



United States Mission to the OSCE

**Reply to Russia
on the Geneva International Discussions on
the Conflict in Georgia**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 23, 2016

Colleagues, I'd just like to call attention once again, since this has been a pattern, to the statement just made by our distinguished Russian colleague.

When we see the continued denial of the reality of the situation that Russia is occupying territory that belongs to neighboring countries – and that's countries plural, obviously – it makes it incredibly hard to have a genuine dialogue. It is well known – in fact I've heard Russian officials acknowledge that it is the FSB that is putting up the razor wire on the Administrative Boundary Lines within Georgia's territory; Russia is a party to the conflict. And when we hear statements like the one we have just heard, it underscores how difficult it is to get the kind of confidence you need at a political level in order to push for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements, as well as for the resolution of the conflict that is ongoing in Georgia.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.