
SPOT REPORT

OSCE SMM Spot Report 46/2021: Armed formations denied and delayed the SMM's passage near Zolote and Stanytsia Luhanska, Luhansk region

On the morning of 21 December, the armed formations in Luhansk region once denied the Mission's passage to non-government-controlled areas and once delayed its passage to government-controlled areas.

The denial occurred at 09:10 at about 350m north of the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote, where a member of the armed formations cited "the SMM's safety". The delay occurred at 10:07 at the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge, where a member of the armed formations only allowed the Mission's passage after about 37 minutes of waiting, citing "a need to wait for a decision from superiors".

Additionally, earlier in the morning, at 09:06, at a checkpoint near the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote, members of the armed formations denied another SMM patrol passage inside the disengagement area citing "the SMM's safety". The patrol was to assist the SMM patrol crossing to non-government-controlled areas mentioned above.

In all instances, the SMM had preannounced its passage as a temporary, COVID-19 related courtesy.

For recent freedom of movement restrictions faced by the Mission, see previous [SMM Spot Reports](#).

The Mission again notes that such denials and delays not only restrict the SMM's freedom of movement across the contact line, but also prevent the SMM's logistical operations, which are essential for the effective functioning of the Mission.

The OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 1117 specifies that the SMM shall have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. Unrestricted and unconditional access to all areas 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/508910>

Contacts:

Alesia Bolot

26 Turhenievska Street

01054 Kyiv

Ukraine

Mobile: +38 063 022 9600

smm-press@osce.org