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United States Mission to the OSCE

Reply 2 to the Russian Federation on Constitutional Policing in the United States

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 3, 2016

I'd just like to respond to our distinguished Russian colleague. First, I didn't say that the United States doesn't have statistics, I said that a member of the Federal Government testifying before Congress might not have statistics at his fingertips – while he was testifying – that come from all 50 states. That's different.

Second, I'm sorry that our distinguished Russian colleague has not been able to find the time to come to the multiple explanations that my delegation has provided for colleagues here in Vienna about specific steps that we are taking. But I completely reject the statement that he just made -- that the United States is not doing things to address the issues that we have.

I think we are doing things to address them. I think there's much more work to be done -- something that is acknowledged repeatedly by President Obama, by our Attorney General Loretta Lynch -- and so I would urge our distinguished Russian colleague, if he's truly interested in this topic, that the next time we offer a substantive update that he make the time in his schedule to attend, because I would enjoy the opportunity to share those concrete steps.

And finally, I would just like to say that the statements that were just presented don't strike me as statements that are intended for anything other than domestic consumption in Russia, and I feel sorry for the people in Russia who have to listen to the mix of facts and hyperbole and fabrications and distortions that we just heard. Because I wish for the day when people in Russia can have an accurate understanding of the United States, with all of its challenges, and that people in the United States can have an accurate understanding of what's going on and how people experience life in Russia.

Thank you.

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