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PRESS RELEASE

Statement by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the situation in Eastern Ukraine

Belgrade, 3 February 2015 - In view of the continuing heavy fighting around Debaltsevo and the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the area, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dačić, calls upon all actors to refrain from violence and to immediately stop all military activities and expresses his profound regret for the loss of lives.

On humanitarian grounds, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office calls on all actors in and around the Debaltsevo area to establish a local temporary truce for a minimum of three days, taking immediate effect, facilitated and supported by SMM. This would allow for the urgent evacuation of civilian population from the conflict zone. He asked the Special Representative to the Trilateral Contact Group, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini to pursue this proposal within Trilateral Contact Group.

The truce should also be used for the immediate resumption of consultations with the aim of securing a sustainable cease-fire and the full implementation of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, signed in September 2014. These two documents remain the basis for a peaceful settlement of the crisis. The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office recalls that the Trilateral Contact Group has stated its readiness to engage in such consultations without delays.

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