



During the Ministerial Meeting of the OSCE Troika on the margins of the 22nd Ministerial Council in Belgrade, the Foreign Ministers of the current, previous and incoming OSCE Chairmanships - Serbia, Switzerland and Germany, respectively – reaffirmed their full support to the political process within the Trilateral Contact Group and the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), emphasizing that the Minsk agreements should be fully implemented. This implies upholding the ceasefire and moving forward with the political process.

The Ministers said it was of crucial importance to stabilize and strengthen the ceasefire in the east of Ukraine. Although the ceasefire is largely holding, a pattern where days of relative or absolute calm are punctuated by days of intense and localized fighting is of serious concern.

The fact that the ceasefire violations involve weapons that should have been withdrawn from those areas is particularly worrying, the ministers stated. They agreed that the SMM's capacities to mediate and broker localized ceasefires should be strengthened. Furthermore, they stressed that the monitors' access to all of Ukraine has to be unhindered and unfettered and according to the SMM's mandate as decided by the OSCE Permanent Council. To this effect, all sides should enable the establishment of further forward patrol bases.

The Foreign Ministers – Ivica Dačić of Serbia, Didier Burkhalter of Switzerland, and Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany – expressed their full support for the "Normandy format", welcoming the close co-operation with the OSCE Troika and the OSCE Chairmanship.

Dačić also thanked the other Troika members for their constructive discussions over the course of Serbia's 2015 OSCE Chairmanship.

*Photo by:OSCE/Jonathan Perfect*