Latest from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), based on information received as of 19:30, 28 July 2019

KYIV 29 July 2019

This report is for the media and the general public.

Summary

- Compared with the previous reporting period, between the evenings of 26 and 27 July, the SMM recorded fewer ceasefire violations in Donetsk region. It recorded no ceasefire violations in Luhansk region.
- Between the evenings of 27 and 28 July, the SMM recorded more ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions compared with the previous 24 hours.
- The SMM observed damage from gunfire to a document processing booth of the Ukrainian Armed Forces entry-exit checkpoint in Marinka.
- An SMM mini-unmanned aerial vehicle was hit by small-arms fire near Pervomaisk.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to the ceasefire to facilitate repairs and maintenance work to and the operation of critical civilian infrastructure, including drilling of water wells near Raivka.
- The SMM saw long queues at a checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka.
- Restrictions of the SMM’s access continued, including at checkpoints of the armed formations in Kreminets, Zaichenko, and Novoazovsk and at a border crossing point near Izvaryne.*

Ceasefire violations[1]

In Donetsk region, between the evenings of 26 and 27 July, the SMM recorded fewer ceasefire violations, including one explosion, compared with the previous reporting period (five explosions).

Between the evenings of 27 and 28 July, the Mission recorded more ceasefire violations, including more explosions (about 30), compared with the previous 24 hours. The majority of ceasefire violations were recorded at an assessed range of 1-4km in southerly directions of the SMM camera at the Donetsk Filtration Station (DFS) (15km north of Donetsk) and in northerly directions of Yasynuvata (non-government-controlled, 16km north-east of Donetsk).

In Luhansk region, between the evenings of 26 and 27 July, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations. In the previous reporting period, the SMM had recorded ceasefire violations, including 21 explosions.
Between the evenings of 27 and 28 July, the Mission recorded ceasefire violations, including ten explosions; whereas it recorded none in the previous 24 hours. The majority of ceasefire violations were recorded at south-easterly directions of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk) and west of Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58km west of Luhansk).

**Damage from gunfire to a document processing booth at the Ukrainian Armed Forces entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) in Marinka**

On 28 July, at the Ukrainian Armed Forces EECP in Marinka (government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk), the SMM saw a hole about 1.5m above the ground in the east-north-east-facing side of a container, used as a document processing booth, and a corresponding in the west-south-west facing side of the same container. The Mission assessed the damage as fresh and caused by small-arms fire.

**An SMM mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) hit by small-arms fire near Pervomaisk**

On 28 July, positioned at the west-north-western outskirts of Pervomaisk, while conducting a mini-UAV flight, the SMM heard 13 shots and bursts of small-arms fire at an assessed distance of 2km west, assessed as aimed at the UAV, which at the time was flying 2km west. The SMM safely landed the UAV but noted it had sustained damage: broken hitch of the camera, a hole in the chassis and missing propellers, assessed as caused by small-arms fire.*

**Stanytsia Luhanska disengagement area**

In the morning hours of 27 July, the SMM saw a crane mounted on a truck (MAZ type) and another truck (MAZ type) and seven men in civilian clothing going through the Ukrainian Armed Forces EECP and continuing towards the former forward position of the Ukrainian Armed Forces north of the broken section of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north-east of Luhansk).

During the day on 27 July, at the Ukrainian Armed Forces EECP, the SMM observed about 1,100 people queuing to exit government-controlled areas and about 30 people queuing to enter government-controlled areas. At the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the bridge, on the same day, the SMM saw about 40 people queueing to travel towards government-controlled areas and a steady flow of people travelling in the opposite direction.

On 27 and 28 July, the Mission saw a Ukrainian Armed Forces officer of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) between the Ukrainian Armed Forces EECP and their former forward position.

During the same period, it also saw up to ten members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them) between the southern edge of the broken section of the bridge and the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the bridge.

On 28 July, the Mission observed metal bars on the ground and a dug up area where a wooden shelter belonging to an international humanitarian organization was previously dismantled near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the bridge.
Between the evenings of 27 and 28 July, the SMM heard two undetermined explosions and one shot of small-arms fire, assessed as outside the disengagement area but within its 5km periphery.

Other disengagement areas[3]

On 26 July, an SMM long-range UAV again spotted an armoured personnel carrier (APC) inside the disengagement area near Petrivske (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), about 1km east of its western edge and about 800m north of its southern edge, assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces (see below). On 27 July, positioned north of Petrivske, the SMM heard seven shots of heavy-machine-gun fire, at an assessed range of 2-3km south-west, assessed as inside the disengagement area. During the same day, the SMM saw a military truck (Ural type) entering the Petrivske disengagement area near its north-eastern edge and about three minutes later. The SMM could not see if the truck was loaded. On 28 July, positioned close to the disengagement area near Petrivske, the Mission observed a calm situation.[4]

During the night of 27 July, the SMM camera in Zolote (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk) recorded a projectile in flight at an assessed range of 1-3km south-south-east, assessed as inside the disengagement area and three undetermined explosions at an assessed range of 3-6km north-east, assessed as outside the disengagement area but within its 5km periphery. During the day of 28 July, positioned at the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote, the SMM heard an undetermined explosion, at an assessed distance of 3km north-east, assessed as outside the disengagement area, but within its 5km periphery. During the same day, positioned at the west-north-western edge of Pervomaisk, the SMM heard 13 shots and bursts of small-arms fire, assessed as outside the disengagement area, but within its 5km periphery (see above).

