



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on Ongoing Violations of OSCE Commitments by Russia in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
April 3, 2014

The United States remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and calls for a diplomatic resolution to the crisis. We condemn the Russian Federation's occupation of Crimea and remain deeply concerned about Russia's military build-up along the border with Ukraine. The United States' position is clear and unchanged: Russia must pull back its forces to their pre-crisis positions and numbers and engage in direct dialogue with Ukraine.

Russia's military actions in Crimea are illegal. Russia's actions over the past several weeks have placed it at odds with international law and isolated Russia from the global community.

Russia's actions stem from weakness, not from strength. Nothing Russia does wrong abroad will fix any of the serious problems Russia faces at home.

Last week in the UN General Assembly, one hundred countries from all regions of the world stood up in support of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter—which require respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity—and against Russia's actions in Ukraine. Here at the OSCE, participating States jointly committed at the Lisbon Summit in 1996 “not to support participating States that threaten or use force in violation of international law against the territorial integrity or political independence of any participating State.” We note our disappointment that a handful of participating States around this table failed to support or, worse, in direct contravention of their OSCE commitments made at Lisbon, voted against the landmark UNGA resolution.

The list of ten who voted with Russia includes Assad /Syria, Jong-Un/North Korea, and other dictatorships known as rogues in the international community. It is a list any country should be ashamed to be on.

Mr. Chairman, for the OSCE to support all of Ukraine's citizens most effectively, monitors must have unrestricted access throughout the territory of Ukraine—including the Crimean region. We note with disappointment that Long-Term Election Observers were denied entry into Crimea this past week. Blocking access to an integral part of Ukraine is inexcusable and hinders the important work conducted by this Organization. We urge participating States to continue supporting all OSCE monitoring missions as well as future extra-budgetary projects requested by the Project Coordinator in Ukraine.

Mr. Chair, I would also like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of promoting gender balance in all OSCE activities in Ukraine—particularly among the staff in the numerous monitoring missions on the ground in Ukraine. Over the past 10 years, the OSCE has taken valuable steps towards ensuring that women form part of our comprehensive security. Despite the time pressure to deploy monitors on the ground as soon as possible, we

encourage all participating States to review thoroughly their available candidates, and nominate qualified women – as well as men – to serve as monitors. For our part, the United States aims to put forward an equal number of men and women. So far, we have put forward eight women and ten men and we will aim to achieve a 50/50 ratio as the Monitoring Mission continues to build. This will also help to send a message of support to the women of Ukraine who have, as Secretary Kerry has asserted, boldly stepped up to “defend their nation’s right to be independent, democratic and prosperous” and have been an “unwavering anchor in times of challenge.”

Mr. Chairman, in this trying period, we applaud the Ukrainian government for continuing to take a restrained and de-escalatory approach to the crisis and for forging ahead with constitutional reform and preparations for democratic elections. The United States has stood and will continue to stand with all Ukrainians as they strive to secure a stable and peaceful democracy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.