 September 2014.

One of those elements should be an inclusive political dialogue, which may also include round-table discussions with a broad spectrum of participants. There is also an urgent need for the elaboration of a comprehensive economic rehabilitation programme, and even more so for providing humanitarian assistance to the population in the conflict zone, keeping in mind that winter conditions are already setting in.

Last but not least, I wish to point out that a sustained ceasefire between the opposing forces will never be achieved without complete and firm control over the international border between Ukraine and Russia, and that additional efforts are needed to reach that goal, based on the provisions of the Minsk documents.

In concluding my remarks, let me reiterate my firm belief that the conflict in eastern Ukraine can be solved only by peaceful means and at the negotiation table. We see the two agreements signed in Minsk as milestones on that path. In the effort to achieve their implementation, I feel united with my friend and colleague the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan.

The President: I thank Ambassador Tagliavini for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting on the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. We also thank Assistant Secretary-General Toyberg-Frandzen for his clear and objective briefing. We are grateful to Ambassadors Apakan and Tagliavini for briefing us today and for the brave and critically important role that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is continuing to play on the ground.

This is the Security Council's twenty-sixth meeting on the current crisis in Ukraine. If our message and the message of other countries today on the deteriorating situation in eastern Ukraine sounds familiar, it is

for good reason. For while the situation has evolved, the root of the problem remains the same: Russia's flagrant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Time and again, Russia has made commitments and then failed to live up to them, and subsequently offered explanations to the Council that it knows are untrue.

The most recent example involves the joint commitments made by Russia, the separatists it supports and Ukraine on 5 September in Minsk. They include an immediate end to the ceasefire violations, the restoration of Ukrainian control of its side of the international border, OSCE monitoring of the border and a security zone on either side of the border, as well as the withdrawal of foreign forces, mercenaries and equipment from Ukraine and the release of hostages and prisoners. On none of those have Russia or the separatists lived up to their word. At Minsk, all sides committed to an immediate ceasefire. Yet, rather than observe the ceasefire, the separatists have taken advantage of the agreed-upon pause in the fighting to try and expand their territory beyond Minsk lines.

Meanwhile, Ukraine has maintained a full ceasefire along the agreed lines, as it defends its forces and population from separatists' push for more. Over the last few days separatist attacks have increased significantly, including on positions around Donetsk airport, the city of Debaltseve and, of course, near Mariupol.

At Minsk, all sides committed to permitting the OSCE to monitor and verify the ceasefire. Yet Russian-backed separatists have fired on OSCE monitoring drones and used jamming signals to interfere with its team members' electronics using equipment supplied by Moscow. At Minsk, all sides agreed to permanent monitoring at the Ukrainian-Russian State border and the creation of a security zone along the border. Yet Russia has done nothing to restore Ukrainian Government control over the international border. Russia has refused to press separatists to allow the OSCE access to the border, and Russia continues to flout Ukrainian air space with its helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles. It also continues to send so-called humanitarian convoys — convoys it will not allow Ukrainian customs authorities or international monitors to search.

At Minsk, all sides committed to immediately free all hostages and illegally held persons. Yet Russia and

the separatists it backs continue to hold approximately 500 captives. Those captives include Ukrainian pilot Nadia Savchenko and Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov, both of whom were captured by separatists on Ukrainian soil and illegally transported against their will to Russia.

At Minsk, Russia committed to remove all illegal military formations, military equipment and militants from Ukraine. Yet, rather than withdrawing its military forces from Ukraine and rather than cutting off its support for separatists, Russia is instead surging more forces and more equipment across the border. The Russian military has maintained a forward presence in eastern Ukraine since the ceasefire took effect. We have information indicating that a Russian air-defence system was operating near one of the separatist convoys in Donetsk. Russia has not provided that type of air-defence system to separatists to date, suggesting that Russian forces were protecting the convoy.

On 9 November, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission reported two convoys of 17 unmarked green trucks moving west through Donetsk towards the ceasefire line. Yesterday, 11 November, OSCE monitors observed the movement of 43 unmarked military vehicles on the eastern outskirts of Donetsk. Five were seen towing 120-millimetre howitzers and five others were towing multiple-launch rocket systems. NATO confirmed it had observed columns of Russian equipment — primarily Russian tanks, Russian artillery, Russian air-defence systems and Russian combat troops — entering Ukraine over the past 48 hours.

The list goes on, but the pattern is clear. Where Russia has made commitments, it has failed to meet them. Russia negotiated a peace plan, then systematically undermined it at every step. It talks of peace, but it keeps fuelling war. That is not all. On 2 November, Russian-backed separatists held illegal elections in the parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions that they control. The elections contravene Ukraine's laws and its sovereignty. They defied point 9 of the Minsk protocol. But if Russia and the separatists intended the elections to cast a veneer of legitimacy on their actions, they failed. Instead, the world saw the elections for what they are: a shameless attempt to validate territory seized at the barrel of the gun — a gun provided by Russia.

In keeping with its efforts to escalate rather than de-escalate at every turn, rather than condemn the separatists' sham election like most of the international community, Russia encouraged it. Foreign Minister Lavrov even tried to argue that the elections were part of the Minsk agreements, which clearly stipulate that the elections be local and conducted "in accordance with the law of Ukraine".

Russian and separatist actions in eastern Ukraine currently have nothing to do with improving the humanitarian situation in Donbas, or decentralizing power, as called for in points 3 and 8 of the Minsk protocol. A recent Associated Press (AP) report from the rebel-held town of Perevalsk, part of the territory that recently declared independence from Ukraine, revealed the town was ruled by a local warlord who goes by the name of "batya" — or "daddy". Daddy's power is maintained by a group of armed Cossacks, whom he calls his Great Don Army, and four tanks outside his office fly Russian and rebel flags. Asked where his authority came from, Daddy told the AP reporter:

"We are an independent organization and we don't depend on anyone. I am answerable only to President Putin and Our Lord."

In neighbouring Alchevsk village rebel leaders preside over the kangaroo trials of people accused of crimes. Defendants are not given lawyers and their judges are whatever members of the community show up, who vote by a simple show of hands. That is what the separatist democracy looks like. We continue to see similar repressive tendencies in Russian-occupied Crimea, where members of the Tatar minority have been relentlessly persecuted and the free press muzzled.

By contrast, Ukraine has made a genuine effort to live up to its agreements at Minsk and continues to show considerable restraint in response to constant provocation and attack. The Ukrainian people have repeatedly chosen leaders who call for de-escalation over escalation, first in the presidential election and then in parliamentary elections.

Ukraine has also put in motion critically important reforms to reduce corruption and grant greater authority to its regions through constitutional reform. It has sought to maintain the ceasefire along the lines established at Minsk. The United States continues to support the Minsk peace process, and we continue to call for its full implementation. We remain prepared to roll back sanctions if the fighting stops, the border is

closed, the foreign forces and equipment are withdrawn and hostages are released. We have said all along that there is no military solution to the crisis. The solution, as has been said, by the OSCE here today and United Nations, must be political. With Minsk we have a road map to reach that solution. The problem is, as it has long been throughout this crisis, you cannot reach a political solution if only one side is committed to forging it, and you cannot effectively implement a road map with parties who, like the Russians and the separatists they back, so consistently fail to keep their word.

We have seen Russia's playbook in Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Crimea — so the question is not what Russia will try to do in eastern Ukraine, the question is what we, the international community, will seek to do to prevent yet another frozen conflict in Europe manufactured by Russia.

The Minsk agreement was brokered under the auspices of the international community; as such, there must be consequences when Russia flouts the commitments it has made and continues to destabilize its neighbour.

Russia has not earned the good faith we would wish to bestow. Even when Russia claims, as Foreign Minister Lavrov did today, "the inadmissibility of disrupting the implementation of the Minsk ceasefire agreements" actions are all that matter — and actions alongside these words show intentions. The Donetsk airport has come under attacks from artillery and arms fire four times in the past 24 hours, and in the past day Ukrainian positions have been shelled near Debaltseve, Avdiyivka, Hirske and Krasnohorivka.

What we can do — what we must do — is keep ratcheting up the pressure on Russia until it abides by Minsk and chooses the path of de-escalation. Russia's actions in Ukraine are a threat not only to the countries in Russia's immediate vicinity but also to the international order.

