

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moscow, October 29, 2021

Colleagues,

I would like to reaffirm the importance of continuing our joint mediation efforts within the Normandy format for bringing about a settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

There is much talk at present about our potential meeting. I believe that it must be well prepared, including by drafting in advance a detailed joint outcome statement setting forth specific recommendations for the parties to the conflict: Ukraine, and certain areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

HIS EXCELLENCY  
MR HEIKO MAAS,  
ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER  
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY  
Berlin

HIS EXCELLENCY  
MR JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN,  
MINISTER FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC  
Paris

You will find attached the Russian draft of this document, which we believe reflects the reality of the peace process and its main objectives. I will appreciate your timely comments and amendments, if any, to this draft, after which we will be able to assess the prospects of reaching the corresponding agreements, as well as set the date and venue for the meeting.

Sincerely,  
(signature)  
Sergey Lavrov

**Joint Statement by foreign ministers of the Normandy format countries  
following the meeting in \_\_\_\_\_ on November \_\_, 2021**

We, the foreign ministers of Germany, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and France, held a meeting today in \_\_\_\_\_ to consider what is causing the lack of progress in settling Ukraine's internal conflict, as well as to give a political jolt to the efforts undertaken by Ukraine and certain areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions (CADLR) within the Trilateral Contact Group, facilitated by Russia and the OSCE.

Tensions persist around the intra-Ukrainian settlement process. We express our deep frustration with the failure to fulfil the provisions of the February 12, 2015, Minsk Package of Measures, as well as the recommendations of the leaders of the Normandy format countries, as set forth in the Common Agreed Conclusions of the Paris Summit of December 9, 2019.

We reaffirm that the Minsk agreements provide the sole framework for achieving a peaceful and comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Ukraine, and that there is no alternative to them. To this end, we stand for promptly establishing direct dialogue between Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk.

We also reaffirm that in accordance with the Package of Measures, the responsibility, rights and obligations for coordinating and carrying out measures to settle the conflict lie with the governmental authorities of Ukraine and CADLR's de-facto functioning governmental authorities.

We express serious concern about the multiple violations of the terms of the ceasefire along the contact line. We emphasise the importance of ensuring strict compliance with the "Measures to strengthen the ceasefire" of July 22, 2020, without any omissions or distortions. To this effect, it is advisable for representatives of the Ukrainian authorities and CADLR to work together within the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination in its current form.

We welcome the efforts by the Trilateral Contact Group to draft a Plan of Action (roadmap) for bringing about a comprehensive settlement to the conflict in accordance with the Minsk agreements, and express our interest in completing the work on the Key Clusters for the implementation of the Minsk agreements that will serve as the Normandy format's recommendations to the Trilateral Contact Group as it continues drafting the roadmap.

We proceed from the premise that having Ukraine's governmental authorities and CADLR's de-facto functioning governmental authorities approve a coordinated Plan of Action at the highest level of governmental authority will create an opening for fulfilling the Common Agreed Conclusions of the Paris Normandy Summit, and contribute to settling the conflict as per the Minsk agreements.

In order to open two new crossing points (Zolotoye and Schastie), we note the need for Ukraine and CADLR to step up their coordination efforts to agree on the parameters of their functioning without changing the de-facto contact line.

We reaffirm the need to launch discussions on all the legal aspects of the future special regime (status) for certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions within Ukraine in keeping with the Minsk agreements, while drafting the Plan of Action, and, guided by the Steinmeier Formula, to promptly coordinate and enact all the necessary legal instruments, including amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine.

We believe that legislative activity in violation of the Minsk Package of Measures must be stopped for the sake of achieving a settlement, which includes laws adopted in Ukraine on the state language, education, and rights of indigenous peoples, as well as the bill “On the Principles of the State Policy of Transition Period,” as submitted to Ukraine’s Verkhovna Rada on August 9, 2021 – its adoption would make it impossible for Ukraine to fulfil the Minsk agreements and would amount to Ukraine’s withdrawal from them.

We are in favour of immediately removing all obstacles to the full resumption of socioeconomic ties with CADLR in strict conformity with the Package of Measures.

