

OSCE SMM Spot Report 8/2022: Significant deterioration in the security situation in Ukraine

On 24 February, starting in the early morning and continuing throughout the day, the Mission observed a sharp deterioration of the security situation throughout its area of operations, characterized by heavy exchanges of fire along the full length of the contact line, and attacks in areas with key infrastructure and bases throughout the country.

In the early morning, SMM cameras near Shyrokyne (government-controlled, 100km south of Donetsk), Stanytsia Luhanska (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), Zolote (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk) and Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk) recorded intense kinetic activity, including a high number of explosions due to the use of heavy weapons. The cameras later ceased transmission.

Between 04:58 and 05:08, while at the SMM Forward Patrol Base (FPB) near Kadiivka (formerly Stakhanov, non-government-controlled, 50km west of Luhansk), the SMM recorded 233 undetermined explosions at an assessed range of 15-20km east-north-east. Also, between 04:45 and 05:20, the SMM at its FPB near Stanytsia Luhanska recorded a very large number of explosions by multiple launch rocket systems at an assessed range of 10-20km west.

During the day, the Mission heard explosions and saw movement of military equipment at various locations.

In view of developing military hostilities, the SMM has not dispatched any ground patrols today. Monitoring activities are continuing from a limited number of listening and observation posts and with the help of the SMM's technical monitoring assets. Some of the SMM's forward patrol bases have been temporarily relocated to Patrol hubs and Team offices. All mission members are accounted for. The SMM maintained its presence in all locations stipulated in its mandate.

The SMM continues to gather information and report on the security situation by monitoring from its listening posts, albeit with a reduced posture.

The Mission continued to operate under the principles of impartiality and transparency, stipulated in the OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 1117, in line with all OSCE principles and commitments. To this end, the mandate provides the SMM with safe and secure access throughout Ukraine in order to gather information and establish facts related to the security situation.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/512989>

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