



United States Mission to the OSCE **U.S. Statement on the** **Adoption of the FSC Agenda**

As delivered by Arms Control Counselor Daniel Wartko
May 22, 2024

Mr. Chair,

The United States has deep respect for the role of the Chair of the FSC, and we have great appreciation for the dignified and even-handed way in which you and the preceding Chairs have organized and run the FSC meetings. We have witnessed Russia's repeated attempts to insult each Chair, to make unreasonable demands for itself, and then to make a great show of trying to stop the FSC's useful work by crying that its "rights had been violated."

We reached a new level of absurdity last week. Russia demanded that the Chair allow a Moscow official to speak for the Russian delegation via Zoom during the FSC proceedings. When the Chair refused, the Russian delegate claimed that this was somehow discriminatory and thus "contrary to the UN Charter."

Mr. Chair,

We all gather here at the Hofburg every week for in-person dialogue, to make our national positions known, to listen to others, and to discuss ways in which our differences could be reconciled.

I, like most of us here, am present in this room because my Capital trusts in my ability to faithfully convey its positions and it has confidence that I can speak thoughtfully and responsibly on the issues that arise in this forum. In fact, this is why we are called "delegates" – because authority has been *delegated* from our Capitals to us.

It is therefore puzzling why the Russian Federation claims it needs direct intervention from Moscow to competently present Russia's position here in this forum. Why can't its delegation handle this?

It becomes even more puzzling when we consider the sheer size of the Russian delegation. Last week, the updated OSCE Directory was circulated to all missions. The “Delegation of the Russian Federation on Military Security and Arms Control” lists a whopping 26 members. This is an increase from the July 2023 directory which listed “only” 16 members.

Surely, the Russian Federation has ample capacity here in Vienna to handle these meetings.

Mr. Chair, we commend you for standing firm on this point.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.