



Newsletter of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Donetsk People's Republic

Main news of the Republic (from Desember 11 to Desember 18)

NATALIA NIKONOROVA COMMENTED THE STATEMENTS OF THE VERKHOVNA RADA SPEAKER

Statements continue to be heard from Kiev, which directly confirm all our guesses what kind of chaos, confusion and inconsistency of actions take place in Ukraine.

Thus, the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada spoke about the fact that no appeals with legislative initiatives regarding the implementation of the Minsk agreements political block were sent to the Ukrainian parliament. Such statements sound extremely absurd, taking into account that at the beginning of this year the Ukrainian president appointed the chairmen of the Verkhovna Rada three committees to the Ukrainian delegation in Minsk. These appointments were accompanied by a large-scale hype in the media: supposedly, now the connection with the Rada will be direct, and the Ukrainian negotiators will not have the slightest difficulty in cooperation with the parliament for a political settlement.

But in practice, it turned out that the Ukrainian authorities continue to play ping-pong: at the Contact Group meetings, representatives of Kiev tell us that they have no authority to apply to the Verkhovna Rada with initiatives to amend or adopt the regulatory legal acts necessary for the implementation of the Package of measures. And Rada representatives, in turn, say that no one has contacted them on this matter.

In a situation where Ukrainian officials cannot decide who is responsible for the legislative initiative and therefore are inactive on this issue, the Verkhovna Rada could begin to consider the already existing draft normative legal acts – those that were sent to Kiev from Republics. However, as follows from the statements of the Rada speaker, the Ukrainian parliament has not even received any such projects. In addition, the Ukrainian authorities have not yet provided us with any answers and comments on our Roadmap version, which, if adopted at the level of the Verkhovna Rada, could clearly delineate the powers to implement the items of the Minsk agreements among all branches of government in Ukraine and maximally to define in detail all modalities, terms and details of the implementation of each item of the Package of measures.

Obviously Kiev does not seek to bring constructiveness and certainty in terms of the Minsk agreements implementation, preferring to search for new ways to delay and complicate the settlement process.

In the period from December 15 to 16, 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.

This year's final meeting of the Contact group regarding **political issues** did not bring any positive changes and once again showed Kiev's destructive approach to a political settlement.

“The Ukrainian side has not been able to provide its comments on our Roadmap version, sent back on October 9, 2020, for more than two months. At the same time, it is simply impossible to accept for discussion the draft that was submitted by Ukraine: as we have already noted many times, this paper contradicts the Minsk agreements by almost 80%. In this regard, we again voiced a proposal on how to get out of this situation: given the absence of any comments and objections, to accept our draft Roadmap and start implementing it.

However, unfortunately, the OSCE coordinators voiced a rather vague position on this issue – the need to discuss other paragraphs if we do not agree on these. The question arises: how can we eliminate the disagreements, if we have not even decided what exactly they are, since Kiev refuses to consider our written proposals.

This behavior on the part of the OSCE coordinators causes us great concern and bewilderment, since it is obvious that the status of a mediator obliges not to interfere with the communication of the parties, and even more so not to take the position of any side, but to promote the dialogue as much as possible, "said Natalia Nikonorova.

In the current situation, the call from the head of the Ukrainian delegation to “stop the fruitless conversation” sounded especially cynical. Let us remind the Ukrainian representatives that talks about a political settlement in recent months have remained fruitless solely because of the absolutely unproductive position of Kiev, which has done absolutely nothing to give constructive work on the political track.

We do not still know on what conditions Kiev plans to implement a comprehensive political settlement. The Ukrainian delegation even refuses to voice these parameters, putting forward additional conditions. Under these circumstances, constructive dialogue is out of the question.

If our counterparts insist on this logic, the Republics have every right to take symmetrical steps: to offer the Ukrainian side to disarm, move away from the contact line, withdraw all foreign troops and mercenaries, and then, perhaps, we will voice how we want to coexist with Kiev. However, whether this will contribute to the conflict settlement is a rhetorical question.

Unfortunately, it is the issue, with which the negotiation year ends, instead of the implementation of the Package of measures and of the results of the leaders' summit.

Today, as part of the discussion of the annual work **security group** results, the Contact group participants heard a report of the coordinator, Ambassador Cevik, who stated that he could not speak about any progress.

“Indeed, about what progress we can speak if the Ukrainian party did everything to nullify all the efforts made by the participants to agree on Measures to strengthen the ceasefire regime?”

