



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

# **Ongoing Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 9, 2014

In the interest of time I've considerably shortened my statement, it covered many of the issues just covered by the European Union.

The United States remains deeply concerned by the violence in eastern Ukraine that threatens the ceasefire. Despite the provisions of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, Russian military personnel and equipment are still in Ukraine, undercutting efforts to secure a peaceful resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In fact, attacks by Russia-backed separatists on Ukrainian positions, including those in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, continue—killing and wounding scores of Ukrainian armed forces and civilians.

The United States strongly condemns these ceasefire violations and reiterates that the destruction of critical infrastructure is unacceptable and the tragic loss of life is intolerable. We deplore the deaths last week of more than ten individuals in a Donetsk school and the death of a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross who fell victim to shelling. We express our heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have lost their lives due to this ongoing crisis.

Madame Chair, we urge both sides to honor the ceasefire strictly and to implement in their entirety the measures agreed upon in the Minsk Protocol. We call on Russia-backed separatists to end these attacks immediately. Russia influences the separatists in many ways, including material and financial support; it needs to use that considerable influence to get the separatists to honor their commitments made in Minsk. Russia and its proxies signed in Minsk on September 5th, there is no excuse for the violations.

We applaud Ukraine for steps it has taken to implement ceasefire commitments and pursue a peaceful resolution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Similarly, OSCE monitors are on the ground and trying to monitor and verify compliance with the ceasefire. Their good-faith efforts must not be thwarted by Russia. It is time for Russian authorities and the separatists they back to fulfill the commitments made in Minsk immediately and allow the OSCE monitors to do their work, including by taking all necessary steps so that the Special Monitoring Mission can monitor the ceasefire and the Ukraine side of the Russia-Ukraine border.

We are concerned by reports of the discovery of mass graves in the Donetsk region. Allegations of atrocities are extremely serious. We understand that the Ukrainian government has publicly promised to undertake investigations into these reports, just as it has

already begun to work with international organizations to investigate an earlier finding in Slovyansk after it was liberated from separatist control. We are confident that Ukraine will pursue a full and thorough investigation. We call on the Russia-backed separatists to allow OSCE monitors and independent investigators access to these sites.

In Crimea, the human rights situation continues to worsen since Russia's occupation began in March. We would like to draw attention to a recent report by Human Rights Watch noting that several individuals have gone missing in enforced disappearances in Crimea since May, including in recent weeks. We condemn the dozens of raids on Crimean Tatar mosques, schools, and homes during the past month, as well as the closure of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, all on the pretext of combatting "extremism." We urge the Russian occupying authorities to cease their harassment of religious and ethnic minority communities, investigate violent crimes and bring the perpetrators to justice, and allow international human rights monitors full access.

Madame Chair, as we have stated before, Russia must withdraw all forces and equipment from Ukraine and away from its border, and end support for separatist forces. Russia must respect its neighbor's sovereignty and territorial integrity and end its occupation of Crimea.

Thank you, Madam Chair