



United States Mission to the OSCE

Interpretative Statement on the Declaration on Further Steps in the Helsinki +40 Process

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the OSCE Ministerial Council
December 5, 2014, Basel, Switzerland

The United States makes the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A) 6 of the OSCE rules of procedure and asks that it be attached to this Declaration.

This declaration we have just adopted is considerably shorter than the Helsinki +40 decision and declaration that preceded it in Dublin in 2012 and Kyiv in 2013. In those texts, we reaffirmed our full adherence to all OSCE principles and commitments and we recommitted that, as participating States, we are responsible to implement our commitments fully and in good faith. Unfortunately, we have not been able to make the same reaffirmations in our Declaration this year for one simple reason: the egregious ongoing violations by the Russian Federation of its international legal obligations and its continuing contravention of the fundamental principles and the commitments of this Organization in its aggression in Ukraine. Russia's ongoing violations of its OSCE commitments have made it very difficult for this Ministerial to agree on many substantive documents or credibly broaden and deepen the commitments made across all dimensions of security. More importantly, Russia's conduct has eroded trust among participating States, had a grave impact on human lives, including many thousands of deaths, and is undermining security and stability in the OSCE area and beyond. While this Declaration on the Helsinki +40 process is meagre, previous Ministerial texts on Helsinki +40 provide us both with a framework from which to move forward in the Helsinki + 40 process, as well as with a key tool for addressing the crisis of Russia's aggression in Ukraine: focusing on implementing our commitments fully in good faith.

Thank you.