



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

# **Ongoing Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine**

As delivered by Acting Political Counselor Jennifer Bosworth  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
June 19, 2014

At the outset, the United States would like to express its condolences to the people of Ukraine for the loss of life that occurred last week on the transport plane shot down by pro-Russia separatists. We mourn with Ukraine for the 49 servicemen and crewmembers who perished. The United States, in the strongest terms, condemns this horrific attack.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to be deeply concerned that militant and separatist groups have received heavy weapons and military equipment from Russia, including Russian tanks and multiple-launch rocket vehicles. We have long condemned the flow of Russian fighters and arms into Ukraine, and we urge Russia to cease immediately its support for separatists in eastern Ukraine and the provision of arms and materiel across the border. This latest incursion marks an unacceptable and disturbing escalation of the crisis in eastern Ukraine.

Mr. Chairman, we have information, which imagery released recently by NATO also illustrates, that armed pro-Russia separatists are operating Russian-furnished tanks in eastern Ukraine. Though Russia may claim that these tanks were taken from Ukrainian forces, no Ukrainian tank units have been operating in these areas and we are confident that these tanks came from Russia.

Mr. Chairman, we remain deeply concerned that separatist forces continue to hold hostage eight OSCE Special Monitoring Mission monitors abducted on May 26 and May 29. We strongly condemn their abduction, which is unacceptable. We call on all OSCE participating States, including Russia, to use their influence to secure the immediate and unconditional release of the monitors, to guarantee the security of the OSCE monitoring teams as they carry out their mandate throughout Ukraine, and to denounce the use of OSCE monitors as hostages.

Mr. Chairman, we reject any attempt by the Russian Federation to destabilize eastern Ukraine and falsely portray a humanitarian crisis in an attempt to justify further Russian intervention. Just as we reject its occupation and subsequent attempted annexation of Crimea, we reject any attempt to encroach into eastern Ukraine. Instead, Russia must engage in diplomatic discussions and do so in good faith. We urge Russia to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation.

We welcome President Poroshenko's announcement, after he spoke with President Putin on Tuesday, that Ukraine plans to implement a ceasefire as a first step in his peace plan. President Poroshenko reiterated that amnesty would be offered to those who lay down arms

voluntarily, and who are not guilty of capital crimes. He also committed to providing a safe corridor for Russian fighters to return to Russia. President Poroshenko has been clear that he will continue discussions about decentralization and constitutional reform to address the legitimate concerns of the Ukrainian people. We commend these good-faith efforts on the part of the Ukrainian government to pursue national unity and peace.

But he needs partners in this effort. The separatists must lay down their arms and participate in a political process. And Russia should support the peace plan by using its influence with the Russian fighters and separatists to do this. Russia should also fulfill the commitments President Putin made in Normandy to secure their side of the border and halt the flow of arms and fighters into Ukraine.

This is a moment of opportunity that should not be missed. When President Obama spoke to President Putin in Normandy, he made clear that a failure by Russia to take the necessary steps toward de-escalation will only deepen Russia's isolation. The G-7 leaders have also called on Russia to take concrete steps to de-escalate.

The United States also commends the Ukrainian government's swift action to denounce the defacement of Russia's Embassy in Kyiv last week. We understand that Ukrainian authorities have voiced a commitment to prevent any further damage to the Embassy's property and we welcome Ukraine's action to investigate the incident immediately. We, along with Ukraine, condemn the destruction, defacement, and vandalism of the Embassy property.

Mr. Chairman, the United States will continue to support the people of Ukraine's aspirations for an independent, prosperous, and democratic Ukraine, and an end to the occupation of the Crimean region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.