



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1335 Vienna, 16 September 2021

EU Statement on Russia's decision to not allow for a further extension on the Border Observation Mission to Gukovo and Donetsk

FINAL (325 words)

1. The European Union deplores the decision by the Russian Federation not to agree to an extension of the mandate of the Border Observation Mission to Gukovo and Donetsk beyond 30 September. This is an unfortunate political signal confirming Russia's lack of political will to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the conflict.
2. The Border Observation Mission is an important confidence-building measure informing the participating States about the situation on the ground. Since 2014, this Mission has provided us with information about the movements over this border which unfortunately is not under the control of the Ukrainian government. Together with the SMM and the Trilateral Contact Group, the Border Observation Mission is an important instrument in the OSCE toolbox for resolving this conflict.
3. In 2014, Russia illegally annexed the Crimean peninsula and started its destabilising acts of aggression in eastern Ukraine in blatant breach of international law and OSCE principles and commitments. This is why we repeatedly call on Russia to immediately stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the Russia-backed armed formations, and we remain deeply concerned about the presence of Russian military equipment and personnel in sovereign territory of Ukraine.
4. The Minsk agreements call for permanent monitoring of the border and verification by the OSCE and include a commitment to reinstate full Ukrainian control over its entire

international border. This is why we persistently claim that effective and comprehensive monitoring of this border is crucial for a sustainable political solution to the conflict in line with the Minsk agreements and an integral part of the efforts aimed at fostering stability and security in the region. The fact that Russia, as a party to the conflict, the host country of this Mission and a signatory of the Minsk Agreements decides to end the BOM is a clear step backwards when it comes to finding a peaceful resolution to this conflict. We deeply regret this decision by Russia.

We would like to ask to have this statement attached to the journal of the day.

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

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