



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Events in Ukraine

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
February 6, 2014

The United States continues to monitor with grave concern credible reports of human rights violations against activists, protestors, and journalists in Ukraine. We are particularly alarmed by reports from numerous independent observers that at least 36 Ukrainian citizens remain missing or unaccounted for since November 30, 2013. The most recent and particularly disturbing case is that of activist Dmytro Bulatov, who after being missing for eight days, was found bearing obvious and gruesome signs of physical abuse. These disconcerting reports have not gone unnoticed.

As we noted previously, these attacks appear to be part of a pattern of retribution against those who have organized, participated in, or reported sympathetically on the Euromaidan protests, exercising their fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly. We again urge the Government of Ukraine to investigate these disappearances and attacks, release detained protesters, and bring those responsible swiftly to justice.

The United States reminds the government of Ukraine that OSCE tools remain at its disposal and that this Organization has invaluable experience in helping participating States to successfully overcome political turmoil by building transparency and confidence. The United States commends Chairman-in-Office Burkhalter's continued leadership on this issue, including his personal engagement and willingness to reach out and listen to voices from the Ukrainian government, opposition and civil society. We also commend his initial proposals for OSCE involvement to help pave a peaceful way forward in Ukraine. We regret that Ukrainian authorities failed to meet with Head of the OSCE Chairmanship Taskforce, Ambassador Grau, and the Director of the Conflict Prevention Center, Ambassador Kobieracki, last week or to accept their sincere offers of assistance, dialogue, and mediation, and we will support Ambassador Grau and others from the Swiss chairmanship as they stay engaged and keep an open door. We once again reiterate that sustained international engagement is necessary to support and secure a peaceful solution to this crisis in Ukraine.

The United States stands firm in its position that reducing tensions and ongoing dialogue are central to resolution of this crisis. Vice President Biden emphasized that the only

viable path to peace and stability in Ukraine is through dialogue and genuine compromise to form a new government that can earn the confidence of the Ukrainian people. The vast majority of Ukrainians – like all of the rest of us – want to live freely in a safe and prosperous country, and the United States stands with the people of Ukraine as they seek to realize their European aspirations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.