We believe that the provisions of the Joint Statement following the 23<sup>rd</sup> EU-Ukraine Summit (Kiev, October 12, 2021) on settling Ukraine’s internal conflict distort the contents of the Package of Measures and do nothing to promote a settlement.

We express our support for the efforts of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and call on this mission to strictly abide by the principles of impartiality and transparency in its efforts to effectively monitor and verify ceasefire violations, conduct impartial investigations into such violations and convey accurate and truthful information about these violations in the mission reports, including with respect to the parties to the conflict responsible for each violation, as well as their consequences for the other party to the conflict, with information on casualties and infrastructure damage.

We note the importance of the activities undertaken by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and call on him to make all necessary efforts within the Trilateral Contact Group, in an impartial and unbiased manner, with a view to promoting constructive dialogue between the representatives of Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk.

We stand ready to continue our work in the Normandy format for supporting the negotiating process between Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk within the Trilateral Contact Group and fulfilling all the recommendations of the Paris Summit of December 9, 2019, as well as to draft coordinated proposals on holding the next summit to discuss the political and security conditions, including for holding local elections.



Botschaft  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Moskau

Geschäftszeichen (bitte bei Antwort angeben): Pol-S1-701 WTL

Verbalnote Nr. 823/ 2021

Die Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland beehrt sich, dem Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der Russischen Föderation, ein an Seine Exzellenz, den Minister für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der Russischen Föderation, Herrn Sergej Wiktorowitsch Lawrow, gerichtete mündliche Botschaft Ihrer Exzellenzen der Minister für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Herrn Heiko Maas, und der Französischen Republik, Herrn Jean-Yves Le Drian, in schriftlicher Form sowie ein Begleitschreiben Ihrer Exzellenzen der Botschafter von Deutschland und Frankreich vom 5. November 2021 zu übersenden.

Die Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland benutzt diesen Anlass, das Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der Russischen Föderation erneut ihrer ausgezeichneten Hochachtung zu versichern.

Moskau, 5. November 2021



An das  
Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten  
der Russischen Föderation  
3. Europäisches Departement  
Moskau

**Embassy  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Moscow**

Ref. # (Please indicate when replying hereto): Pol-S1-701 WTL

Unofficial translation

**Note Verbale No. 823/2021**

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and has the honour to transmit attached hereto a transcript of an oral communication by Their Excellencies Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany Heiko Maas and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic Jean-Yves Le Drian to His Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov, along with a supporting letter by Their Excellencies Ambassadors of Germany and France dated November 5, 2021.

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation the assurances of its highest consideration.

Moscow, November 5, 2021

Seal

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Russian Federation  
Third European Department  
Moscow



Embassy  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Moscow



AMBASSADE  
DE FRANCE  
EN RUSSIE

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

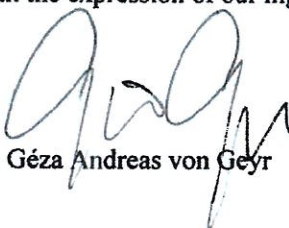
His Excellency  
Mr. Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Russian Federation

Moscow, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021

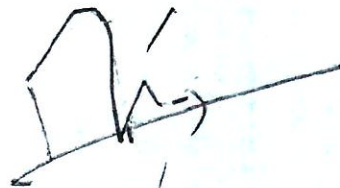
Excellence,  
dear Minister,

we have the honour to convey to you the attached joint oral message of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Jean-Yves Le Drian, and the Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Heiko Maas, in written form. Attached please also find a courtesy translation into Russian.

With the expression of our highest appreciation



Dr. Géza Andreas von Geyr



Pierre Lévy

Attachment

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Seiner Exzellenz  
Dem Minister für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten  
Der Russischen Föderation  
Herrn Sergej W. Lawrow

Moskau

Berlin / Paris 4 November 2021

Dear colleague,

We received your letter of 29 October 2021. We fully agree that it is important to continue and to step up our joint efforts as members of the Normandy format towards the political settlement of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Our Heads of State and Government reiterated the need for a ministerial meeting of the Normandy format during their phone call on 11 October 2021, which we would like to hold on 11 November 2021 in Paris.