Withdrawal of weapons

The SMM continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum and the Package of Measures and its Addendum.

Beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites

Non-government-controlled areas

28 July

The SMM saw two tanks (T-64) near Uspenka (23km south-west of Luhansk).

Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone[5]

Government-controlled areas

24 July

An SMM mini-UAV spotted an infantry fighting vehicle (IFV) (BMP variant) in the south-eastern outskirts of Shchastia (20km north of Luhansk).

25 July
An SMM mid-range UAV spotted a trench digger (PZM-2) and a 150m long trench under construction, running from east to west, along the edge of a forested area, near Novoselivka Druha (23km north of Donetsk).

27 July

The SMM saw:
- two IFVs (a BMP-1 and a BMP variant), one of them parked beside a residential house and less than 150m from a school, and an armoured recovery vehicle (BREM variant) in Popasna; and
- three personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (one man and two women), appearing to control a white UAV tablet and, ten minutes later, a white UAV on the ground near the mentioned personnel, in Popasna.

Non-government-controlled areas

24 July

An SMM mid-range UAV spotted a probable armoured combat vehicle under camouflage netting in a residential area of Novohryhorivka (61km north-east of Donetsk).

26 July

An SMM long-range UAV spotted:
- an APC inside the disengagement area near Petrivske (see above); and
- two APCs (BTR variant) in the eastern outskirts of Bezimenne (30km east of Mariupol).

27 July

- The SMM saw an armoured reconnaissance vehicle (BRDM-2) in Debaltseve (58km north-east of Donetsk).

Anti-tank mines near Shchastia and in Nyzhnie Lozove, including some for the first time, and mine hazard signs near Volnovakha

On 24 July, an SMM mini-UAV again spotted at least 36 anti-tank mines (TM-62) laid in three rows across road H-21 south of the bridge in Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk), assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

On the same day, an SMM mid-range UAV spotted, for the first time, 26 anti-tank mines (TM-62) laid in the fields in two rows on the eastern side of the road M-03, 30m east on the same road, about 2.2km west of Nyzhnie Lozove (non-government-controlled, 59km north-east of Donetsk). Approximately 2.7km north-west of the said mines, on road M-03, the same UAV again spotted 39 anti-tank mines, about 5km south-east of Luhanske (government-controlled, 59km north-east of Donetsk), near the forward positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

On 27 July, while passing through the road H-20 north-east of Volnovakha (government-controlled, 53km south of Donetsk), the SMM saw for the first time about five mine...
hazard signs with an icon of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and a writing in red in Cyrillic.

**SMM facilitation of repairs to civilian infrastructure**

On 27 July, the Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to the ceasefire to enable the drilling of wells near Raivka (non-government-controlled, 16km north-west of Luhansk). On 27 and 28 July, the SMM also continued to facilitate the operation of the DFS and monitor the security situation in the area of the pumping station near Vasylivka (non-government-controlled, 20km north of Donetsk). On 27 and 28 July, positioned at two different locations, the SMM heard four explosions, seven bursts of heavy-machine-gun fire and 112 shots of small-armed fire, at an assessed range of 3-4km from DFS.

**Long queues at checkpoints**

On 27 July, at the checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk), the SMM observed up to 300 cars and ten buses waiting in line to enter non-government-controlled areas. It also saw 90 people (mixed ages and genders) gathered in front of the checkpoint, 14 of whom (four women, ten men; 30-60 years old) told the SMM that they were protesting against the long checkpoint procedures, allegedly due to the implementation of a “regulation” by the armed formations (see [SMM Daily Report 17 June 2019](https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/426848)).

**People apply for “LPR passports” in Holubivka**

On 27 July, in Holubivka (formerly Kirovsk, non-government-controlled, 51km west of Luhansk), the SMM saw about 20 people (mixed genders, 18-75 years old) queuing outside of a building. A man and a woman (both about 45 years old) in the queue told the SMM that they had been queuing to apply for “LPR passports” and planned to apply for Russian Federation passports. During the same day, in Slovianoserbsk (non-government-controlled, 28km north-west of Luhansk), the SMM saw two men, a woman and a child queuing outside of a building. A 25-year-old man told the SMM that he had applied for “LPR passport” and plans to apply for Russian Federation passport to seek employment opportunities there.

**Border areas outside government control**

On 28 July, while at a border crossing point near Izvaryne (52km south-east of Luhansk) for about 20 minutes, the SMM saw two cars with Russian Federation licence plates and seven pedestrians (two men and five women) entering Ukraine. The Mission also saw two cars with Russian Federation licence plates and 28 pedestrians (13 men and 15 women) exiting Ukraine. After about 20 minutes, a member of the armed formations told the SMM to leave the area.*

During the same day, while at the border crossing point near Verkhnoharasymivka (57km south-east of Luhansk) for about 35 minutes, the SMM saw two men entering Ukraine and 13 pedestrians (eight men and five women) exiting Ukraine. At the border crossing point near Sievernji (50km south-east of Luhansk) for about 30 minutes, the Mission saw 12 pedestrians (four men and eight women) entering Ukraine and six pedestrians (three men and three women) exiting Ukraine.

