



Newsletter of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Donetsk People's Republic

14. 07. 2020

Main news of the Republic (from July 07 to July 14)

In the period from July 7 to July 8, the next round of negotiations took place. The meetings of the Contact Group and the working groups to resolve the conflict in Donbass were held in the form of video conferences.

At the Contact Group sitting regarding **security issues**, the participants heard a report of the profile group coordinator, exchanged views and outlined their positions on the main agenda items.

“We welcome the work continuation on the draft Supplement to the Framework Decision, as well as some progress in the work of the group in terms of coordinating the mine action, but in this situation, the rule “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed” works. Therefore, today it was decided to continue the dialogue and to formulate a full-scale mine clearance plan to agree on the remaining 7 areas, among which there are critical infrastructure facilities that require repair and restoration work.

The key priority issue for us is the speedy approval and signing of additional measures to control the current cease-fire, on which, despite all the efforts made by us and the mediator in the person of the Russian Federation, to our surprise, no progress is taking place: the Ukrainian delegates indistinctly reacted to the discussion and approval specific measures, and the OSCE coordinators, for reasons incomprehensible to us, were completely silent.

This state of affairs allows the armed formations of Ukraine to unpunished continue the ongoing shelling of Republic's territories, which lead to devastating consequences.

In this regard, we asked the OSCE coordinators to clarify the situation with blocking the approval and signing of additional measures. In response, Ms. Grau assured us that in the near future the OSCE will have a working document with a list of additional measures outlined in the framework of the meeting in the Normandy format fields, which will immediately be sent as a base for elaboration in a profile group” - Natalia Nikonorova told about the negotiation situation in terms of security.

Despite some progress in discussing certain issues, negotiations in a **political group** are still not productive.

“We managed to reach a consensus on the content of articles 2 and 3 of the law on Donbass special status. We hope that we will be able to maintain positive dynamic and continue to discuss article by article this important law for a political settlement. However, Kiev’s representatives continue to ignore the discussion of the most priority and key issues - first of all, how the special status will be taken into account in the draft amendment of the Constitution regarding decentralization.

Without an approval of constitutional amendments, a discussion of certain aspects of political conflict settlement can be throw into question. Further discussion will only make sense after we agree on what exactly will be enshrined in the new version of the Constitution, regarding the features of local self-government in Donbass, since in accordance with the hierarchy of regulatory legal acts, any law must comply with the Constitution. However, instead of specifically discussing the draft constitutional amendments, representatives of Ukraine again promised to provide it someday. Such behavior of Kiev’s representatives has already become traditional” - Natalia Nikonorova said.

The DPR Plenipotentiary once again called on the Ukrainian party to begin a substantive discussion of main topics of the political track - namely, to work on draft normative legal acts related to the implementation of Donbass special status and its consolidation in the Constitution.

As for the **humanitarian topic**, today, the Contact group participants continued to discuss the urgent issue of completing the exchange procedure, as well as the procedural issues of subsequent exchanges.

“Today, representatives of official Kiev have not changed their position and continued to avoid the fulfilling their obligations to complete the earlier exchange regarding the full procedural cleansing of released persons. Also today, in our opinion, an illogical proposal was made to split up categories and statuses of individuals to form new lists for exchange.

At the moment, four comprehensive categories are clearly defined, according to which we have worked out our list of persons for the subsequent exchange and are ready to send it before July 10.

Instead of exchanging the formed lists for approval, representatives of official Kiev suggest adding two more statuses, one of which is already taken into account, and the second contradicts the relevant clauses of the Minsk agreements.

The stabilizing factor in this situation was the negotiation coordinators, who supported our view that the four categories previously approved by the parties are exhaustive. Everything is ready from our side, we are waiting for the reaction of the Ukrainian party” - Natalia Nikonorova said.

The discussion of the **Contact Group regulations** caused a spirited debate. Especially the Ukrainian party insisted on the disagreement to remove paragraph 2.1, securing the right of the group to lunch break. At the same time, representatives of Kiev

were ready to sacrifice other, critically important items, such as the clause on the participation of working groups in the decision-making process. It is significant that the Ukrainian negotiators are more interested in issues of their own comfort than productive work.

However, we were able to reach consensus on clause 2.3, which will be adopted in a compromise edition. According to it, all participants of the Contact Group will be required to send their reactions regarding the agenda of the next meeting in writing, no later than two days before it. We hope that thanks to this item we will be able to avoid a repetition of the situation in which Kiev refuses to discuss agenda items, or will replace them in order to satisfy its immediate interests.

Despite certain advances in regulations progress, the pace of work on it is still insufficient. First of all, this is due to the attitude of the Ukrainian negotiators, who consider the issue of the regulation as secondary. We hope that the Ukrainian party will take the next meeting more seriously and prepare substantive article-by-article proposals on this issue.

Statement by Natalia Nikonorova concerning simplification of the pass mode for OSCE employees to the republican territory

At the Contact Group meeting on June 25, the Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Ambassador Yasar Halit Cevik, asked us to consider lifting the quarantine requirement when crossing the contact line, expressing agreement with the need for the mission staff to bring the test result with them.

We considered this request and, in connection with the softening of the high alert regime in the Republic, as well as on the basis of our full assistance to the OSCE SMM in fulfilling its functions in recording ceasefire violations and the consequences of Ukrainian shelling, we decided to simplify the procedure for allowing mission personnel to Republic's territory. In particular, it was decided to abolish the requirement for these employees to quarantine when entering the Republic, but provided that the entrants show negative results of the coronavirus test, and also make a second test in 14 days.

In the near future, this decision and all necessary clarifications will be officially got across to the representatives of the OSCE SMM in the working order.