

Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict
18th June 2015, Security Council Chamber

Statement made by Galina Khvan, Representative of Russia to the United Nations

(Spoke in Russian): In his statement, the representative of Ukraine did not agree with information about the loss of children's lives in south-eastern Ukraine as a result of firing by the Ukrainian military, and accused Russia of having done that. In order to avoid the usual accusations of propaganda, let us look at the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. One need only look at recent reports. The report of 6 June talks about the mission's visit to Telmanove, which was shelled by artillery on 4 June. The mission looked at 13 shell traces; seven of them, they concluded, originated from the west. They also visited the local hospital, where the deputy head doctor said that the shelling had killed a 4-year-old boy in his home. The report of 28 May talks about the artillery shelling of Horlivka on 26 May. According to the mission's assessment, in this case the shells came from the north and north-west. That is where territory is located that is under Kyiv's control. Not only adults but also an 11-year-old girl died, and the monitors concluded that she died because of the shelling. Furthermore, on that day two children were injured, leading to their hospitalization. Mission representatives spoke to the children's mother, who was also wounded. These two localities, Telmanove and Horlivka, are located on territory that is not under the control of the authorities in Kyiv. We do not think that this information needs to be additionally commented upon.

As regards the destruction, a United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) report stated that in the Luhansk region, which is not under the control of the Ukrainian Government, about 60 per cent of schools were damaged and five schools destroyed. Nonetheless, according to OCHA the local authorities have managed to ensure that the children are attending school and receiving food.

On the issue of abductions, the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/409) talks about the horrendous abduction of hundreds of children by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and Boko Haram, as well as the physical violence against them, their sexual enslavement and the ideological propaganda to which they are subjected. Many of the participants in today's meeting have spoken about the importance of putting an end to those crimes.

If the delegation of the Ukraine does not see the difference between these crimes and removing children from an area of armed conflict for medical care, then we have nothing more to say.

We are convinced that those children who were seriously injured, or those who needed, for example, dialysis, which is impossible to provide in many areas, do not consider themselves to have been abducted.

It is also out of place to make such statements against Russia as those made by the representative of Georgia. The root of the problem, in that case, is Georgia's refusal to normalize relations with the newly independent States of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.