



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Illegal Detention of Ukrainian Hostages

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 23, 2015

The United States remains deeply concerned about the fate of Ukrainian hostages that Russia and the separatists it backs continue to hold in defiance of the commitments they made in the Minsk agreements and the February 12 Package of Measures.

Among these is Nadiya Savchenko, a member of the Verkhovna Rada and of Ukraine's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, who was captured by Russia-backed separatists last year and transferred to Russian custody.

She has suffered greatly during her unjust imprisonment.

We remain deeply concerned about the state of her health and urge that she be examined by a doctor appointed by the Ukrainian embassy.

This week, PACE holds its Spring Session in Strasbourg. How many more PACE meetings will Ms. Savchenko miss because Russia is holding her hostage?

Another hostage, Oleg Sentsov, has been held in pre-trial detention for nearly a year since his arrest in Crimea on May 11, 2014. He was arrested on trumped-up terrorism charges.

The fact that Ukrainian consular officials have not been able to visit Mr. Sentsov at all since then, compounds the illegality of Russia's actions in Crimea.

We once again call on Russia and the separatists it backs to follow through on their Minsk commitments and release immediately Ms. Savchenko, Mr. Sentsov, and all of the other Ukrainians they are detaining.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.