



**Statement as delivered by Mr David Lewis, Australian Chargé d’Affaires, to the OSCE Permanent Council**

**Vienna, 18 July 2014**

Thank you Mr Chairman,

The loss of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 over Ukraine is a terrible tragedy.

Our hearts go out to the families & friends of the 298 people killed when the flight was shot down, including 28 Australians a large number of citizens from OSCE Participating States, particularly the Netherlands, and Malaysia.

If, as appears increasingly likely, flight MH 17 was brought down by a missile, then this is, as Prime Minister Abbott has said, “an unspeakable crime”.

If this is found to be the case, the perpetrators must be brought swiftly to justice.

We welcome advice that the Trilateral Contact Group has secured commitments of safe access and security guarantees for OSCE monitors.

These undertakings must be upheld.

We welcome the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission’s willingness to support Ukraine in in this difficult rescue operation.

Mr Chairman,

We owe it to the families to find out exactly what has happened and exactly who is responsible.

We call on all sides to support a full and impartial investigation with full access to the crash site.

Australia will work towards this end in the UN Security Council. We believe the Security Council should adopt a resolution which reinforces the need for access to be granted to the crash site, and a full, thorough independent international investigation.

Mr Chairman,

We had thought the situation in Ukraine had brought tragedy enough. The horrific loss of flight MH 17 has added immeasurably to that toll.

Enough is enough. It is time to bring this conflict to an end.

Let me close by once again sending Australia’s deepest condolences to the families, friends and governments of everyone killed in this terrible tragedy.

Thank you.