Mr. Nduhugirehe (Rwanda): I would like to thank Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, Assistant Secretary-General Ad Interim for Political Affairs, Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Chief Monitor of the special monitoring mission to Ukraine of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, for their briefings on the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. I would also like to recognize the presence in the Chamber of

the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations.

Since our last briefing, on 24 October (see S/PV.7287), the security situation in Ukraine has deteriorated further, despite the extensive diplomatic efforts deployed in the region over the past month. It seems that when the region takes a step forward, the parties respond with two steps backwards, at the expense of the civilian population. We should remember, as Ambassador Tagliavini has reminded us, that winter is around the corner and that with increased fighting, coupled with a shortage of gas in Ukraine, a humanitarian disaster is looming.

It is disappointing that despite the signing of the Minsk protocol and memorandum on 5 and 19 September, respectively, the parties seem unwilling to implement those agreements. We are seriously concerned about the continued violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, the massive reinforcement of the armed separatists with heavy weaponry, including via military convoys, as well as the continued shelling in populated areas, including, last week, of a school. In that context, we commend the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for its continuing role in verifying the ceasefire on Ukraine's eastern border. We note that it is facing serious challenges, including problems with the safety of its personnel and a lack of necessary equipment. We urge all parties, particularly the armed separatists, to assist the Mission in implementing its mandate, and we also encourage those who have the capacity to provide the monitors with the equipment they need to do so, in order to improve the success of its activities.

It is unfortunate that the deterioration of the security situation in Ukraine comes on the heels of the parliamentary elections of 26 October, which were viewed as free, fair and peaceful, despite the fact that there were no polling stations in the rebel-held areas. In that regard, we believe that the subsequent elections organized on 2 November by the armed separatists are unconstitutional and undermine the Minsk protocol and memorandum. In a context of heightened tension and escalation, we note with concern statements from all sides that may jeopardize even the provisions of the Minsk agreements that had begun to be implemented, such as those on the exchange of prisoners of war and the law on interim local self-government. It is therefore imperative that, given the alarming situation, all the signatories recommit to implementing the Minsk agreements and that members of the Trilateral Contact Group use their

influence to end the dangerous escalation. Otherwise, despite our collective commitment made yesterday on the occasion of Remembrance Day, the situation could get out of hand and lead to another full-blown regional war on the European continent.

I would like to conclude by recalling that, despite the fact that we all agree that the situation in Ukraine has become a threat to international peace and security, the Security Council is still discussing it based on letters sent by Permanent Representatives in New York back in February (S/2014/136) and April (S/2014/264). While I am aware of the deep division in the Council on the substance, as demonstrated by its persistent lack of any pronouncement on the issue, I believe it is time for the 15 to at least agree that the Council should remain seized of the matter under a specific agenda item, "The situation in Ukraine".

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank Ambassadors Tagliavini and Apakan for their statements, and Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, Assistant Secretary-General Ad Interim for Political Affairs, for his briefing.

Chad remains concerned about the deterioration of the security situation in Ukraine, particularly in the eastern part of the country. In the past few days we have seen a resurgence in the fighting between the Ukrainian army and the separatists. The city of Donetsk is the scene of exchanges of artillery, mortar and automatic weapon fire. Several sources also confirm that the parties to conflict have been firing fragmentation shells in urban areas. Chad condemns such acts of violence and calls for an immediate end to armed confrontations in accordance with the ceasefire established by the Minsk agreement. Chad also deplores the radicalization of the parties' positions, with the announcement, on one hand, by Poroshenko's Government that it has suspended all financial aid to Donbas and frozen €2.6 million in salaries and various forms of assistance, and, on the other, the separatists' holding of elections on 2 November in Donetsk and Luhansk, in flagrant violation of the Minsk agreement and the Constitution of Ukraine. All of that chiefly affects the civilian population, which has already paid a heavy toll in the conflict. According to the United Nations, since the start of the conflict in April more than 4,000 people have died, many of them civilians, and more than 5,000, whose situation will worsen as winter approaches, have been internally displaced.

In the face of this escalating situation, we urge the parties to the conflict to act calmly and with restraint. Like other members of the Council, Chad believes that finding a political solution is the only way to emerge from the crisis. In that regard, we encourage the Government of Ukraine to find a path to a direct and inclusive national dialogue focused on national reconciliation. Chad also urges the countries that have the capacity to influence the parties to the conflict to use that influence to help achieve peace in Ukraine, with respect for its territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I thank the briefers for their statements.

We are concerned by the escalating violence and mounting civilian casualties in eastern Ukraine. The constant shelling, the fragile security situation, the teetering economy and an atmosphere of uncertainty are obstacles to the attainment of peace in the region. Strict adherence by all parties to the provisions of the Minsk protocol and the memorandum of 19 September is vital and urgent. We call on all concerned to keep genuine channels of communication open and take concrete steps to consolidate the ceasefire agreement. We emphasize that there can be no military solution to the crisis.

The elections conducted on 2 November in the separatist republics of Donetsk and Luhansk run counter to the spirit of the Minsk protocol and pose a threat to the peace, unity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Although the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe recently stated that the elections would further complicate the implementation of the Minsk protocol, and we share that view, we urge all concerned, and in particular nations with influence over the parties, to continue to facilitate dialogue with a view to easing tensions, de-escalating the violence and ultimately arriving at a peaceful solution to the crisis. We would like to see Ukraine return to normalcy and its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity respected, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Omaish (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I, too, would like to thank the briefers for their presentations this afternoon.

Jordan is extremely concerned by the worsening security situation and the increase in shelling in eastern

Ukraine, which follows a period of tenuous calm in the region. We now fear a resumption of full-scale fighting. If the situation is not brought under control, there could be spillover effects beyond Ukraine and into the entire region.

Jordan believes that the military build-up and the illegal flow of weapons into Ukraine, as stated in the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, are violations of the Minsk agreements. Any attempt by the parties to resume the fighting flouts international efforts aimed at reaching a lasting and peaceful solution to the conflict. We reiterate our call to all parties, in particular armed groups, to show restraint and discipline, calm the situation and make intensive, serious and sincere efforts to prevent a further worsening of the situation, which would be dire for all concerned.

Any deferral of a political solution based on the peace agreements will only further exacerbate violence and instability and bring about a worsening of the humanitarian situation, which must be addressed. Any delay will only further prolong the ongoing investigation of the Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 crash. The shared challenges have to be tackled by all Ukrainians across the board, be they in the east or the west of the country. I am referring to the political reforms, national reconciliation and economic development. Those shared challenges can be tackled only through cooperation among all the parties so as to ensure that the conflict not worsen irreversibly.

In that regard, the holding of legislative elections in the country on 26 October was an important step on the path to political reform, which the Ukrainian Government has committed itself to. We therefore encourage the Government to continue its efforts to step up the national dialogue and to put in place all the necessary political and economic reforms that can contribute to the national reconciliation process among all members of Ukrainian society.

Jordan will continue to back the Minsk agreements. We stress the importance of cooperation among all parties for a comprehensive and swift implementation of all the provisions of the agreements, including provisions regarding the ceasefire and the halting of weapons flows. We emphasize the need to uphold and maintain the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, as undermining those would be a violation of international law.

We also recall that it is crucial that there be no impunity or immunity for those having perpetrated violations or acts of violence. We further recall that such individuals must be brought before justice to ensure that the situation in Ukraine not further deteriorate.

Mr. Oyarzábal (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to begin by thanking Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen, Ambassador Tagliavini and Ambassador Apakan for their statements. We also welcome the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the Council.

The signing of the Minsk protocol, on 5 September, and of the ceasefire memorandum, on 19 September, under the auspices of the Trilateral Contact Group, were steps that had broad support from the international community and raised the hope that we could begin to overcome the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Both agreements established a basis and set broad criteria for a negotiated exit from the crisis and for a reduction in the levels of violence, including the decentralization of power and the holding of an inclusive national dialogue.

Unfortunately, the implementation of the agreements has been very slow. We are concerned about the information indicating that the ceasefire, which was never fully carried out, is at risk of completely collapsing. That would be a tragedy. It would lead to the loss of more lives, the aggravation of the humanitarian situation and an entrenching of the positions, which would lead only to a prolongation of the conflict.