It contains many assessments that are not shared by Germany and France, e.g. the portrayal of an “internal Ukrainian conflict” or the description of Russia as a facilitator alongside the OSCE in the Trilateral Contact Group. It also entails provisions that will certainly not find acceptance among Normandy states, inter alia the “establishment of a direct dialogue between Kyiv, Donetsk and Luhansk” and it omits that the OSCE SMM must be allowed to fully implement its mandate and, to that end, must be granted safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. It also contains several items well outside the scope of the prerogatives of the Normandy format with little relevance to implementing the Minsk agreements. In order to engage in constructive discussions at a ministerial meeting, we are therefore providing a Franco-German proposal for a joint statement that is, in our view, better suited to achieve consensus among the Normandy states.

Regardless of disagreements over the concrete wording of these respective drafts, we noted that we share an assessment of the issues that we jointly need to discuss if we are to achieve substantive progress in the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. We therefore suggest an agenda for our meeting that highlights issues that you also addressed in your proposal, which would include:

- the stabilization of the ceasefire and strict observance of the “additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire” of 22 July 2020;
- re-focusing on the full implementation of the Paris Summit Conclusions to achieve progress in the humanitarian and security fields, which are essential for the civilian population on the ground;
- addressing legal aspects and political provisions listed in the Minsk agreements;
- outlining an ambitious follow-up process.

With regard to the “Key Clusters”, we remain convinced that the draft provided by Germany and France should serve as the basis to overcome contentious issues linked to the implementation of the Minsk agreements. An impulse from the Normandy format in this regard could contribute to unblock the negotiations in the Trilateral Contact Group. Our meeting should also pave the way for a summit of our leaders to discuss political and security conditions, inter alia, for the organization of local elections.

We agree that the parties to the conflict have to fully implement the Minsk agreements and we are looking forward to meeting in person on 11 November to engage constructively towards that objective.

Heiko MAAS

Jean-Yves LE DRIAN



## **Draft Conclusions of the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Countries of the Normandy Format**

(Paris, 11 November 2021)

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine met today in Paris.

They reaffirm that the Minsk agreements (Minsk Protocol of 5 September 2014, Minsk Memorandum of 19 September 2014 and the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015) continue to be the basis of the work of the Normandy format and of the Trilateral Contact Group, whose members are committed to their full implementation.

They reaffirm that the agreed Conclusions of the Normandy Summit on 9 December 2019 in Paris are to be fully implemented. In particular, the ministers agree that further immediate measures to stabilize the situation in the conflict area will be taken without delay. This includes:

- The agreed decision by the Trilateral Contact Group of 22 July 2020 on additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire will be reaffirmed and applied starting from 00.01 (Kyiv time) on 1 December 2021 and to continue working towards an effective coordination and verification mechanism to address ceasefire violations.
- The implementation of the framework decision on mine action and its annex containing an updated demining plan at 19 agreed sites will start on 1 December 2021.
- The implementation of the addendum to the Trilateral Contact Group Framework decision on disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016 with an annex containing four additional disengagement areas with the aim of disengaging forces and equipment in these zones will begin on 1 December and be accomplished by 31 December 2021.
- Agreement on another release and exchange of conflict-related detainees based on the principle of “all for all” will be achieved by 30 November 2021.
- All remaining obstacles to full and unconditional access of international organisations (including the ICRC) to all detained persons will be lifted as of 1 December 2021.
- Two new crossing points (Zolote and Shchastya) at the Line of Contact and all existing crossing points will open starting no later than 10 days after the day of holding this meeting, allowing for reasonable and proportionate sanitary restrictions.
- The OSCE SMM must be allowed to fully implement its mandate and, to that end, must be granted safe and secure access throughout Ukraine, allowing it to expand its footprint in territories not controlled by the government of Ukraine and to make unhindered use of SMM’s technical equipment.

