



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

### **Statement on Russian Citizens as Foreign Fighters in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
December 18, 2014

Open source information from numerous sources has documented the presence of citizens of Russia and members of the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. Every week, the Observer Mission at the border crossing points of Gukovo and Donetsk reports on men and women in military-style clothing crossing from Russia into Ukraine. Setting aside the fiction that these are volunteers who are not acting at the behest of the Russian government, other questions remain. A few weeks ago, our distinguished colleague from Norway asked the Russian Federation to share with this council information about measures it is taking to halt the flow of fighters from Russia to Ukraine. I join the Ukrainian ambassador today in echoing that call.

Also, Mr. Chair, I'd like to note that this discussion underscores the need for the Russian Federation to allow the OSCE to monitor the entire length of the border, to include all crossing points and the territory in between them, as required by the Minsk Protocol. We are disappointed that Russia once again blocked efforts to expand the mandate of the observer mission to allow for comprehensive border monitoring.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.