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NATO Secretary General statement after the extraordinary meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission

We have just held an extraordinary meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, following the serious escalation of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. The meeting was held at Ukraine's request.

Despite Moscow's hollow denials, it is now clear that Russian troops and equipment have illegally crossed the border into eastern and south-eastern Ukraine. This is not an isolated action, but part of a dangerous pattern over many months to destabilise Ukraine as a sovereign nation.

Russian forces are engaged in direct military operations inside Ukraine. Russia continues to supply the separatists with tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery and rocket launchers. Russia has fired on Ukraine from both Russian territory and within Ukraine itself. Moreover, Russia continues to maintain thousands of combat-ready troops close to Ukraine's borders. This is a blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It defies all diplomatic efforts for a peaceful solution.

Today, we expressed strong solidarity with Ukraine. At the Wales Summit next week, we will meet President Poroshenko to make clear NATO's unwavering support for Ukraine.

We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's continued disregard of its international obligations. We urge Russia to cease its illegal military actions, stop its support to armed separatists, and take immediate and verifiable steps towards de-escalation of this grave crisis.

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