The ministers agree on the need for a summit of the leaders of the Normandy format in the near future, to exchange views on the political and security conditions for the organization of local elections, in particular the withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment, mercenaries, on the disarmament of all illegal groups, on the adoption of a constitutional reform in Ukraine providing for decentralisation as a key element, as well as on the special order of local self-government of Certain Areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions, incorporating the Steinmeier Formula. They agreed on the necessity for the leaders to provide clarity with regards to the entry into force of the law prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons in connection with the events that took place in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, as well as the reinstatement of the full control of the state border by the government of Ukraine, as outlined in the Minsk Agreements.

The ministers agree to meet within six months to take stock of the implementation of the agreements reached. They welcome the work of the Political Advisors of the leaders on the “Key Clusters”, which are based on reciprocal and verifiable steps and timelines in the comprehensive implementation of the Minsk agreements.

## RUSSIAN FEDERATION

### MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moscow, November 6, 2021

Colleagues,

I have received your message dated November 4, 2021, in response to our proposals of October 29, 2021, regarding the outcome document for a potential meeting of the Normandy format foreign ministers.

I will not hide my disappointment with your answer. Take, for instance, the part where you say that our proposals contain provisions that “will certainly not find acceptance” among Normandy format countries, in particular, “the establishment of direct dialogue between Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk.” In addition, you pointed out that our draft fails to state that “to fully implement its mandate” the OSCE SMM must be granted “safe and secure access throughout Ukraine.”

HIS EXCELLENCY

MR JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN,

MINISTER FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

Paris

HIS EXCELLENCY

MR HEIKO MAAS,

ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER

OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Berlin

I would like to remind you once again that paragraphs 9, 11 and 12 of the Minsk Package of Measures require that all matters related to the special status of Donetsk and Lugansk, constitutional reform in Ukraine with decentralisation as its key element, and preparations for local elections, be coordinated with Donetsk and Lugansk. Moreover, paragraph 13 directly states that it is necessary to establish working groups within the Trilateral Contact Group on the implementation of the relevant aspects of the Minsk agreements. For this reason, your statement that direct dialogue between Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk would not “find acceptance” serves to discredit the co-authorship of the leaders of Germany and France under the February 12, 2015 document.

The OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 1117, dated March 21, 2014, which sets forth the OSCE SMM mandate, does contain a provision on “safe and secure” access for SSM members throughout Ukraine for the purposes of “fulfilling their mandate.” However, my dear colleagues, you have decided to overlook several key aspects of this mandate as contained in paragraph 3 of the Permanent Council’s decision. It directly states that the SMM must operate “under the principles of impartiality and transparency.” In order to fulfil its tasks, it must “establish contact with local, regional and national authorities, civil society,

ethnic and religious groups, and members of the local population,” as well as “facilitate dialogue on the ground.” In other words, it is only through this dialogue that the SMM is to fulfil its mandate, which includes, among other things, coordinating with the local authorities in Donbass on specific procedures for accessing various areas controlled by Donetsk and Lugansk. By the way, this has been the case for many years, which proves that the SMM leadership understands its mandate.

Since you have mentioned the SMM mandate, I would like to draw your attention to the unsatisfactory performance of its key duties such as to “monitor and support respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.” Let me note that this refers to the entire Ukrainian territory.

In your message of November 4, 2021, you mentioned in passing that our proposals “contain several items well outside the scope of the prerogatives of the Normandy format with little relevance for implementing the Minsk agreements.” I am well aware that Berlin and Paris are unwilling to get into specifics on the key issues related to the settlement. Still, I would appreciate if you could explain what provisions in our October 29, 2021 draft you are referring to.

You provided an alternative joint statement draft which, in your view, is better able to achieve consensus among the Normandy format countries. In your November 4, 2021 message, as well as in the draft joint statement attached to it, you promote an agenda that suits you. It includes four items.

The first one deals with stabilising the ceasefire and ensuring strict observance of the “additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire” of July 22, 2020. The Trilateral Contact Group has regularly discussed this topic. The political and military representatives of Donbass and Ukraine, on whom the ceasefire depends, work within this format, not the Normandy format. For a long time now, the Donetsk and Lugansk authorities have issued orders to respect these “additional measures” and have been following them, while Kiev attempted to evade these obligations but had to accept them in the end. However, last month the Ukrainian military command officially repudiated this decision. It was stated publicly that commanders on the ground, among whom, as you understand, there are many extreme radicals from the so-called voluntary battalions, can decide on their own when to open fire and how. For this reason, in order to deliver on this objective Kiev must be forced to abide by the “additional measures” of July 22, 2020.

