



## **United States Mission to the OSCE** **U.S. Statement for the** **Forum for Security Cooperation:** **On the Blocking of the FSC Agenda by the** **Russian Federation**

Arms Control Counselor Daniel Wartko  
February 7, 2024

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will note that the Russian Delegate, after disrupting the meeting and blocking the agenda, lacks the decency to remain in the room to hear the reaction.

Mr. Chair,

The United States strongly supports your prerogative to select panelists of your own choosing for FSC security dialogues. The FSC rules of procedure clearly state this, as the delegate from Malta quoted earlier. Nowhere in the rules of procedure does it say that the Chair must consult with or get the permission or concurrence of any participating State before selecting panelists. Should the Chair choose to do so anyway, it is out of courtesy and not out of obligation. Russia knows it has no right to this, and as such, its demands for a panelist (especially one of such weak qualifications) are clearly a just lame excuse to block this session.

The Russian nominee covers nonproliferation and is not an expert on international humanitarian law. Regardless of his lack of qualifications, it remains the Chair's prerogative to decide who will or who will not be on panels or if there is even going to be a panel.

So, why is Russia completely alone in its objection? Why is Russia so fearful of discussing International Humanitarian Law in this forum? Plain and simple: Because Russia knows that it repeatedly violated international humanitarian law. It does not want the other delegations in this room to hear what will be revealed about its ongoing violations in Ukraine.

It is a distraction because Russia does not want all of us to consider the truth of what is going on in Ukraine. But the truth will not be concealed under such flimsy efforts, and we look forward to discussing this issue in depth in any manner of the Chair's choosing.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.