



A special session of the OSCE Permanent Council was convened today by the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship in light of the rapid deterioration of the situation in eastern Ukraine, and particularly the shelling of civilian areas in Mariupol on 24 January.

The Permanent Council was briefed by Chief Monitor of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan, and the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, who expressed deep concern about the increase in violence in Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the spread of instability to other cities. They stressed the need for all parties to immediately return to peace consultations in order to achieve a sustainable ceasefire and to implement all provisions of the Minsk agreements.

The Serbian OSCE Chairmanship reiterated their strong support for the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. The Chairmanship condemned the indiscriminate use of heavy weapons in civilian areas, called for an immediate cessation of hostilities on the ground and expressed condolences and sympathy to the families of the deceased and those who were injured.