



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 Special Permanent Council, Vienna
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The United States remains committed to supporting a democratic Ukraine that is unified, politically and economically secure, and able to determine its own future. As we work towards supporting a mutual and sustainable ceasefire, we should not forget that the ultimate goal is not just a temporary halt to violence, but rather a stable and prosperous future for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. We support the Ukrainian government in its efforts to restore and protect access to essential services in areas formerly held by the Russia-supported separatists and applaud President Poroshenko's oft-repeated commitment to pursue political dialogue. He has continued to offer to hold negotiations in the "contact group" format, but the separatists have refused each offer. We hope that the news of a possible meeting today bears fruit, and that the separatists join the contact group discussions.

Achieving a genuine de-escalation and implementing a bilateral, mutually-agreed ceasefire requires a neighbor who abides by its international obligations and commitments. We have heard Russia's words, including a succession of conspicuously well-timed statements that hint at positive steps. But words are not enough: we need to see Russia take action. Russia must end all support for the armed separatists and thugs who are fomenting unrest and violence in Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia must halt the flow of money, weapons, equipment and militants from Russia to separatists, pressure the separatists to release all hostages they hold, support a bilateral ceasefire that both sides honor, and support the rapid deployment of an OSCE border monitoring mission. Russia needs to cease its own destabilizing actions and exert pressure on its proxies to stop theirs. And if that is not forthcoming, we must impose more costs on Russia.

We continue to support the work of the OSCE and its institutions in Ukraine. The Special Monitoring Mission has played, and should continue to play, an important role of the ground. We share the concerns of the Representative on Freedom of the Media about media freedom, particularly in Russian-occupied Crimea and the parts of eastern Ukraine affected by Russian-backed fighters. Respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including not assisting or supporting those who violate it, is a commitment of all participating States. We reject Russia's illegal attempted annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula; we will not recognize it and we call on Russia to reverse it.

Thank you, Madam Chair.