

## Two objects that appear to be cameras installed on the mast of the SMM camera system at the Oktiabr mine, at night, and without permission, in Donetsk

The SMM's daylight camera at the Oktiabr mine (non-government-controlled, 9km north-west of Donetsk city) is emplaced on a mast located on the roof of a 50m concrete tower.

On 14 April, a senior member of the armed formations asked the Mission whether armed formations could install a camera on the SMM's mast at the Oktiabr mine. The SMM rejected the request.

On 17 April, between 21:08 and 22:09, the Oktiabr camera recorded two men in military-type clothing in the immediate vicinity of the Oktiabr camera: one on the mast and the other at its base. During that period, one man was seen on the mast fixing an L-shaped metal frame to its side with bolts and nuts, while the other was standing next to the mast and appeared to be helping hoist up the frame with a rope. The SMM saw that an object, which appeared to be a camera dome with an attached wire, was fixed on this frame. At 22:09, the camera recorded both men disappearing from view.

The SMM camera was operational throughout this event; however, its field of visibility was obstructed by the man engaged in attaching the metal frame to the mast.

On 19 April, an SMM patrol was dispatched to assess the situation at the camera site. The patrol saw that a ladder from the top floor to the roof had been recently cut, preventing access to the roof to conduct any further assessment. The Mission saw an L-shaped metal frame attached to the camera's mast, with an object that appeared to be a camera dome fixed on the other end of the frame. The SMM also saw another unidentified object, which appeared to be another camera, attached to the western-facing wall of the tower. The Mission observed wires leading from both objects towards a position of the armed formations, located about 50m from the tower.

The SMM subsequently disabled its camera system later on 19 April to avoid possible interference with its monitoring. The Mission will follow up in order to make a full site assessment.

The SMM's technical assets are an inseparable part of the Mission's operational infrastructure; as such they are included in the specification of OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 1117 that the SMM shall have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. Unrestricted and unconditional access to all areas, including by technical means, is essential to ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the security situation, as well as other mandated tasks. The mandate also tasks the Mission to report on any restrictions of its freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:

<https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/483956>

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