In that context, avoiding any new escalation of hostilities is a priority. The parties must demonstrate moderation and refrain from taking unilateral actions that run counter to the peace initiatives. All the relevant actors must return to the letter and spirit of Minsk in order to re-establish the conditions that make it possible to renew dialogue.

It is also up to the international community to do its utmost to facilitate the swift implementation of the Minsk protocol and Minsk memorandum, in the context of respect for international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Any intervention in affairs that are within Ukraine's internal jurisdiction — whether it be military, political or economic in nature — must be avoided. In that context, we appreciate the actions taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We underscore once again the Council's political and institutional

responsibility to safeguard international peace and security.

We deplore the fact that, until now, despite the many times we have met to deal with this situation, we have not been able to play a positive role and overcome the divisions that prevent the Council from contributing to the parties finding the necessary points in common in order to move forward towards a diplomatic solution and put an end to the confrontations, which are especially punishing on the civilian population.

As we seek to move the crisis onto the diplomatic track, there is a need to continue to respond to the difficult humanitarian situation being experienced by persons affected by the crisis. We recognize the work being carried out by humanitarian workers to ensure access to assistance to those who need it, in a context that poses many security challenges. We call on all parties to facilitate the distribution of humanitarian assistance on the basis of non-discrimination and in full cooperation with humanitarian actors.

At the same time, we underscore that it is essential that independent investigations be conducted in response to all reports of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, so that those responsible, no matter to whom they report, be accountable for their actions.

The parties in Ukraine and those who have influence on them are facing a critical moment. They have two clear options before them — working in a genuine fashion to restore calm and peacefully resolve the crisis so that Ukraine may return to the path of growth with inclusion, or immersing itself in unnecessary and fruitless conflict. It is not too late to choose the first path. Argentina will continue to firmly support all efforts for peace and the decisions taken to that end.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General ad interim for Political Affairs, Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, for his briefing. I also thank Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission, and Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, for making themselves available to us and for the invaluable information they have provided to the Council on the critical situation in Ukraine.

Luxembourg fully supports the efforts of the Swiss Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE to find a political solution to the crisis, while fully upholding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We also support the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, which has a key role to play to promote the de-escalation of tensions by providing objective information on the situation on the ground.

We are very concerned by the serious deterioration of the situation in eastern Ukraine since 2 November, when the separatists held illegal elections in the regions of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts under their control. While the Minsk protocol and memorandum, signed on 5 and 19 September, respectively, paved the way for a peaceful end to the conflict, non-compliance with key provisions of the Minsk agreements has led to a new escalation of tensions and a worsening situation in several regions of eastern Ukraine.

The growing number of violations of the 5 September ceasefire agreement are compounded by worrisome omens. We are concerned about the recent build-up of Russian troops in the immediate proximity of the Ukrainian border. We are also concerned about the increased movements of military convoy in separatist-controlled areas heading for Ukrainian army positions. As has been noted, in recent days the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has reported sightings of large convoys of military trucks without license plates transporting troops and heavy weapons, including howitzers. A convoy of nine tanks — four T-72s and five T-64s — heading west was observed by the Mission on Saturday, 8 November. These movements of troops and heavy weaponry are accompanied by intensified bombing, especially in Donetsk.

We condemn the sham elections held on 2 November in the eastern regions of Ukraine controlled by the separatists, with the blessing of Russia. We do not recognize those elections. They are illegal under the Constitution and Ukrainian law. They constitute a flagrant violation of the commitments that Russia and the representatives of illegal armed groups made when signing the Minsk protocol. Those sham elections do not legitimize the warlords at the head of the self-proclaimed republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, just as the illegal referendum in Crimea does not and will not legitimize the annexation of the peninsula by Russia. Successive reports of the Special Monitoring Mission bear witness to serious violations of human rights committed since April in areas occupied by armed

separatist groups. These individuals cannot claim to speak for the people of Donbas. The Secretary-General and the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office have rightly denounced the elections of 2 November as an obstacle to efforts to find a political solution to the conflict.

We welcome the concrete steps taken by Ukraine to meet its commitments under the Minsk agreements, in particular the adoption of laws providing for amnesty and the temporary status of local autonomy. In addition to scrupulously observing a ceasefire, of particular importance is the withdrawal of armed groups, military equipment, combatants and illegal mercenaries, as well as securing the border between Ukraine and Russia and its permanent monitoring with OSCE verification. It is crucial in this context that the Mission's monitoring of the border posts at Gukovo and Donetsk be extended to other border-crossing areas as soon as possible.

It becomes more urgent every day to end the conflict impacting Ukraine. The conflict has already killed more than 4,000 people since April. The victims include numerous children, including two struck down on 5 November by mortar shells on a school playing field in Donetsk. The killing must stop. The solution to the conflict has been identified; it includes the good-faith implementation of the Minsk protocol of 5 September and the Minsk memorandum of 19 September, signed by all parties to the conflict, with the decisive verification support of the OSCE.

Ukraine has demonstrated in deed its determination to pursue the path of peace. We call on the separatists and Russia to do the same so as to halt the spiral of conflict. We call on the Russian Federation to shoulder its responsibilities in the full and complete implementation of the Minsk agreements by preventing all military movement of weapons or combatants from its territory into Ukraine and by exercising its influence on the separatists to fulfil the obligations to which they have subscribed under the Minsk agreements.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen, Ambassador Apakan and Ambassador Tagliavini for their briefings on the situation in eastern Ukraine.

We are acutely alarmed by the observations reported by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, detailing the influx of military equipment, weapons and armed personnel into the region of Ukraine held by armed rebel groups. It represents a clear violation of the Minsk agreements, a serious encroachment on

the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and a challenge to the future of the country. The Minsk protocol and memorandum of September offered the basis for hope towards a peaceful and viable resolution of the crisis. They provided the parties concerned with a measure of political space to build upon. However, such early hopes have turned into worries that the conflict may again escalate. The withdrawal of foreign troops and military equipment under OSCE monitoring is an integral part of the Minsk agreements, which must be fully implemented. We urge all concerned parties to stop any provocative actions that may derail the fragile peace process, as embodied in the Minsk agreements. All outside military intervention in the situation must cease immediately.

Regarding political developments in the country, we welcome the holding of parliamentary elections on 26 October, which proved to be orderly and peaceful. We very much hope that the election results, together with national reconciliation and a process of dialogue, will pave the way for much needed stability throughout the country. In that regard, the separate elections held by armed rebel groups in eastern Ukraine earlier this month run counter to the spirit of a dialogue-based resolution of the situation. They also undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We hope that the political track based on the Minsk agreements can be restored and put back into force as soon as possible.

We commend the role of OSCE, the United Nations and other partners in seeking a peaceful political resolution of the situation, and we stand ready to support such efforts.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I thank the three briefers for their briefings this afternoon.

As others have pointed out, the Council has met many times on Ukraine over the past six months. There is a reason for that. The situation in Ukraine continues to be a severe threat and indeed an escalating threat to international peace and security. There is a reason why that is so. Since the start of the crisis, Russian actions have been consistently designed to undermine, interfere with and transgress Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in a way that flouts international norms, including the Charter of the United Nations.

Since the Council last met on 24 October to discuss Ukraine (see S/PV.7287), Russia and the separatists it supports have repeatedly undermined and ignored

the Minsk agreements. Russian leaders have told us one thing and then ordered their military, their special forces and their separatist rebel proxies to do another. The ceasefire has been breached. Attempts to monitor and verify the ceasefire and the border have been blocked. Russia continues to supply its soldiers in Ukraine and the separatists they fight alongside with heavy weaponry, artillery, tanks and armoured vehicles in flagrant breach of the Minsk protocols.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reporting in recent days lays bare the extent of that Russian support. On several separate occasions, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has witnessed significant numbers of troops and military equipment moving in convoy in separatist-held areas. I will mention just one such report. On 8 November, the Mission observed a convoy of more than 40 unmarked military vehicles moving west on the outskirts of Donetsk. It included 19 unmarked Kamaz trucks, each towing a howitzer artillery piece and carrying personnel in green uniforms without insignia; 15 Kraz troop carriers; 6 fuel tankers; and an unmarked Bronetransporter armoured personnel carrier. We have seen this pattern before — unmarked columns of military vehicles entering Ukraine to support continued fighting by separatists. Efforts to remove markings and insignia from those vehicles cannot disguise the fact that they come from Russia. What other credible explanation is there?

