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United States Mission to the OSCE

Right of Reply to the Russian Federation

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 11, 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In response to my colleague from the Russian Federation, I think there are some things I should point out, because I think maybe I misheard him, or misunderstood him, or perhaps it is information that is not accurate for the members of the OSCE. But I am looking right at my copy of the Paris Normandy Format statement; I keep it with me all the time, because it is an important document.

Let's be clear about it, this document, the Paris Normandy Format statement, was entered into by the President of the French Republic, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, the President of the Russian Federation, and the President of Ukraine. Those four states are the Normandy Four. The document says that the Minsk agreements, including the "Package of Measures," continue to be the basis of the work of the Normandy Format, whose member states are committed to their full implementation. This is not brushing this off to some fake political organization in Donetsk and Luhansk, as they're attempting to do. The Normandy Format includes the Russian Federation. That was the understanding. Paragraph one says that the sides commit to a full and comprehensive implementation of the cease fire.

Then it talks about the Trilateral Contact Group – "they will support the development and implementation of the plan based on the decision of the Trilateral Contact Group." Unless I am forgetting something, the Trilateral Contact Group is Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE.

The document further states that they will support the agreement of the Trilateral Contact Group, that being Russia, Ukraine, and the OSCE, for additional disengagement areas. This has nothing to do with any so-called separatist or break away regions. These are the states that are trying to resolve this conflict. And Russia should not be moving away from this, this is an opportunity to resolve this in a way that is consistent with their OSCE obligations.

By the way, the Paris Normandy Format Summit also points out that the SMM should have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine in order to fully implement its mandate. So, Russia, France, Germany and Ukraine, in Paris in December 2019, as my colleague from the Russian Federation made reference to this meeting, have made these agreements. These are the parties to the agreement, not some mythical group of people somewhere else, who Russia has sought to put forward, just over the last three or four months. This is not the case. The obligations are to the Normandy Four and the Trilateral Contact Group, of which Russia is a full participant.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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