



United States Mission to the OSCE

On Nadiya Savchenko and other Ukrainian Hostages Held in Russia

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 8, 2015

The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms the continued detention of Nadiya Savchenko by Russia. Ms. Savchenko was captured in Ukraine by Russia-backed separatists over a year ago and taken to Russia, where she has remained in prison ever since.

Her detention is a violation of the commitments Russia made under the Minsk Package of Measures in February, when it pledged it would “ensure release and exchange of all hostages and unlawfully detained persons.” Yet, on October 5, the Rostov regional court upheld a previous ruling to extend Ms. Savchenko’s custodial detention by six months.

We continue to have serious concerns about Nadiya Savchenko’s treatment in detention and are watching preparations for her trial and pre-trial proceedings closely. The charges against Ms. Savchenko should be dismissed, and Ms. Savchenko should be released immediately and allowed to return to Ukraine.

We note that Ms. Savchenko is not alone. There are at least eleven Ukrainians being held in detention in Russia based on politically motivated cases, including Oleg Sentsov and Oleksander Kolchenko, who in August were given harsh sentences in a Russian court on baseless charges.

We call upon the Russian Federation to adhere to all of its Minsk commitments and release Ukrainian hostages without delay.

Thank you, Madam Chair.