Yet Russia continues to deny that fact, despite the fact that its attempts at deception turned to farce only yesterday when Russian television station NTV broadcast footage of an armoured personnel carrier at the head of a column in Donetsk bearing markings from the Russian city of Ryazan. If Russia is not supplying separatists across the border, then why does it continue to block any expansion of OSCE border monitoring? Russia must implement the commitment it made at Minsk to allow the monitoring of its border with Ukraine, of which only 2 kilometres are currently observed by the OSCE. Flights of OSCE unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) above Donetsk must also be allowed to proceed unhindered. OSCE reports that UAVs are being jammed electronically by military-grade equipment call into question the credibility of the commitment towards the Minsk agreements of those who control that territory and their Russian supporters.

The United Kingdom deeply regrets that illegal elections took place in separatist-controlled areas of

Donetsk and Luhansk on 2 November. The Secretary-General could not have been clearer in his public message that the elections were illegal under Ukrainian law and seriously undermined the Minsk protocol. The Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE was equally clear that the elections ran counter to the letter and spirit of the Minsk protocol and would further complicate its implementation.

When the leadership of international organizations to which Russia belongs issue such statements, one would expect Russia to listen. Instead, Russia has offered support to the elections. Russia has said that it will respect the will of the citizens of the Donbas despite the fact that, as President Poroshenko has made clear, the so-called elections were “a farce at gunpoint that had nothing in common with the real expression of the people’s will”. Russia’s refusal to disavow the elections is a continuation of a pattern of Russian behaviour that flouts the Minsk agreements and is designed to destabilize the situation in Ukraine.

Although the focus of today’s discussion is the increase in fighting and the illegal elections held in eastern Ukraine, the Council must not lose sight of the deteriorating human rights situation in areas under separatist control in eastern Ukraine and in particular in the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula, which the mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is still unable to visit. We continue to receive disturbing reports of intimidation and harassment of Crimean Tatars, ethnic Ukrainians and all those who have refused Russian citizenship.

The de facto Crimean authorities have undertaken a campaign to rid the Crimean peninsula of its Ukrainian and Tatar identity. Citizenship provisions, the educational syllabus and the media are all being ruthlessly engineered to that end. Crimean Tatars are being targeted by security forces; 18 prominent Tatars remain missing and 1 body has been found. That is an issue that we will need to come back to discuss when the mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights produces its next report.

We have said in the past that Russia must be judged by actions, not words. What we see is that Russia’s actions continue to escalate tensions rather than contribute to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The Minsk agreements offer a framework that can

move the situation away from the current crisis and towards stability based upon de-escalation and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. However, that requires genuine commitment of a kind we have not yet seen from Russia. Instead, Russia is taking a cynical and selective approach towards the agreements while it continues its destabilization of Ukraine. That must change.

We therefore call again on Russia to withdraw its equipment, weapons and troops from Ukrainian territory, as it undertook to do in September, and to use its influence to secure a lasting ceasefire. Its continued support for the armed separatists serves only to escalate an already perilous situation and will only lead to a further deterioration in Russia's relations with the international community.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General ad interim Toyberg-Frandzen, Ambassador Apakan and Ambassador Tagliavini for their briefings just now.

While the overall security situation in eastern Ukraine has been stable recently, violent attacks have continued to take place and have caused loss of life and property. China is concerned about that. At the same time, China welcomes the recent agreement signed between Russia and Ukraine on natural gas and hopes that the agreement will contribute to easing the current tensions and enhancing a political solution to the crisis in Ukraine. China believes that a political solution is the only way to resolve the question of Ukraine. For the next stage, all the parties concerned should truly implement the Minsk agreement in a comprehensive manner so as to ensure that a ceasefire is achieved, the violence in eastern Ukraine is brought to an end and the humanitarian situation in affected areas is alleviated.

The question of Ukraine involves both complex history and current reality. A fundamental solution to the question of Ukraine should take into full account the legitimate rights, interests and wishes of all regions and ethnic groups in Ukraine. It should also seek to satisfy the reasonable concerns of all parties and achieve a balance of interests among them. We hope that all parties will continue to engage in constructive dialogue with a view to agreeing on a balanced, lasting and comprehensive political solution. All parties should work together to achieve that goal.

China has always abided by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other

countries and respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, including Ukraine. China supports all actions that will contribute to dialogue and consultation and to finding a political solution to the crisis. China will continue to play a positive and constructive role in favour of a political solution to the question of Ukraine.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen for his briefing, and Ms. Tagliavini and Mr. Apakan for theirs.

Almost a year ago, Ukraine entered into a period of unprecedented transformation after years of administrative inefficiencies and political blockage. This transformation came from deep within Ukrainian society. Following the presidential election in May, the Ukrainian parliamentary elections of October 26 represent a new phase in the process of democratization taking place in Ukraine. The elections neatly confirm the fundamental choices of the Ukrainian people in favour of a deep transformation and a deep economic and social modernization of Ukraine. The forward march of Ukraine to the rule of law and political pluralism can continue. The path will be long. Agreed steps must now be translated into the implementation of necessary reforms in the areas of the economy, rule of law, decentralization and reconstruction.

However, since Ukraine has embarked on the path of reform, it has been constrained in moving forward. The separatist agitation helped from outside the country has spread to the eastern part of Ukraine, first in Crimea — annexed in violation of the law — and then in the Donbas region, causing disturbances, human rights violations and a serious humanitarian situation. We condemn in the strongest terms this interference in Ukrainian internal affairs, which has taken place with flagrant disregard for its sovereignty and territorial integrity. As occurred in Crimea in March, so-called elections were held on 2 November by the separatists in the part of Donbas that they occupy. These elections violate the letter and the spirit of the Minsk protocol, which provides for local elections in accordance with Ukrainian law. It is essential to quickly reach full compliance with the ceasefire and pursue further negotiations on the provisional status of the regions of the east.

With the signing of the ceasefire in Minsk on 5 September and an agreement on 19 September, a diplomatic process was finally set in motion between

Kyiv and Moscow. These agreements remain a good basis for bringing about an end to the crisis based on three principles: respect for the ceasefire, monitoring of the eastern border of Ukraine, and political discussions for the purposes of finding a lasting solution. The priority now must be to remain on the path of dialogue and to continue the implementation of the agreements. Our goal is to bring Ukrainians, separatists and Russians to the negotiating table in order to stop the escalation. That is a crucial aspect of the Minsk protocol.

Military movements last weekend at the Russian-Ukrainian border, confirmed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), are cause for great alarm in that respect. Several dozens of military vehicles including tanks entered Ukraine in recent days. The strengthening of the military presence of the separatists and the proliferation of troop movements have raised fears of renewed fighting on a larger scale. The announcement of the creation of a Donbas army and a general mobilization is particularly worrying. The separatists and their supporters must prove they are ready for dialogue and the search for peace. In this context, we call once again for Russia to prevent the transfer of arms and men across its border and to use all its influence on the separatists so that the ceasefire is fully respected.

The issue of monitoring the Russian-Ukrainian border remains a focal point for reaching a political solution to the crisis. We expressed our readiness to provide the OSCE with our surveillance capabilities. The utility of drones has been shown in that they can be alternative and exclusive sources of information. We are in discussions with our Russian and Ukrainian partners on the subject. These discussions are difficult, but they are crucial if there is to be progress. We also believe that the mandate of the OSCE mission in Russian territory should be strengthened and expanded as quickly as possible to other border posts.