Firstly, Ukraine thwarted a joint inspection agreed at an extraordinary meeting of the Contact group to assess AFU positional violations in the area of the village of Shumy. Then it flatly refused to discuss and agree on the clear functionality of the coordination mechanism – the most important and only mechanism for verification by the parties of violations of the Measures and their elimination, pretending that they supposedly “everything works”.

Yesterday, the Ukrainian representatives said that after two months they did not see any new proposals for a coordination mechanism, and they do not understand at all what they need to work on. And all this is happening because for the sixth year now Kiev has been trying, without leaving Minsk agreements officially, to replace the party of the negotiations.

At the same time, the most disturbing thing for us is that the OSCE coordinators, with their position of so-called non-interference, allow the Ukrainian side to take such a careless attitude to the real work on the agenda. In our opinion, this is a questionable approach from the point of view of constructiveness and logic on the part of the coordinator: if there is no agreement on the most important issues, let's discuss at least something.

In this regard, we were forced to once again urge all participants to return to the Package of measures implementation, where the parties are clearly defined. Without such a direct dialogue, it is simply impossible to achieve any progress in the agreements implementation, and this should be accepted as a fact by the Ukrainian side.

With regret and concern, we state that this negotiating year, during which the instructions received from the leaders of the Normandy format countries were to be worked out and implemented, ended in another negotiation deadlock, despite all the options offered by the Republics to get out of it” - Natalia Nikonorova stated.

It is a great pity that Ukraine has not yet understood that procedural clearance is the most important, key point of the negotiations, which cannot be considered secondary. Again, we have to recall the protocols signed in December 2019 and in April 2020 between the members of the Contact group, which indicate that the exchange of 2019 is not considered complete until all procedural clearance actions on both sides are completed.

We also had to recall that all citizens who were transferred to the territory of Ukraine in 2019 and 2020 were procedurally cleared by us, that is, on our part, all obligations were fully fulfilled, which cannot be said about the Ukrainian party.

At the same time, our proposed compromise – the Action plan for the implementation of the Package of measures, in which clear regulations for all procedures were stipulated – was completely ignored by official Kiev. Due to this fact, there is no understanding of the prospects for a political settlement, respectively, of the foundations, status and procedures for the exchange, and all responsibility in this lies solely with the official Kiev.

STATEMENT OF NATALIA NIKONOROVA IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEATH OF DONETSK PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC DEFENDERS

The situation on the contact line continues to deteriorate rapidly – official Kiev has significantly increased shelling of Republic's territory with the use of weapons prohibited by the Minsk agreements. Of particular concern is the significant aggravation in the South of the Republic.

Thus, according to the DPR Representation in the JCCC and in the negotiation process, over the past three days, the armed formations of Ukraine opened fire 4 times with the use of 120 mm mortars in the direction of settlements in the Mariupol direction, while 36 mines were fired.

On December 18, as a result of these shelling, two servicemen of the DPR People's Militia were fatal injured. Since the signing of the Measures to strengthen and control the ceasefire regime, which were disavowed by the Ukrainian party in early September, seven defenders of our Republic have already died, two civilians and one serviceman have been injured. We express our deepest condolences to all the families and friends of the fallen Republic's heroes!

It remains obvious to us that the Ukrainian side deliberately ignores its obligations and does not want to implement the document we have proposed, which contains detailed parameters for the operation of the coordination mechanism and direct interaction at the level of the JCCC in the current composition to verify and prevent violations.

Every day, representatives of the authorities and the military command of Ukraine are committing more and more egregious crimes. Thus, by formally calling for the observance of "silence" during the New Year holidays, Kiev is aggravating the situation on the contact line.

For the entire world community, it should be obvious that Kiev is fighting not according to generally accepted methods of warfare, but vilely – surreptitiously, not only violating the obligations assumed in Minsk, but also disregarding any notions of humanity.

In this regard, we insist that the guarantor countries of the Minsk agreements and the curators of Ukraine return it to a peaceful, diplomatic path in order to prevent the disruption of the current truce.

We also demand that the Ukrainian side finally begin to agree on the detailed parameters of the coordination mechanism, as direct interaction at the JCCC level to verify and prevent violations and which is provided for by the Measures to strengthen the ceasefire regime.

Otherwise, we have the right to adequately respond to the actions of the armed formations of Ukraine.