



## **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 B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
July 10, 2014

The United States continues to support efforts to find a diplomatic and peaceful solution to the crisis in Ukraine. We support President Poroshenko's continued commitment to his overall peace plan which includes decentralization, the free use of the Russian language, state-assisted housing, and job creation. He continues to offer amnesty and safe passage back to Russia for foreign fighters who disarm. We view the July 6 meeting of the trilateral contact group as a positive step towards a diplomatic settlement, and we welcome President Poroshenko's offer to invite the Russian-backed separatists to meet with the contact group. The separatists will need to participate in these talks if they are to be effective, and we urge the Russian Federation – as the supplier and backer of the separatists – to get them to lay down their arms and join the discussions.

At the same time, we also call on the Russian Federation to implement immediately those agreements that it has made to help deescalate the crisis – such as inviting an OSCE team to monitor its border with Ukraine. I repeat the call I made earlier today for the Chairmanship to find consensus on a mandate for a new OSCE mission to observe the Russian side of the border as soon as possible. The Russian Federation must also refrain from any escalatory action – such as violating Ukrainian airspace – if it truly wants to find a peaceful resolution to this crisis. We have repeatedly heard Russia express concern for the safety and well-being of the population in eastern Ukraine. However, we must remember that it is the Russia-backed separatists that refuse to engage in a cease fire and come to the negotiating table, despite the Ukrainian Government's peace plan and Ukraine's security forces' efforts to minimize casualties. These separatists are using private buildings as firing positions. The best way to ensure the local population is safe is for Russia to secure the border and cease supplying weapons to the Russian-backed separatists, and for those separatists to work with President Poroshenko to implement his peace plan. We will judge Russia's commitment to peace by its actions, not its words.

Mr. Chairman, even as we focus on Donetsk and Luhansk, we must not lose sight of Russia's ongoing violation of international law and breaches of OSCE commitments as it occupies the Crimean peninsula, which remains the territory of Ukraine. We are deeply concerned that the chairman of the Tatar Mejlis, Refat Chubarov, has been barred from returning to Crimea for five years. He is the second Tatar leader to be banned from his ethnic homeland. Since Russia's occupation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, there has been a marked deterioration in human rights conditions there. There have been threats and attacks against members of minority ethnic and religious populations, including the Crimean Tatars and other Muslims, Jews, Catholics, Protestants and Ukrainian Orthodox Believers. We reiterate our call for Russia to reverse its illegal actions and return control of the Crimean peninsula to the government of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.