In this context, our political approach is based on firmness and dialogue. The sanctions are not intended to punish but to encourage dialogue. Sanctions are a tool, but they are not the only one. The conclusion of the negotiations on the supply of natural gas 10 days ago is a sign that some progress can be achieved through dialogue. Europe gave a clear alternative — heavier sanctions if the destabilizing actions continued and worsened, or a re-examination of the question if the situation on the ground bears witness to a real implementation of the agreements of 5 September. It

is high time that we all rally in favour of de-escalation and the re-establishment of good-neighbourly relations between independent and sovereign States. No one has interest to fan the flames and return to the rhetoric of another century.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Assistant Secretary-General ad interim for Political Affairs, Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen, and we appreciate the presence of Ambassadors Apakan and Tagliavini at this meeting. We also welcome Ambassador Sergeyev, Permanent Representative of Ukraine, to the Security Council today.

We regret that the Council has had to be convened today and express our deep concern at the further escalation of the crisis in the east and south of Ukraine. We are concerned about information with respect to a possible foreign military support in eastern Ukraine and what the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has told us. It is urgent that the ceasefire be fully respected, monitored and verified by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, in accordance with the provisions of the Minsk agreements. We trust that all the parties will be able to implement the Minsk agreement, which is an inclusive political instrument aimed at achieving peace and calm for the entire population of eastern Ukraine.

We regret the worsening security situation in the east of the country which has had serious consequences for the civilian population, which continues to suffer violations and human rights abuses from all actors. It is urgent that the increasing humanitarian needs in south-eastern Ukraine be addressed, as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other United Nations agencies have pointed out. The dramatic increase in the number of internally displaced persons is one of the most disturbing elements. The delivery of humanitarian assistance must go forward without delay and in accordance with humanitarian principles. The efforts of the international community must be harnessed in support of the host Government, which bears the primary responsibility for assistance and protection.

We stress the importance of strengthening the rule of law and the obligation to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, General Assembly resolution 68/262 and international law. It is also necessary to observe the principle of

non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of another State. Finally, we urge the parties to seek a peaceful solution to this crisis through direct political dialogue, exercise restraint and refrain from unilateral actions that could increase tensions.

We reiterate our support for the efforts that the Secretary-General and the United Nations continue to undertake to resolve the situation in Ukraine. We also hope that the various independent international mechanisms will continue to contribute to finding a solution to the crisis.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): An undeclared war is being waged by Russia against Ukraine. By now, it is barely making the world's headlines because it is slow and creeping — a few more metres of captured land, a few more explosions, a few more Russian tanks, a few more dead at a time. As Europe marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Europe, Russia is doing its best to resuscitate the bygone era of division and brinkmanship, continuing its aggression against Ukraine, buttressed by bogus claims of defending Russian speakers from the advances of fascism and by outlandish accusations against Europe and the West.

The abduction of an Estonian intelligence officer on the Estonia side of the border and of a Ukrainian pilot in Ukraine; the alarming rise in the intensity and gravity of provocations involving Russian reconnaissance and fighter jets over an increasing territory, from the Baltic Sea region to Portugal, the United States, Canada and Japan — all point to a more aggressive unilateral Russian military posture going well beyond Ukraine's borders.

The conflict in Ukraine is not an internal affair. It is neither a civil war nor a rebellion of disgruntled citizens. It is Russia's war against Ukraine for daring to choose a different, European path. Sponsored by the Kremlin, the illegal armed separatists, many of whom carry Russian passports, have inflicted heavy damage on the Ukrainian forces and civilian population before and during the ceasefire, using sophisticated weaponry, tanks, multiple rocket launchers and heavy artillery. While Ukraine honoured the ceasefire agreement, Russia-backed separatists used the time to rearm and grab more territory. By now, those illegal armed groups are probably better armed than some of the smaller European armies — all thanks to Russia's continued support and supplies.

We are profoundly worried by the recent reports of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, registering unmarked convoys of trucks carrying substantial amounts of heavy weaponry, ammunition, Grad multiple-launch rocket systems and howitzers, as well as armoured personnel carriers and tanks, moving cross the border and westwards inside the separatist held areas. That is a clear and blatant violation of the ceasefire agreement, which called for the withdrawal of Russian weapons and troops from Ukraine and a sealing of the border under international observation. Let us not forget that despite relevant provisions of the Minsk protocol on the establishment of a permanent OSCE presence along the Ukraine-Russia border, Russia single-handedly prevented the expansion of such a presence on the border, as a result of which OSCE observers monitor only 2 kilometres of the Russia-Ukraine border out of a total of 400 kilometres.

The holding by the separatists of illegal elections in eastern Ukraine is another clear violation of the Minsk agreements. Russia alone endorsed those sham elections and even arranged the presence of "observers" — a bunch of hard-line nationalists, Nazi sympathizers and xenophobes, tried and tested in the illegal plebiscite in Crimea. If Council members google the name of Mateusz Piskorski, they will find him posing in front of a swastika flag. Frank Croyelman is an open xenophobe, known for demanding amnesty for those who collaborated with the Hitler regime during the Second World War. Marton Gyongyosy once suggested that Hungarian Jews should be tallied up because they pose a threat to the State. Srđan Trifković is defender of Slobodan Milošević and an Islamophobe. Ewald Stadler is known for delivering one of the most racist speech ever in a European parliament. The list could go on.

It is with the help of such odious characters that Moscow is "fighting Fascism" in Ukraine. Little does it matter that Ukraine's population squarely rejected the extreme forces during the recent national elections. As Russia flirts with Europe's extremist fringe, the myth of Ukraine's fascist junta continues to be advanced by Russia's propaganda machine. What the Russian propaganda machine will not say, however, is that since Russian troops "liberated" Crimea, the human rights situation in the region has deteriorated dramatically, and that the separatist-held regions in eastern Ukraine have been repeatedly described by United Nations

human rights reports as an abyss of lawlessness and criminality.

Russia's disdain for the internationally accepted norms of behaviour, international law and the Charter of the United Nations is astounding, including the manipulation of all things humanitarian. Under the pretext of humanitarian aid, we have seen the preparation of what may be the seventh convoy now to be sent into Ukraine without Ukraine's consent and in violation of Ukraine's borders. While the humanitarian needs in the region have not diminished and remain dire, the armed separatists have been gaining ground with each new convoy. Today, the cost of Russia's aggression against Ukraine is some 400,000 displaced, at least 4,000 killed, over 9,000 wounded, and some 5.2 million people living in conflict-affected areas. The result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine is also Russia's own young men returning home dead and anonymous in the notorious Cargo 200 boxes.

The Geneva statement, the Berlin joint declaration, the Minsk protocol and Minsk memorandum are the latest additions to the long list of documents and treaties that Russia has breached, from the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration, the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, the 1997 Black Sea Fleet Agreement Between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and the Charter of the United Nations itself. Only a full and sustainable return to the ceasefire by all parties can defuse this increasingly bloody crisis before it gets completely out of hand — and that, with Russian troops amassed near Ukraine's borders and increasing military movements in separatist held areas, could happen at any time.

Ukraine has been doing its part, and must continue to do so, by pursuing a wide range of necessary reforms, fighting corruption and reaching out to the affected regions to rebuild popular trust in the national Government. The onus, however, is on Russia and its militant proxies in eastern Ukraine to do theirs. Russia must stop threatening its neighbours, accept the spirit and letter of the Minsk agreements and allow unhindered international monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian border. Russia must disown the separatists and condemn all attempts on the part of the self-proclaimed leaders to create parallel power structures in eastern Ukraine. As per the Minsk agreements, it must also withdraw its equipment, weapons and troops from Ukrainian territory and seal its borders to the movement of arms and mercenaries into the separatist-held areas.

A peaceful settlement of the crisis in eastern Ukraine is squarely in Russia's hands. It bears full responsibility for the further escalation of the situation, and for creating another frozen conflict in Europe. Attempts to redraw Europe's borders by military force 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall are criminal and undermine the very foundations on which the United Nations is built.

My delegation thanks the OSCE and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the important observation and monitoring work that is being done on the ground, and stresses the importance of ensuring their continuing reporting and presence in the conflict-affected area. Providing an objective, unbiased alternative narrative is critical as Russia's propaganda machinery expands its reach. My delegation reiterates its full support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. Ukraine's European choice is not an imposition from the outside. It is the choice of the Ukrainian people who a year ago showed clearly that they have had enough of corruption, enough of cronyism, enough of kleptocracy. That choice was reaffirmed in the recent national elections and must be respected by all.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would call on my colleagues on the Security Council not to turn the Council's meetings into farces of rabid hysterics.

