



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**U.S. Statement for the**  
**Forum for Security Cooperation**  
**General Statements**

As Delivered by Deputy Arms Control Delegate Spencer Fields  
October 25, 2023

Thank you, Madam Chair,

I would like to share with you President Biden's recent message to the American people about our policy regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. This speaks directly to our shared purpose here at the OSCE.

He said that, "We're facing an inflection point in history, where the decisions we make today will determine the future for decades to come."

In the recent terrorist attacks by Hamas that slaughtered 1,300 innocent people in Israel, we see echoes of the brutality inflicted on the people of Ukraine. We've not forgotten the mass graves, the bodies found bearing signs of torture, rape used as a weapon by Russia's forces, and thousands and thousands of Ukrainian children forcibly taken into Russia, stolen from their parents.

Hamas and Putin represent different threats, but they share this in common: They both aim to annihilate a neighboring democracy.

- Hamas's stated purpose for existing is the destruction of the state of Israel and the murder of Jewish people.
- Putin denies Ukraine has, or ever had, real statehood. He claims the Soviet Union created Ukraine. He claims that the Ukrainian people do not have an identity separate from Russians, saying, quote, "Russians and Ukrainians are one people – a single whole. These words are not driven by some short-term considerations or prompted by the current political context. It is what I have said on numerous occasions and what I firmly believe." End quote.

- And just two weeks ago, he told the world that if the United States and our Allies withdraw our military support, Ukraine would have, quote, “one week left to live.”

But we are not withdrawing.

Madam Chair,

Putin has clearly miscalculated. When Russia’s forces launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Putin thought he would take Kyiv and all of Ukraine in a matter of days. But today, Kyiv still stands strong because of the bravery and tenacity of the Ukrainian people. Ukraine has regained more than 50 percent of the territory Russia’s troops have occupied since 2022. Ukraine is backed by a coalition of more than 50 countries around the world, all doing their part to support Kyiv.

To cope with his defeats in Ukraine, Putin has turned to Iran and North Korea to buy attack drones and ammunition to sow fear in Ukrainian cities and people. And just as we see Iran supporting Russia against Ukraine, we see Iran supporting Hamas and other terrorist groups in the Middle East.

Russia does not threaten only Ukraine. Putin also threatened to, quote, “remind Poland that its western land was a gift from Russia.” One of his top advisers, former president Medvedev, referred to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as “Russia’s Baltic provinces.”

These sovereign states are all NATO allies, and for 75 years NATO has kept peace in Europe and has been the cornerstone of American security. The United States does not seek to have American troops fighting against Russia, but if Putin were to attack a NATO ally, we will defend every inch of NATO territory.

Madam Chair,

The United States will continue to work hard to provide Ukraine with the air defense systems needed to shoot down Russia’s missiles and drones before they destroy Ukraine’s cities. We will work hard to continue to supply the weapons,

munitions, the capacity, and the capability for Ukraine to push Russia's invading forces off its land.

Thank you, Madam Chair.