



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Right of Reply to the Russian Federation on the Rise of neo-Nazism in the OSCE area**

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires Courtney Austrian  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
September 30, 2021

The United States categorically condemns the glorification of Nazism and all modern forms of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and other manifestations of intolerance. Indeed, the Biden Administration has spotlighted the very real problem of neo-Nazism and other kinds of racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism for increased domestic and international action. The United States is an active partner in promoting remembrance of the Holocaust and other genocides worldwide and continues to lead efforts to bring perpetrators of these and other atrocity crimes to justice. Earlier this year we launched a U.S.-Germany Dialogue on the Holocaust to ensure current and future generations not only learn about the Holocaust but also learn from it. It is necessary to commemorate events, like the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the atrocities at Babyn Yar, which we are marking yesterday and today, and use the memories of these horrors to strengthen our resolve of “Never Again” with action. The answer to combating the glorification of Nazism is not to curb the freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, but to first combat the denial and distortion of the Holocaust as we have prioritized in our aforementioned bilateral Dialogue with Germany. The best way to counteract offensive speech is with more speech based on facts, not self-serving disinformation, and certainly not by limits on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Racism, police violence, and government accountability should be part of any discussion about human rights and fundamental freedoms, anywhere in the world. The United States has worked to be transparent and accountable on these issues. Recognizing that there is more work to be done at home, we are committed to striving further to create a fairer and more just society. Although our laws provide protections against racial discrimination, discrimination and the legacy of slavery are an unfortunate part of the United States’ history and an all-too-present reality for many Americans. America’s greatest strength lies in the power of our example. We’re not perfect -- far from it -- but we are always striving to live up to our highest ideals and principles.

For years, Russia has raised the issue of Neo-Nazism when it is convenient. This year, Russia is appropriating the topic to block the way for the holding of the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). But it is obvious to all that Russia uses this topic as a political tool and is not really interested in a serious discussion. Russia is, and has always been, completely free to raise this issue, and any other issues, at HDIM. We urge Russia to stop blocking HDIM so that we can all gather to honestly and constructively discuss the issues we all care about with each other and with civil society.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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