We carefully listened to the briefing of the Assistant Secretary-General ad interim for Political Affairs, Mr. Toynberg-Frandzen and thank him for the information provided. We also thank the Chief Monitor of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Mr. Apakan, and the representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, Ms. Tagliavini. We were interested to hear the evaluations of those who are directly working on the ground every day to resolve the situation in south-eastern the Ukraine.

At the same time, we believe that inviting international players acting under an OSCE mandate to Security Council meetings is not totally appropriate, not to mention that it distracts them from their direct obligations and unnecessarily politicizes practical activities. The fact that inviting them was for precisely that purpose has been confirmed by the statements we have heard today by several Council members, who have used our platform and the OSCE representatives

not to constructively seek a solution to an internal Ukrainian crisis, but rather to make another foray into propaganda, with new flourishes.

The situation in the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces unquestionably remains tense. The ceasefire regime is not being fully complied with, and the withdrawal of heavy weaponry and equipment has not begun. On the contrary, during the entire period of the ceasefire we have seen Ukrainian forces concentrated along almost all the front lines. It is important to note that that concentration of the Ukrainian forces is taking place very close to the cities of Donbas, which the rebels are forced to protect. As a result, there have been clashes between the parties along the front lines. Innocent civilians are being killed every day, especially in territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces in the residential areas of Avdeyevka and Peski. There is systematic shelling in residential areas of Donetsk near the airport. On 6 November, a mortar shell launched from that neighbourhood in a north-westerly direction — which has been confirmed by the OSCE monitors — fell on a Donetsk sports school soccer field, killing two boys and injuring three. Cluster munitions fired from the same position at the beginning of October killed some workers from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In the Russian language the word “truth” exists only in the singular. It has no plural, unlike the word “lie”, and in the context of that silenced truth, it would seem logical that the strengthened rebel positions the OSCE monitors have seen are in areas that are under constant attack by the armed forces. Apparently Kyiv’s fear of the rebel forces is so great that in order to justify their failures and the massive deployment of people and equipment to the front, we are once again hearing loud assertions about Russia sending weapons and members of its regular army. In the Western capitals and through NATO they are shouting pronouncements about virtual deployment of convoys and fighters from Russian territory. But no one is presenting any real facts to confirm such assertions, because this is all empty talk and the usual propagandistic lies. It should be clear that in the current conditions, the Russia-Ukraine border is subject to particularly careful attention and observation and is easy to monitor, including from space.

We are unfortunately compelled to admit that we are discouraged by the almost complete lack of reaction from the OSCE Mission concerning the movements and strengthening of positions of the Ukrainian armed

forces and its other armed sub-divisions, which, by the way, have their own “Daddies”, as one of our colleagues expressed it here in the Chamber. We do not know to whom or how they are accountable. But on 9 November heavy artillery and tanks entered Karlivka; on 8 November Grad and Uragan multiple-launch rocket systems and Scud missile launchers arrived in the Luhansk area, and a group of 500 Ukrainian military entered the Krasna Talivka district in the Luhansk region. On 7 November, 32 tanks approached the eastern outskirts of Horlivka, while 13 tanks, 15 Shilka self-guided anti-aircraft guns, 7 Tochka-U tactical missile launch systems, 6 Grad multiple launch rocket systems and a Smerch multiple rocket launcher headed for Artemivsk. On 6 November a tank convoy entered the outskirts of Yasynuvata in Donetsk province. Those are statistics. Why are these facts not being talked about? It must be clear to everyone that the lack of information on this in the OSCE report creates a false and provocative picture of what has happened. We hope that gap will be filled.

We believe that the full, thorough compliance of the parties to the conflict with the Minsk agreement is essential. In that regard, the first major issue is establishing a genuine ceasefire that both sides would observe responsibly. No less important, however, are the elements of the agreements concerning the decentralization of authority and establishing an inclusive nationwide dialogue and measures for improving the humanitarian and economic situation in Donbas. But the Ukrainian authorities are doing none of those things.

We are concerned about President Poroshenko’s decision to recall the law on a special status for specific areas of Luhansk and Donetsk provinces. After all, that is a cornerstone of the Minsk agreements, which will essentially be made completely null and void. The law was not ideal and had limited legitimacy; the previous convocation of the Verkhovna Rada did not indicate the boundaries of the districts that would have special status, and the date of 7 December for elections cited in the law was not discussed with representatives from Donetsk and Luhansk and violated Ukraine’s own Constitution. Despite that, the law could have become a basis for further talks between Kyiv and the rebels.

Kyiv also failed to implement another important provision of the Minsk agreement, the law granting amnesty to those who have participated in the events. Moreover, it appears that the Chair of the Verkhovna

Rada is proposing that it be rescinded. No guarantees of personal security for participants in the consultations were provided.

Turning now to the humanitarian aspects of the agreements, we find that instead of taking measures to rebuild Donbas, the Ukrainian Government has established a new order for financing its budgetary institutions and meeting social and pension payments — they have simply been cancelled. How can there be any talk of trust from ordinary people's point of view when their homes being bombed and they themselves lack the wherewithal to live? In that regard, we reject any accusations directed at Russia's efforts to send humanitarian convoys carrying food, medicines and building materials to Donetsk and Luhansk. In the worsening circumstances, such accusations are simply amoral. And we have had enough of the fabrications and distortions on this subject. Kyiv is informed about every humanitarian convoy fully and in good time, but getting its cooperation is problematic. We get the feeling that it is not very concerned about the fate of its own people in those regions.

Regarding the elections held in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions on 2 November, over which a number of delegations have expressed exaggerated horror, as if the process was not a democratic one, I would like to emphasize the following points. The Russian Federation respects the will of the people of the south-east as they have expressed it. On the whole, the elections were conducted in an orderly way and voter turn-out was high, and certainly not forced at gunpoint. It is particularly important that the elected representatives received a mandate to resolve the practical issues of restoring normal life in the region. They pose no threats to the Minsk agreements and the peace process. Moreover, they present a unique opportunity for launching a sustainable dialogue between the central Ukrainian authorities and the representatives of Donbas, with the goal of finding comprehensive political solutions that can eliminate the accumulated disagreements.

We have been talking since the spring about the fact that there is no alternative to an inclusive dialogue conducted on a mutually respectful and equal basis. It is high time for Kyiv to fulfil the obligations it undertook in Geneva, particularly given that it now has representative partners in the negotiations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Australia.

I thank our briefers today, including those from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in which we place great confidence for its indispensable monitoring role on the ground. We also welcome Ukraine's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Sergeyev.

Two weeks ago, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Fernandez-Taranco told the Council the Minsk protocols were not being fully implemented and that the ceasefire was being violated regularly, causing violent loss of life. He described how the security situation was hampering the return and settlement of internally displaced persons, which was becoming increasingly urgent with the onset of winter. His report was of concern then, but the situation in eastern Ukraine has now deteriorated much further.

As Assistant Secretary-General Toyberg-Frandzen has just told us, the ceasefire is "under continuous and serious strain" and Minsk is "in jeopardy". Ambassador Tagliavini spoke of the "blunt disregard for ... commitments undertaken in Minsk". We have seen consistent and credible reports of Russian-supplied military reinforcements, including heavy weapons and tanks, moving to the front line of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The OSCE Chief Monitor, Ambassador Apakan, has just described three separate sightings of such convoys by OSCE monitors.

We must all be seriously concerned at these further escalations in eastern Ukraine and at Russia's ongoing violations of the Minsk protocols, particularly its failure to withdraw all its personnel from Ukraine. And, in further violation of the Minsk protocols, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been prevented from monitoring adequately the Ukraine/Russia border, where Russian troops appear — once again — to be massing in significant numbers. As Assistant Secretary-General Toyberg-Frandzen has just told us, failure to secure the border is a threat to peace. This is all ominously reminiscent of the situation prior to Russia's purported annexation of Crimea. We have seen this positioning before.

These recent developments come against the backdrop of the so-called elections in eastern Ukraine. These illegitimate, pseudo-elections have been widely condemned around the world, including by the Secretary-General. They were another direct contravention of the Minsk protocol, which clearly

states that elections must be held “in accordance with the law of Ukraine”.

