



United States Mission to the OSCE

Investigations of Incidents on Maidan and in Odesa by Ukraine

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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The United States welcomes the Government of Ukraine's investigation into the killings that took place in February on the Maidan in Kyiv and the tragic violence in May in Odesa that led to scores of deaths and injuries. We look forward to learning more about the investigations' findings in due course.

These investigations are important on many levels. Not only are they vitally necessary to identify the culpable parties in these two violent incidents and bring them to justice, they are also part of the larger reform effort underway in Ukraine. Let us remember that the demonstrations in Kyiv, which began one year ago on November 21st as a peaceful protest, gained so much support because they were seen by many as the only venue in which the people of Ukraine could express their opposition to the Yanukovich government and its culture of corruption and disregard for the rule of law. In contrast, the new government of Ukraine has focused its efforts on substantive reform, enhancing transparency, combatting corruption, strengthening the rule of law, and working more cooperatively with NGOs and civil society. The investigations into the deaths on the Maidan and in Odesa are important parts of this larger effort.

The United States applauds and supports Ukraine's reform efforts, and urges the OSCE – as an organization and all of its participating States – to strongly support Ukraine, including both the government and Ukrainian civil society, in these efforts. We also call on Ukraine not be deterred from pursuing genuine reform against the backdrop of the crisis in the Donbas region and the ongoing occupation of Crimea. The people of Ukraine who helped to usher in a new government and a break from the past deserve no less.

Thank you, Madam Chair.