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**PRESS RELEASE**

**OSCE Chairperson-in-Office welcomes Declaration by participating States calling for immediate ceasefire in Ukraine**

BELGRADE, 20 January 2015 - The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Serbia's Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić today welcomed a Declaration adopted by representatives of the OSCE's 57 participating States at a special meeting of the Permanent Council in Vienna, calling for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. He welcomed the Permanent Council's prompt response to the rapidly deteriorating situation on the ground.

"The Declaration confirms the firm conviction of all the OSCE's 57 participating States that the cycle of violence and hostilities in eastern Ukraine cannot be settled on the battleground but only at the negotiating table," said Dačić. "I call on all sides to immediately move towards de-escalation and the implementation of a full ceasefire and I would like to encourage them to make full use of the OSCE conflict resolution toolbox."

In a Declaration OSCE participating States expressed their "serious concern over the military escalation in recent days in eastern Ukraine" and called "for an immediate ceasefire by all sides and the full implementation of the Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014, and Memorandum of 19 September 2014."

Participating States also expressed their "full support" to the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, and called upon "all signatories of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum to meet as soon as possible in order to achieve practical progress on the full implementation of the Minsk agreements."

Supporting all efforts that are being made to de-escalate the situation, including in the Normandy format, the Declaration emphasizes "that all sides should fully respect and ensure the safety and security of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) monitors on the ground, and fully co-operate with the Mission."

Ambassador Tagliavini and Chief Monitor of the SMM Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan addressed the Permanent Council via video link.

*For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:*

<http://www.osce.org/cio/135461>