All other security-related matters in your draft joint statement also fall within the competence of the Trilateral Contact Group. However, you have worded them as imperatives, ignoring in effect the need to coordinate with Donetsk and Lugansk as per the Package of Measures.

The second item on the ministerial agenda you proposed is: “Re-focusing on the full implementation of the Paris Summit Conclusions.” There is no need to convene a ministerial meeting for that, my dear colleagues. All that is needed is for Berlin and Paris to force their protégés in Kiev to carry out what was signed by our leaders on December 9, 2019. By the way, our October 29, 2021 draft of the outcome document for the possible Normandy format ministerial meeting refers to these agreements. However, instead of simply suggesting to discuss them, it states that Kiev must immediately carry them out in good faith.

The third item in the agenda you propose for the meeting consists of addressing the “legal aspects and political provisions listed in the Minsk agreements.” Speaking of legal matters, I would like to refer, once again, to paragraphs 9, 11 and 12 of the Minsk Package of Measures, which require Kiev to engage in direct dialogue with Donetsk and Lugansk. Since you have raised legal matters, let me remind you that the UN Security Council approved this

Package of Measures, making it a legally binding document. Your peremptory statement that direct dialogue would not find acceptance could be interpreted to mean that by suggesting this agenda you are seeking to rewrite the Minsk agreements, which is something I refuse to believe.

The fourth item on your agenda is about “outlining an ambitious follow-up process.” This provision is devoid of any substance, unless you explain what you mean by this. Judging by the corresponding section in your draft joint statement, we are asked to agree to hold a Normandy format summit in the near future, so that the leaders can “engage” on all matters they already agreed on February 12, 2015. One gets the impression that this is also an attempt to create conditions for a radical revision of the Package of Measures in order to please Kiev, which has been refusing to comply with it in an official and public manner.

Speaking of the decisions adopted on February 12, 2015, in Minsk, we tend to overlook the fact that the four leaders also adopted a Declaration. Apart from supporting the Minsk agreements, including the fact that Donetsk and Lugansk signed it, it contains several broader political commitments. This includes “improving cooperation between the EU, Ukraine and Russia,” supporting talks in order to “achieve practical solutions to concerns raised by Russia with regards to the implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the EU,” as well as the commitment to create “a joint humanitarian and economic space from the Atlantic to the Pacific.” At a certain stage, it would be important to have our heads of state and government discuss these major tasks for addressing system-wide challenges that have been weighing on our relations.

You ended the November 4, 2021 message you sent me by saying that you agree that the parties to the conflict have to fully implement the Minsk agreements. Considering the facts about the way you interpret these agreements as stated above, this statement seems unrealistic.

I also noted that you have completely ignored the provision in our draft on the need to put an end to efforts by the Ukrainian authorities to undermine the place of the Russian language, along with the languages of other ethnic minorities, in education and everyday life through legislative efforts, which runs counter not only to Kiev’s obligations under the Package of Measures, but also to the Ukrainian Constitution and its commitments under various international and European conventions. By the same token, you have not commented on the provision in our draft on the bill submitted by Vladimir Zelensky’s government to the Verkhovna Rada “On the Principles of the State Policy of Transition Period,” which de-facto bans the Ukrainian officials from implementing the Minsk agreements. You preferred to sweep this subject under the rug, despite the fact that the leaders of Russia, Germany and France paid special attention to this topic during the telephone conversation on October 11, 2021. Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron assured Vladimir Putin that they will take the necessary steps to influence the Ukrainian president so that this bill is withdrawn. This did not happen, as you are very well aware.

As for your assertions that our heads of state “reiterated the need” for a Normandy format ministerial meeting, during the October 11, 2021 conversation mentioned above, Vladimir Putin answered the repeated calls by his counterparts by saying that he will instruct his foreign minister to “explore this opportunity.” This is precisely what we are doing. As part of these preparations, and as the first step, we want to honestly outline the causes that created this hopeless impasse in the implementation of all the preceding Normandy agreements.

