



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**U.S. Statement for the**  
**Forum for Security Cooperation:**  
**General Statements –**  
**Russia’s War of Aggression Against Ukraine**

As delivered by Chief Arms Control Delegate Daniel Wartko  
November 1, 2023

Thank you, Madam Chair,

At the end of another monologue last week, the delegate of the Russian Federation again tried to “whitewash” Russia’s massacre of civilians in Bucha, claiming that the rape, torture, and murder of civilians by Russia’s Forces was simply “Western disinformation.”

We need to understand the gravity not only of committing atrocities but of denying them. If anyone needs to be reminded of the crimes that were committed, I recommend re-reading the Moscow Mechanism report of July 11, 2022. I will attach the text of that report – in English and in Russian – as an annex to this statement.

Madam Chair and dear Colleagues,

The details from that Moscow Mechanism report I am about to recount are horrific and disturbing, but we must not shrink from the gruesome facts. It is our moral duty to confront the reality of these crimes and to reject Russia’s attempts to deflect responsibility or to deny that these crimes even happened.

The Moscow Mechanism report stated, quote, “The signs of torture and ill-treatment on the corpses of killed civilians... show disregard of the principle of humanity that should guide the application of International Humanitarian Law in military operations. The events concerning the towns of Bucha and Irpin, which were visited by the mission, are two emblematic examples of these grave breaches of International Humanitarian Law under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, which constitute war crimes.” End quote.

In Zabuchchya, a village in the Bucha district, 18 mutilated bodies of murdered men, women, and children were discovered in a basement: some had their ears cut off. Others had their teeth pulled out. Graphic accounts abound of conflict related sexual violence against women and men, boys and girls.

The report observed that Russia's forces "carried out targeted, organized killings of civilians in Bucha" who were "frequently found shot dead, hands tied behind their backs." Some 900 civilian bodies had been discovered in the Kyiv region after the withdrawal of Russia's forces and nearly 95 percent had been "simply executed."

Madam Chair,

Our Russian Federation colleague demanded that Ukraine "hand over to [Russia] the requested results of the pathological examination of the bodies of the dead." I ask the participating States to reflect on the utter cynicism of this notion. But we can all be certain that the delegation of Russia knows that the butchery in Bucha has been extensively documented and that those responsible will be held to account.

Madam Chair,

The war crimes committed in Bucha were not just the acts of a few depraved individuals. They were part, and are part, of a pattern of unconscionable behavior by Russia's forces. Again, 95% of the 900 civilian bodies recovered in Bucha had been "simply executed." There have been other Buchas in places temporarily under the control of Russia's forces. Our colleague from the Russian Federation would have us believe that the images posted by its own soldiers – like Russian Federation soldier Alexei Bychkov who posted a video of himself sexually abusing a one-year-old baby -- were Western fakes. He would have us believe that the mass graves, the multitude of eyewitness reports, and the forensic evidence that supports the eyewitness testimony, were all manufactured.

Madam Chair,

No one believes Russia's lies. This is why Russia again finds itself isolated in this Forum.

Thank you, Madam Chair.