



United States Mission to the OSCE

2nd Reply to the Russian Federation on Ongoing Violations of International Law and Defiance of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation in Ukraine

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 29, 2015

Our distinguished Russian colleague has again raised the so-called “peace plan” by President Putin, and I think it’s an important opportunity to clarify in this chamber so that there’s no confusion that this was not a peace plan.

In a January 15th letter to President Poroshenko – that’s been published in the press – President Putin proposed a cease-fire and a withdrawal of weapons exceeding 100 mm in caliber from a defined area. It wasn’t a “peace plan.” Instead, it would have effectively thrown out Russia’s Minsk commitments, and redrawn the cease-fire lines to give the separatists more territory. The proposal only applied to Ukrainian forces and separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk. No mention was made of Russia, its materiel, or personnel, in Ukraine; there was no mention in the proposal of the September 5th Minsk agreement which established the cease fire and spelled out Russia’s commitments, including withdrawal from Ukraine.

According to the Putin proposal, the cease fire and heavy weapons free-zone would have been based on the September 19th Minsk memorandum **and** “the actual line of contact.” On the map attached to Putin’s letter, this line was to be “based on the situation on November 19, 2014 and January 13, 2015.”

The Ukrainian government has stated – and our preliminary analysis confirms – that there appear to be significant differences between the Putin line of contact and the line in the Minsk agreements. In short, the Putin proposal would have created a cease fire line further to the west than what was agreed at Minsk, giving separatists more control over Ukrainian territory.

As Ambassador Power said in the UN, this was no peace plan but a plan of occupation. Russian allegations that Ukraine could have avoided the horrific violence in Mariupol this weekend if it had accepted the Putin proposal are nonsense. This does not explain the ongoing separatists’ attacks across the cease fire lines including in Mariupol and Debaltseve which are outside even the “cease fire line” that Putin proposed. If President Putin truly wants a peaceful resolution, why is he seeking to undercut Minsk and his own stated commitment to these agreements?

Russian authorities and the separatists they back have so far failed to implement their Minsk commitments. In fact, Russia has refused to set out steps for implementation of Minsk in the Tri-lateral Contact Group, Normandy group format, or other fora. It's therefore highly disingenuous for Russia to suggest that the Putin proposal would have prevented violence when Russia's actions since September 5th have shown that Russia is only fueling the conflict.

We have known for some time now that Russia's words are at wide variance from its actions when it comes to Ukraine. Our information shows – as I said earlier – that Russia continues to provide advanced weapons, soldiers, and armored vehicles to the separatists' attacks. If Russia is truly committed to peace in Ukraine it will immediately cease this flow of materiel and personnel to the separatist and act now to implement the Minsk commitments. If it does not, it will be facing increased costs and further isolate itself.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.