Latest from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), based on information received as of 19:30, 14 August 2019

This report is for the media and the general public.

Summary

• Compared with the previous reporting period, the SMM recorded fewer ceasefire violations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.
• The Mission again saw small-arms fire damage to a school in Zolote-5/Mykhailivka. It also saw damage from gunfire at the entry-exit checkpoint in Maiorsk.
• Small-arms fire was assessed as directed at an SMM mini unmanned aerial vehicle near government-controlled Paraskovivka.
• The Mission saw weapons in violation of withdrawal lines in non-government-controlled areas, including multiple launch rocket systems.
• The SMM monitored adherence to the ceasefire to facilitate repairs to and the operation of essential civilian infrastructure.
• Restrictions of the Mission’s access continued, including at a checkpoint near non-government-controlled Verkhnoshyrokivske and at a heavy weapons holding area in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region.*

Ceasefire violations

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded fewer ceasefire violations, including fewer explosions (38), compared with the previous reporting period (87 explosions). More than half of the ceasefire violations, including almost half of the explosions, were recorded in areas south-south-east and south of Pyschchevky (government-controlled, 25km north-east of Mariupol), at southerly directions of Avdiivka (government-controlled, 17km north of Donetsk) and Yasynuvata (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Donetsk) and in areas north-east of Pervomaiske (government-controlled, 17km north-west of Donetsk).

In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded fewer ceasefire violations, all explosions (three), compared with the previous reporting period (two explosions).

Damage from gunfire to a functioning school in Zolote-5/Mykhailivka

The SMM again observed damage from gunfire to the three-storey brick building of a functioning school on Myru Street in Zolote-5/Mykhailivka (non-government-controlled, 58km west of Luhansk). The Mission saw two holes in two first-floor window panes on the north-east-facing wall of the building. It assessed the damage as fresh and caused by small-arms fire. Two members of school staff told the SMM that they had first seen the damage in the morning on 13 August when they arrived at work.

Damage from gunfire to booth at the entry-exit checkpoint in Maiorsk

At the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) in Maiorsk (government-controlled, 45km north-east of Donetsk), the SMM saw three holes on the south-facing metal wall of one of the booths located at the south-eastern edge of the EECP. It assessed the damage as fresh and caused by 5.47mm or 7.62mm bullets.
Officers of the State Border Guard Services of Ukraine at the EECP told the Mission that the damage had occurred three days prior at night.

**Small-arms fire assessed as directed at SMM mini-UAV near Paraskovivka**

While conducting a mini unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flight near Paraskovivka (government-controlled, 75km north of Donetsk), the SMM heard 20 bursts of small-arms fire at an assessed distance of about 1km south-east of the patrol, assessed as aimed at the mini-UAV, which was also flying about 1km south-east of the patrol. The Mission safely landed the UAV and left the area.*

**Stanytsia Luhanska disengagement area**

On 14 August, the SMM saw four vehicles belonging to the State Emergency Services of Ukraine parked about 100m north of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north of Luhansk), as well as vegetation burning east of the broken section of the bridge. It also saw six members of the armed formations wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them south of the bridge.[2]

**Other disengagement areas[3]**

Positioned close to the disengagement area near Zolote (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), the Mission observed a calm situation.

**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.

**In violation of withdrawal lines/Non-government-controlled areas**

12 August

An SMM mini-UAV spotted four towed howitzers (D-30 Lyagushka, 122mm) and two self-propelled howitzers (2S1 Gvozdika, 122mm) near Bile (22km west of Luhansk) (for previous observations see SMM Daily Report 21 July 2019).

13 August

An SMM mini-UAV spotted two anti-tank guns (MT-12 Rapira, 100mm) near the railway station in Debaltseve (58km north-east of Donetsk).

14 August

The Mission saw four multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) (BM-21 Grad, 122mm) near Novoamvrosiivske (56km east of Donetsk).

**Beyond withdrawal lines but outside of designated storage sites**

**Government-controlled areas**

14 August

The SMM saw two surface-to-air missile systems (9K33 Osa) near Valerianivka (51km south-west of Donetsk).

**Non-government-controlled areas**

11 August

Aerial imagery available to the SMM revealed the presence of:

- 22 tanks in a training area near Kruhlyk (31km south-west of Luhansk) (for previous observations see SMM Daily Report 13 August 2019) and
- five tanks in a training area near Shymshynivka (27km south-west of Luhansk) (for previous observations see SMM Daily Report 10 August 2019).

14 August

An SMM long-range UAV spotted seven tanks (type undetermined) entering a training area near Kruhlyk (see above).

**Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone[4]**

**Government-controlled areas**

13 August

An SMM mini-UAV spotted:
an armoured personnel carrier (APC) (BTR variant) near Pyshchevyk;

- a 140m-long extension of a trench about 3km south-east of Pyshchevyk (not seen in imagery from 4 June 2019), as well as an ongoing construction of a mortar pit about 2km north from the trench extension;

- two infantry fighting vehicles (one BTR-3E and one BMP variant) near Stanytsia Luhanska; and

- an APC (MT-LB) west of the bridge near Shchastia (20km north of Luhansk).

14 August

The SMM saw:

- an APC (BTR-70) inside a concrete shelter, under a camouflage net, outside the disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska (for previous observation, see SMM Daily Report 5 August 2019) and

- a new military position with five Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel reinforcing it located on road H20 about 200m west of the Donetsk Filtration Station (DFS) (15km north of Donetsk).

Non-government-controlled areas

13 August

An SMM mini-UAV spotted two APCs (MT-LB) near the railway station in Debaltseve.

14 August

The SMM saw a reinforcement of an existing trench on the northern side of M-04 road near the interchange with road H-20, about 800m west of the edge of Yasynuvata.

Mines seen near Shchastia and Vesela Hora; unexploded ordnance seen near Raivka and Verkhnoshyrokivske

On 13 and 14 August, an SMM mini-UAV again spotted 36 anti-tank mines (TM-62) laid in three rows across road H-21 south of the bridge in Shchastia, assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

On 14 August, an SMM mini-UAV again spotted 27 anti-tank mines (TM-62) laid out in four rows across road H-21, east and north-east of Vesela Hora (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), assessed as belonging to the armed formations.

On 13 August, the Mission saw for the first time a piece of unexploded ordnance (UXO), assessed as a rocket-propelled grenade and recent, about 10m north of the road from Verkhnoshyrokivske (formerly Oktyabr, non-government controlled, 29km north-east of Mariupol) to Pyshchevyk, about 2km west of Verkhnoshyrokivske.

On 14 August on the side of a local road on the northern outskirts of Raivka (non-government-controlled, 16km north-west of Luhansk), the SMM saw a piece of UXO, assessed as a projectile from an MLRS rocket and not recent.

SMM facilitation of repairs and the operation of essential civilian infrastructure

The Mission monitored adherence to the ceasefire to enable repairs to water pipelines between Zolote-3/Stakhanovets (government-controlled, 61km west of Luhansk) and Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk), to power lines servicing the Petrivske pumping station near Artema (government-controlled, 26km north of Luhansk) and to power lines in the area of Holubivske (non-government-controlled, 51km west of Luhansk) and Donetskyi (non-government-controlled, 49km west of Luhansk), as well as to enable the drilling of wells near Raivka.

The Mission continued to facilitate the operation of the DFS.

The SMM continued monitoring in Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Chernivtsi and Kyiv.

*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 SMM Daily Report 1 August 2019). 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 two occasions, at a checkpoint west of Verkhnoshyrokinske (formerly Oktyabr, non-government-controlled, 29km north-east of Mariupol), members of the armed formations again denied the SMM passage citing "an ongoing operation in the area" on the first occasion and "orders from superiors" on the second.

Delays:

- A member of the armed formations delayed the SMM's entry into a heavy weapons holding area in a non-government-controlled area of Donetsk region by about 40 minutes.

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access to disengagement areas near Zolote and Petrivske, 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. For instance, on 14 August a Ukrainian Armed Forces officer on two occasions denied the SMM passage across the bridge in Shchastia.

Other impediments:

- While conducting a mini-UAV flight near Paraskoviivka (government-controlled, 75km north of Donetsk), the SMM heard 20 bursts of small-arms fire about 1km south-east of the patrol, assessed as aimed at the mini-UAV, which it landed safely.
- On the night of 13-14 August, an SMM long range-UAV lost its GPS signal due to signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over government- and non-government-controlled areas of north and east Donetsk region and central Luhansk region.\[^{5}\]
- On four occasions, SMM mini-UAVs experienced signal interference while flying near Chermalyk (government-controlled, 31km north-east of Mariupol), assessed as caused by probable jamming.
- An SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference while flying near Kruta Balka (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Donetsk), assessed as caused by probable jamming.

\[^{5}\] For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. The SMM cameras in Kriałkiwka and Berezove were not operational during the reporting period.

* Please see the section at the end of this report entitled "Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate".

\[^{2}\] 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.

\[^{3}\] Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

\[^{4}\] The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

\[^{5}\] The interference could have originated from anywhere within a radius of kilometres from the UAVs positions.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:
http://www.osce.org/node/428069

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