Australia welcomes the legitimate parliamentary elections that were held in Ukraine on 26 October. It was encouraging to note the report from the OSCE affiliated Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights praising the conduct of the Ukrainian parliamentary elections and the impartial and efficient Central Election Commission. Australia looks forward to working with the new Government of Ukraine. It is wrong, of course, that people in Crimea and many in the separatist-controlled territories in eastern Ukraine were unable to exercise their democratic right to vote. We commend the Ukrainian authorities for their efforts to enfranchise as many people as possible in these very difficult circumstances.

The Jordanian representative a few moments ago mentioned the risk from the deteriorating security situation to access to the MH-17 crash site. I must emphasize that Australia remains determined to do all it can to bring those responsible for the downing of MH-17 to justice. We are committed to making a full international return to the MH-17 crash site when it is safe to do so and in the company of our Dutch and Malaysian partners. We appreciate Russian President Putin’s confirmation to Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott yesterday, meeting in Beijing, of Russia’s commitment to resolution 2166 (2014), which we all adopted in July, including its support for a full, thorough and independent international investigation into the cause of the crash, and for ensuring complete access for international experts to the crash site. This can, however, happen only if Russian-backed and Russian-armed separatists comply with the ceasefire.

More broadly, adherence to the ceasefire and to the commitments made in the Minsk protocol is essential to move to a lasting political solution in Ukraine, which must be based on respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. But without a genuine engagement from Russia, this plan will obviously come to nothing. This brings us back to the root cause of the deteriorating security situation in Ukraine: Russia’s persistent campaign of deliberate destabilization. Russia’s actions are continuing to fuel the unrest and are undermining the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. The Russian economy is already paying a heavy price for that action, and any further actions can only inevitably lead to even greater consequences for Russia.

There is a clear path forward to end the violence in eastern Ukraine: Russia must withdraw all support to the separatists; remove all its personnel and assets from Ukraine; and engage in genuine dialogue with Ukraine. The OSCE must also be allowed to do its job and monitor unimpeded the Ukraine/Russia border as set out in the Minsk protocol. Russia’s continued refusal to heed the international community’s call to de-escalate the crisis can only lead to Russia’s further isolation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I wish to start by thanking all of the briefers for the information they brought back from the ground. I thank Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen and our colleagues the Ambassadors for their political observations. I also thank the Security Council for having responded to my letter of 7 November (S/2014/798) and convened today’s meeting. In that letter, I drew the attention of the Council to the dangerously deteriorating security situation in the eastern part of Ukraine, which threatens our territorial integrity and shows a tendency to transform into a “frozen conflict”, and thus continues to be a challenge to peace and stability in the whole of Europe and beyond.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all present for the solidarity that they have demonstrated today and in the past and for their constant support for our territorial integrity and the inviolability of our borders.

Ukraine remains devoted to the settlement of the conflict through diplomatic means. The establishment of a Trilateral Contact Group of senior representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairman-in-Office is aimed at finding a political and diplomatic solution to the crisis. The Group held several meetings, including those in Minsk, on 5 and 19 September. The agreements reached at those meetings — a protocol and a memorandum dated 5 and 19 September, respectively — were supposed to become an important step towards a sustainable, mutually agreed ceasefire, a secure Russian/Ukrainian border and the return of peace and stability to eastern Ukraine, with the establishment of a special status zone, which is to be empowered with strong local self-government under Ukrainian law.

The commitment to the implementation of the agreements was confirmed during the high-level meeting held in Milan on 17 October, in which the President of the Russian Federation participated. Despite their claims, the separatists and the Russian Federation, as their sponsor, continue to commit gross violations of the Minsk agreements. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for his part, has expressed his disappointment and called upon the parties involved to fulfil their obligations.

I agree with what my Russian colleague said earlier, that in Russian the word “truth” has no plural form but that the word “lie” does. In that regard, I wish to draw the Council’s attention to a few major points concerning violations of the Minsk agreements.

The first point is that we agreed in Minsk on an immediate bilateral ceasefire and the withdrawal of illegal armed groups, military equipment and fighters and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. What happened instead? In breach of all of the agreements, militants backed by Russian regular forces continue to shell the Ukrainian military as well as civilian locations, in particular using Grad and Smerch systems. Since 5 September, Ukrainian forces and civilians have been shelled over 2,800 times. A total of 131 Ukrainian servicemen have been killed and more than 568 have been wounded. At least 65 civilians lost their lives.

Militants inspired by Russia are disregarding efforts to set up the touchline and continue to conduct offensive operations, trying to expand the area under their control. The large-scale recruitment and training of militants is taking place in the area of Donbas, which is temporarily out of Ukrainian Government control, as well as on the Russian side of the border. An offensive is expected in a number of locations along the touchline. We cannot exclude the possibility of an attempt to create a land corridor from Russia to temporarily occupied Crimea.

Another clear indication of violation of the Minsk agreements is the large amount of heavy weaponry, along with personnel and fuel, that after 5 September illegally entered Ukraine from Russian territory. A dangerous shipment of illegal armament supplies from Russia to militants was observed by Ukraine and the OSCE in the past few days. On 6 November, Ukrainian authorities detected the large-scale movement of heavy weaponry from Russian territory to the town of Krasny Luch in Ukraine: two columns, including 32 tanks, 16 howitzers

and 30 Kamaz trucks, with soldiers and ammunition. The OSCE confirmed on 8 November the movement of two columns of 50 fully loaded trucks. Almost every truck had an artillery mount in tow. On 9 November, the OSCE recorded a convoy of 17 trucks 15 kilometres to the east of Donetsk. Five trucks transported Grad systems. On 10 November, the OSCE spotted another convoy of 17 trucks that supplied the terrorists with 122-millimetre howitzers and radio-location stations. On the same day, a second convoy of trucks, three of which carried radio-location stations, illegally crossed the border. Yesterday, the OSCE recorded a convoy of 43 trucks in the eastern part of Donetsk. Five of these trucks carried 122-millimetre howitzers and five others carried Grads. A Pantsir-1 anti-aircraft missile and gun system was spotted in the vicinity of the militants’ checkpoint near the town of Novoazovsk.

Illegal Russian convoys with heavy weapons are reported literally every day. The Russian delegation insisted today that its Government does not provide any military assistance to the separatists in Ukraine. This means that someone else besides the State has missiles, tanks and guns, and is supplying them to the illegal armed groups in Ukraine. It means that somebody else in Russia has attack aircraft and helicopters that are continually violating our State air border. The Russian delegation keeps saying that the Russian armed forces and military equipment have never crossed the borders of Ukraine. Does this mean that it is not the Russian Federation’s border guard that controls its side of the Ukraine-Russia border, but someone else who is permitting the illegal crossing of military convoys?

We have heard many times, here and from Moscow, about their readiness to withdraw the vast amount of arms and troops from the borders of Ukraine. Today, we have all the evidence we need to conclude that Ukraine is surrounded by a huge amount of armaments and troops. We demand that Russia explain here and now why it needs to maintain 200 tanks, 1,600 vehicles, 640 artillery units, 191 attack aircraft and 121 attack helicopters on our borders. Still, neither Ukraine nor the OSCE has received any kind of explanation.

The illegal movement of cargo from the territory of the Russian Federation through the State border, which the Russian delegation today characterized as humanitarian aid, to the civilians of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, is also a matter of deep concern to Ukraine. It was organized without seeking the official consent of the Ukrainian side, without completing the

necessary border and customs procedures by the relevant Ukrainian authorities, and without coordinating with the International Committee of the Red Cross for its representatives to accompany the cargo, in breach of the national legislation of Ukraine and the agreements reached earlier. The latest so-called humanitarian convoys crossed the State border of Ukraine on 31 October and 2 and 4 November. We demand that the Russian Federation stop using the issue of humanitarian aid as a cover for delivering illegal supplies of troops, mercenaries and weapons to eastern Ukraine.

Contrary to these hostile actions and Russian propaganda myths, Ukrainian forces are observing the ceasefire regime. They make every effort to avoid full-scale military actions and use weapons only to defend themselves against militants' attacks. Let me say very clearly that the only reason why open war has not started yet in the east of Ukraine is because of Ukraine's restraint. We remain committed to a peaceful settlement and the Minsk arrangements, and urge Russia to do the same.