**SMM monitored religious processions organized by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) dedicated to the 1031st**

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* OSCE, Latest from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), based on information received as of 19:30, 28 July 2019 | OSCE, [https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/426848](https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/426848)
On 27 July, the SMM monitored a religious procession of several thousand people (70 per cent women and 30 per cent men), organized by the UOC outside the Saint Volodymyr descent. The SMM saw them marching towards the Ukrainian Parliament and later reaching the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. The Mission saw around 1,000 law enforcement officers in the vicinity. After about 45 minutes, participants started dispersing peacefully.

On 28 July, the OCU served a procession at the Saint Sophia Cathedral, gathering around 1,500 people (mixed genders) and around 800 clergy. The SMM saw 50 law enforcement officers in the vicinity. The participants of the mass moved towards the Saint Volodymyr descent and reached the monument of the Volodymyr the Great, at which point the Mission noted several thousand people (mixed gender and ages) gathered. The people dispersed peacefully. At the same time, a religious liturgy held by the UOC gathered around 3,500 people in Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.

SMM observed a calm situation south of Kherson region

On 28 July, the SMM observed calm situations at the crossing points between Kalanchak (67km south-east of Kherson) and Chaplynka (77km south-east of Kherson) and Crimea.

The Mission continued monitoring in Odessa, Lviv, Kharkiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Dnipro, and Chernivtsi.

*Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate*

The SMM's monitoring and freedom of movement are restricted by security hazards and threats, including risks posed by mines, UXO and other impediments – which vary from day to day. The SMM’s mandate provides for safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. All signatories of the Package of Measures have agreed on the need for this safe and secure access, that restriction of the SMM’s freedom of movement constitutes a violation, and on the need for rapid response to these violations. They have also agreed that the JCCC should contribute to such response and co-ordinate mine clearance. Nonetheless, the armed formations in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions frequently deny the SMM access to areas adjacent to Ukraine’s border outside control of the Government (for example, see below). The SMM’s operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions remain restricted following the fatal incident of 23 April 2017 near Pryshyb; these restrictions continued to limit the Mission’s observations.

Denials of access:

- On 27 July, at a checkpoint on the southern edge of Kreminets (non-government-controlled, 16km south-west of Donetsk), eight armed members of the armed formations again denied the SMM passage south towards road H-15, citing a “requirement to obtain a permission from those in control”.
- On 27 and 28 July, at a checkpoint about 800m north of Zaichenko (non-government-controlled, 26km north-east of Mariupol), armed members of the armed formations again denied the SMM passage southwards to Sakhanka (non-government-controlled, 24km north-east of Mariupol) and westwards to Pikuzy (formerly Kominternove, non-government-controlled, 23km north-east of Mariupol) citing “ongoing demining activities in the area”.

https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/426848
On 28 July, at a border crossing point near Ilovayske (non-government-controlled, 52km south-east of Luhansk), a member of the armed formations again told the SMM to leave the area.

On 28 July, at a checkpoint north of Novoazovsk (non-government-controlled, 40km east of Mariupol), four members of the armed formations denied SMM passage citing “requirement for pre-arranged escort by those in control”. While present, the SMM saw civilian traffic in both directions across the checkpoint.

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access to disengagement areas, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians’ movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines and UXO.

Delay:

- On 27 July, at a checkpoint west of Verkhnoshyrokiivske (formerly Oktyabr, non-government-controlled, 29km north-east of Mariupol), an armed member of the armed formations again only allowed the SMM to proceed after about one hour of waiting.

Other impediments:

- On 27 July, an SMM mid-UAV experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as due to probable jamming, while flying in the vicinity of Pikuzy (formerly Kominternove, non-government-controlled, 23km north-east of Mariupol).[6]
- On 28 July, while conducting a mini-UAV flight at the west-north-western outskirts Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58 west of Luhansk), the SMM heard about 13 shots of small-arms fire about 2km west, assessed as aimed at the UAV.
- On 28 July, an SMM mini-UAV experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as due to probable jamming, while flying near Zernove (non-government-controlled, 33km south of Donetsk).

[1] For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table.

[2] The Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) was established in September 2014 by Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Each posted a representative to jointly head the Centre and a staff of officers from the Ukrainian and Russian Federation Armed Forces to be co-located in defined sectors of Luhansk and Donetsk regions. In December 2017, Russian Federation Armed Forces officers withdrew from the JCCC and departed Ukraine.


[4] Due to the presence of mines, including a road between Bohdanivka and Petrivske, the SMM’s access to its camera in Petrivske remains limited, and thus the SMM has not been able to access observations from the camera since 22 June 2018.
[5] The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

[6] The interference could have originated from anywhere within the radius of kilometres from the UAVs' position.

See the table of ceasefire violations

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