



Joint Comments of FPRI and EESRI Foundation to the Questionnaire on Perceptions of the OSCE and Proposals for the Future Work of the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions

Presented by Mr. O. Tytarchuk, Member of the EESRI Foundation Board, during the Second OSCE Network's Meeting held in Hamburg on 24 February 2016

1. Tentative list of topics that could be regarded as visible and perceived as interesting by the public and/or by elites in Ukraine (all items have been selected from the current and rather broad national security agenda, and are listed at random without prioritizing):

- Deterioration of economic and humanitarian situation in the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Dire human rights situation in the occupied Crimea and those areas of Donbas not controlled by the Government of Ukraine;
- Continued build-up of forces and heavy weapons of the militants on the contact line and their integration into the Russian armed forces and command structures;
- Release of hostages and illegally detained persons blocked by the militants in the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Reinforced international presence on the ground as a core precondition for full implementation of the Minsk agreements and peaceful resolution in Donbas (including deployment of international peacekeeping or police missions);
- Re-establishment of effective control at the Ukrainian-Russian state border at the sections, which are temporarily not under the control of Ukraine's Government;
- Constitutional reform and preparation to the planned local elections in the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Good-governance developments and promotion of anti-corruption efforts;
- Security and defense sector reform/development process;
- Initiatives and practical steps on restoring Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea (volunteers' initiatives, "Geneva plus" format, etc.).

2. According to the latest official estimates, presence of the OSCE in Ukraine and Organization's role in facilitating de-escalation and peaceful resolution in Donbas is generally appreciated by official Kyiv.

The most important element is the activities of the SMM conducted in accordance with agreed mandate and tasks defined by the Minsk agreements. At the same time, there are some official suggestions for increasing Mission's efficiency, namely:

- Strengthening technical and operational capacities for monitoring and verification activities on the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Showing more persistence in attaining full freedom of movement and access throughout the territory of Ukraine, in particular those parts that have been out of reach for the Mission for many months, including along the border with the Russian Federation;
- Paying due attention to the annexed Crimea and Sevastopol to be a subject for regular monitoring;
- Seeking immediate access to the Ukrainian hostages in militants' captivity in the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Providing comprehensive reporting on the human rights situation, social and economic developments in the occupied areas of Donbas;
- Developing modalities for possible involvement in preparation and conducting of the planned local elections in the occupied areas of Donbas.

On the current backdrop of preparing for planned local elections in the occupied areas of Donbas, there are also considerations on possible deployment of a kind of the OSCE Police Mission providing adequate security environment during the elections.

Another important aspects – practical support of the OSCE Secretariat in demining on the Eastern territories of Ukraine in a close proximity to the line of combat contact.

Support of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine is also considered as useful, especially as far as implementing of current democratic reforms is concerned.

Official expectations from the OSCE activates in general and Organizations' field presences particularly remain to be rather higher whilst lacking appropriate strategic approach, and could vary considerably depending from developments on the ground.

From the public point of view, the activities of the OSCE is not so highly appreciated. Among critical demands from civil society and human rights activists towards SMM activities, it is worth mentioning the urgent need for official documenting of all revealed cases of crimes against human dignity and human life as well as humanitarian law violations on the occupied areas of Donbas.

3. The following topics could be the key issues for the OSCE and should therefore be worked on by the OSCE Network in the next 2-3 years (only security dimension and cross-dimensional issues related to security):

- Strengthening the OSCE security mechanisms, including on arms transferring, aimed at effective prevention and resolution of conflicts instigated by hybrid warfare;
- Strengthening border security, including by countering the phenomena of foreign terrorist fighters and other non-state actors;
- Prevention of the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and countering the financing of terrorism;
- Reducing the risk of conflict stemming from the cyber space;
- Developing dialogue on energy security and promotion of transparency in the energy sector;
- Perspective for the OSCE peacekeeping and police activities in settling security crises.

The added value of the OSCE Network's contribution could be the establishing of additional platform for informal dialogue on sensitive issues in the current Organization's security agenda, as well as seeking possible solutions, approaches and formal backgrounds facilitating for reaching appropriate political will among the all OSCE participating States involved.

4. Main areas of the joint FPRI / EESRI Foundation's contributions to the OSCE Network future activities:

- Providing reliable national and international expertise;
- Support in raising public awareness about issues concerned;
- Further developing horizontal cooperation between Network's members;
- Reaching out to a wide public and official audience both in Ukraine and other East European participating States using already established web platforms, including website (<http://eesri.org>) as well as Twitter (<https://twitter.com/EESRIorg>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/eesriorg>) accounts.