We agreed in Minsk that the OSCE would ensure the monitoring and verification of the ceasefire. We also agreed to that the OSCE would ensure the ongoing monitoring and verification of the Ukrainian-Russian border, and envisaged the creation of security zones in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Where are we with that? Ukraine has rendered all necessary assistance to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine to effectively implement its mandate.

Russian-supported militants have not extended security guarantees to OSCE personnel in all areas that they control, and obstruct the Mission's monitoring activities. Moreover, in order to hide its violations, the Russian military uses cutting-edge electronic technology to jam OSCE drones, thereby disturbing monitoring efforts in the region in spite of the Minsk agreements. The Russian side has also refused to join the consensus on the proposed expansion of the mandate of the existing OSCE observation mission at two Russian border checkpoints to all Russian checkpoints along the 400-kilometre section of the border in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

With the Mission's mandate set to expire on 23 November, we urge the Russian side to demonstrate a clear commitment to the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the eastern Ukraine by agreeing to allow OSCE

observers to conduct their monitoring activities at all border crossings with Ukraine and along the entire length of the border in the area. That would contribute to establishing effective border verification by the OSCE, as foreseen in the Minsk agreements. Why is there such a stark difference in the approaches adopted by Ukraine and Russia to the role that the OSCE monitors can play in the current situation? Ukraine is open to transparent monitoring and control. Russia and its puppets are not.

Let me turn to my third point. We agreed in Minsk to adopt the Ukrainian law on provisional arrangements for local government in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts — the law on special status — and to ensure within the provisions of that law early local elections in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The new law was adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament on 16 September. According to that law, local elections in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions were scheduled for 7 December and were intended to produce legitimate local self-governance that would make proper use of enhanced powers, engage in an inclusive national dialogue and ensure the reconstruction of Donbas, which has been severely damaged by the military activities of illegal armed groups. Ukraine rejects any rumours about alleged additional agreements on this issue. What was agreed was signed and what was signed was published, including the OSCE press releases.

Contrary to this, on 2 November Russian-backed terrorists held illegitimate elections for the so-called presidents and parliaments of illegitimate self-proclaimed entities in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. These so-called elections were conducted in violation of Ukrainian legislation and international standards and contrary to the third and ninth articles of the Minsk protocol. By opting to recognize the illegal and illegitimate so-called elections in certain areas of Donbas, Russia has chosen time and again to violate the norms of international law and fundamental OSCE principles and commitments. It has chosen to act in breach of the Minsk agreements.

We are very concerned by the approach of the Russian Federation that consists in manipulating peoples' right to self-determination. Once again, it has, as we saw in Crimea, only one priority — to feed separatism and create frozen conflicts in sovereign States that Russia treats as zones of national interest. That is why neither Ukraine nor the international community will ever recognize the illegal referendum

in Crimea or the illegal pseudo-elections in certain areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, whatever their outcomes.

The Ukrainian leadership has already expressed its deep concern over the violation of the Minsk agreements by Russia and the ring-leaders under its control in eastern Ukraine. Illegal elections and continuous violations of the ceasefire regime by militants, as well as a sharp increase in the illegal supply of weapons and military equipment across the border by the Russian Federation, have seriously undermined the Minsk process towards a peaceful settlement. They undermine any trust placed in signatories who fail to keep their word. Nevertheless, Kyiv has confirmed its commitment to continuing to observe the ceasefire regime in line with the Minsk agreements, and called on all involved in the process to swiftly resume settlement efforts.

We are seeking to make use of all possible mechanisms to forge a peaceful solution to the situation. We call on Russia, the European Union and the United States to meet together in the Geneva format in order to send a clear and consolidated message as well as strong impetus to the parties concerned to strictly adhere to the letter and spirit of the Minsk agreements. However, we will not yield to Russia's attempts to compel implicit international recognition of the ring leaders of illegal entities in the Donbas by inviting them to this meeting.

We continue to demand that the Russian Federation stop backing illegal armed groups; immediately and strictly comply with the Minsk agreements by withdrawing its military forces and weaponry from the territory of Ukraine; establish joint customs and border control; release all Ukrainian hostages captured by Russian forces and their proxies; and stop its protracted military exercise in close vicinity to our borders. We continue to call on the Council to finally assume its Charter responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in order to put an end to the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I do not want to engage in polemics with the Permanent Representative of Ukraine, but all the same I wish to call attention to a few things.

First, I have said, and I repeat, that of course the ceasefire and the normalization of the situation are the key tasks, but they require trust. When we heard the statements of Ukraine's representatives in late October, early November and more recently, we were convinced that Kyiv was not committed to a diplomatic solution to the conflict. From the very beginning, the Kyiv authorities have made no secret of the fact that the ceasefire would be used for a realignment of forces and the pursuit of military activities.

In the framework of what I have said, there is only one truth. I would like to cite two statements, the first made by Yuri Lytsenko, an adviser to the President of Ukraine, on 24 October, before the elections, on the Ukrainian radio. He said:

“The ceasefire and the achievement of peace are going to work in our favour. All four tank factories are working three shifts. Several hundred armed vehicles have been fully rebuilt and have entered the anti-terrorist operation area. We need the ceasefire regime to receive high-tech equipment and military and financing assistance from the West.”

Markiyanyan Lubkivsky, an adviser to the head of the Security Service of Ukraine, also said on the national radio, on 2 November and again on 7 November:

“Sooner or later, we are going to have to engage in very proactive activities” and that “we will need three or four years to resolve the situation. We think we could win this war based on the Croatian scenario. In 1991, Croatia began the war and it ended in 1995 as a result of successful special operations.”

As we can see, there is not a single word about the implementation of the Minsk agreement here, just about a victory on the battlefield.

Secondly, of course some activities do not help the situation from the Ukrainian perspective. For example, with respect to the serious matter of the delimitation of territory, an agreement had been almost 80 per cent concluded. Then suddenly on 28 October, the Ukrainian representative General Dumansky, without offering any reasons, annulled an accord in which over 80 per cent of the lines of opposing forces had been delimited.

Lastly, as I understand it, the Ukrainian representative asked me here and now to answer the question why several hundred units and vast amounts of Russian

military equipment are being concentrated on the Ukrainian border. First, I cannot answer because I do not know if that is true or what sources of information are being cited. Those are horrific numbers; they are very striking, even to me. I am ready to respond to that question in a more specific manner. It will be agreed that the equipment and the Russian armed forces are on the territory of my country and are not threatening Ukraine. They are not leaving my country. Thus, inciting such emotions in the Security Council, as if there were going to be such huge attack on Ukraine, does not help the constructive discussions that all here are counselling and that we too endorse.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine to make a further statement.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I too do not want to continue this dialogue because it is going nowhere. I would just remind our Russian colleague, citing one of the most famous Russian writers, Turgenev:

(spoke in Russian)

“There is one truth for everyone. Everyone has their own truth, but there is only one real truth.”

(spoke in English)

The problem is that the Russian representative quoted two advisers to somebody, and raised the issue of trust. I do not have the quotation, but all of us remember that three or four times the Russian President promised the world community — the last time it was a decision — to withdraw those troops. That is why they are worrying about what is going on. We are worrying about where the armaments are coming from — from

the regular Russian army or from somebody else in Russia? That is the question. I am asking about the position of the Russian leadership. Why, despite the promises, are huge amounts of armaments and personnel — around 49,000 people — still positioned along the Ukrainian border? This is about trust. How can we come back if we have lost confidence, if the Russian leadership — not our adviser to somebody, stating something — promised and and yet has failed to deliver?

I will give the Council the figures. They are not secret because they come from different sources. Council members may brief their colleagues in any format convenient to them, but that is what we have from a variety of sources. The OSCE keeps demanding, under agreements to which the Russian Federation is party, information concerning those flanks, limits and exercises which Russia is obligated to report. What are the troops doing? They have been carrying out exercises since February or March, without explanation. That is about trust.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. Before concluding, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General ad interim Toyneberg-Frandzen and Ambassadors Apakan and Talgliavini for their briefings, especially given the late hour in Kyiv and the demands on both of them on the ground.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.