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United States Mission to the OSCE

Abduction, Detention, and Sentencing of Ukrainian Citizens by the Russian Federation

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 17, 2015

The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms the continued detention of Nadiya Savchenko by Russia. Ms. Savchenko was captured by Russia-backed separatists over a year ago and taken to Russia, where she has remained in prison ever since.

On September 15, a court in the Russian city of Donetsk ruled to extend Ms. Savchenko's detention by six months. Although a date to begin trial proceedings was set, the court continues to deny her defense team the ability to call witnesses, showing, once again, that the trial is a miscarriage of justice.

The charges against Ms. Savchenko should be dismissed, and Ms. Savchenko should be released to return to Ukraine.

Mr. Chair, while we continue to have serious concerns about Nadiya Savchenko's treatment in detention and are watching preparations for her trial and pre-trial proceedings closely, Ms. Savchenko is not alone. Oleg Sentsov and Oleksander Kolchenko were sentenced in a Russian court last month on baseless charges, and more than one hundred other Ukrainian civilians and military personnel remain in detention in Russia and separatist-controlled territory of Ukraine. We call upon the Russian Federation to adhere to all of its Minsk commitments and release Ukrainian hostages without delay.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.