



**Intervention au déjeuner des chefs de délégations de la réunion ministérielle de l'OSCE
sur la sécurité dans l'espace OSCE y compris dans sa dimension méditerranéenne,
Milan le 6 décembre 2018**

Monsieur le Président, de même que le Ministre allemand Heiko Maas s'est exprimé au nom de l'Allemagne et de la France sur la sécurité en Europe et les incidents en mer d'Azov, je m'exprimerai ici sur les processus de Minsk et de Normandie, au nom de la France et de l'Allemagne.

Car, si la sécurité en Méditerranée peut-être une préoccupation légitime de l'OSCE, la résolution de la crise dans et autour de l'Ukraine en est une urgente priorité.

1. Aspects politiques

- **The grave naval incident that took place the 25th of November should not hinder an already hindered negotiation process. We are indeed facing what seems to be a dead-end since a few months, with meetings marked by the repetition of antagonistic positions. The holding of the so-called local elections on November 11 added to an already extremely tense situation.**
- **But at the same time, we have no choice but to maintain a constructive approach: in the coming months, we will be faced with several important deadlines, with the Ukrainian presidential and parliamentary elections in March and October. We will then see another election year in 2020, with the organization of local elections.**
- **That is why 2019 should be seen as a year of opportunities, despite the fact that many political processes will be slowed because of the election period. This year gives us a chance to focus on two issues: first, the finalization of the Steinmeier formula; and second, the Law on local elections in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk. Our goal should be to have these texts ready to be submitted once the new Rada will be in place by the end of 2019. We hope that our legal experts will soon meet in Paris to discuss these issues.**
- **In spite of the seriousness of the recent naval incident that took place in the Black Sea, it should not be used as an excuse to postpone such important discussions on political aspects of the Minsk Agreements. We should continue to focus on a long-term approach to find a peaceful resolution to this conflict.**

2. Aspects sécuritaires

- **Fortunately, the incident in the Black Sea didn't lead to a significant deterioration of the security situation in the east of Ukraine in the following days. The number of ceasefire violations is relatively stable since the 25th of November.**
- **However, the security situation remains extremely tense and volatile: we should not exclude an aggravation of the conflict in the following weeks. We continue to deplore the persistent use of weapons that should have been withdrawn in accordance with the Minsk agreements, while the SMM continues to face daily restrictions of its freedom of movement.**
- **We also deplore the lack of progress concerning the three disengagement areas, in particular concerning Stanytsia Luhanska. This lack of progress is quite worrying, especially regarding president Porochenko's public commitment to initiate disengagement during its meeting with Chancellor Merkel and President Macron on November 11.**
- **However, during the meeting of the Political Directors in Berlin on November 26, both the Ukrainian and the Russian sides agreed on the principle of a recommitment to the ceasefire for Christmas. This new ceasefire should be lasting and strong, contrary to the previous ones which have been systematically violated from day one following their introduction.**
- **That is why Ambassador Apakan urged the sides to try to find common ground to introduce "additional measures" to strengthen the ceasefire, in spite of their disagreement over methodology. We sincerely hope that such measures will be implemented as soon as possible, and call on both sides to finally adopt a constructive approach to bridge their differences.**

3. Aspects humanitaires : Winter Package

- **The humanitarian situation in Eastern Ukraine remains unacceptable, while the looming winter period will increase humanitarian strain on civilians. That is why France and Germany submitted on November 26 a renewed version of the "Winter Package" to their Russian and Ukrainian counterparts. Our goal is to have this new version swiftly and effectively implemented, unlike its previous version.**
- **The focus should be put on immediate humanitarian measures, namely: an exchange of detainees by the end of 2018; the establishment of a joint mechanism under the auspices of the ICRC to help identify missing persons related to the conflict; an improved access and crossing of the line of contact, including by clearance of mines ; the facilitation of transport of essential goods across the line of contact; safe access and operation of humanitarian organizations; protection of vital civilian infrastructures.**
- **We hope that both sides will swiftly agree on the principle of such a Package, and finalize the necessary details to initiate its implementation. Several measures, such as**

the creation of a joint mechanism to help identify missing persons, or the exchange of prisoners, should have been implemented already long time ago.