Finally, regarding the date you suggested for the meeting: November 11, 2021, in Paris. Time and again, we have explained to our German and French partners that what matters the most for us is the substance of any potential discussions and reviewing how the resolutions

of the previous summits were carried out. Otherwise, this would undermine the contacts and agreements between our leaders, which is actually the case for the outcomes of the Normandy summit in Paris on December 9, 2019. However, even if we look beyond your efforts to trade substance for ceremonial events which serve no other purpose, I have to say how perplexed I am by the suggested date. Jean-Yves Le Drian mentioned November 11 during a conversation we had in Rome on the sidelines of the G20 Summit on October 30, 2021. I responded, as above, that substance must take precedence in our contacts, adding that in any case I already have a packed schedule in Moscow for November 11, including talks with a foreign minister from a friendly country. For this reason, the public statements that followed our Rome conversation, claiming that France suggested November 11 for holding the ministerial meeting and is awaiting Moscow's response to this proposal, seem inappropriate, to say the least.

Colleagues, I would like to reaffirm Russia's total commitment to the Minsk Package of Measures as agreed by our leaders and signed by the participants in the Contact Group, including the heads of certain areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions in Ukraine. To overcome the artificial obstacles on this path, we need to clearly reaffirm the provisions of this document. It is free of any ambiguity, and all its provisions are written in black and white, primarily the requirement that the sides it designates engage in direct dialogue. This is what our October 29 draft is all about.

I do hope that you will review these remarks regarding your message of November 4, 2021, and present a more detailed response that doesn't avoid critical issues caused by Kiev's intentional policy of thwarting all the decisions by the Normandy format leaders. Only this approach will enable us to engage in constructive efforts to coordinate conditions for holding a Normandy format ministerial meeting.

Best wishes,  
SERGEY LAVROV



## RUSSIAN FEDERATION

### MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moscow, November 16, 2021

Colleagues,

Lately we have faced increasingly frequent distortions of Russia's position and role in the settlement of Ukraine's internal conflict. Unfortunately, your joint statement "On Support for Ukraine," made on November 15, 2021, in Brussels, following your meeting with Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba was no exception.

In this statement, you threatened Russia with "consequences" for its alleged attempts to undermine Ukraine's territorial integrity, and accused us of "repeatedly refusing" to meet at the level of foreign ministers in the Normandy format. You know perfectly well that neither of these allegations are true. At the same time, you continue to look the other way while Kiev sabotages the Minsk agreements, forgetting that their implementation is intended to ensure that Donbass once again becomes part of Ukraine, thereby restoring its territorial integrity.

HIS EXCELLENCY

MR HEIKO MAAS,

ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER

OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Berlin

HIS EXCELLENCY

MR JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN,

MINISTER FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

Paris

Given the misrepresentations of Russia's approaches to the intra-Ukrainian settlement process and convening a Normandy format meeting, we have no choice but to take the unconventional step of making our correspondence public, including my letter to you dated October 29, together with the Russian draft of the outcome document for the Normandy format ministerial meeting, your response dated November 4, and my detailed comments to it dated November 6, 2021.

I do hope that making these primary sources available to the general public will clarify Russia's true role and intentions regarding the peace process, and will help build political will, including in Germany and France, for achieving a fair settlement in Donbass that is firmly rooted in the Minsk agreements, without any attempts to convene new meetings in order to further accommodate Kiev in its policy of sabotaging its obligations at the connivance of its Western sponsors, and in direct violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2202 (2015).

I would like to reaffirm our commitment to continuing to work together within the Normandy format in order to encourage Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk, as the parties to the

conflict, to fulfil their obligations under the Minsk Package of Measures and coordinate all agreements arising from it within the Trilateral Contact Group.

The Foreign Ministry will release the correspondence indicated above, as well as this letter, on its website on November 17, 2021. I am certain that you will understand why we had to take this unusual step, as it concerns telling the international community the truth about how international legal obligations assumed at the highest level are being fulfilled.

Best wishes,

**SERGEY LAVROV**