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United States Mission to the OSCE
U.S. Statement for the
Forum for Security Cooperation:
Agenda Item 2: General Statements

As delivered by Arms Control Counselor Daniel Wartko
November 9, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair, Good Morning Colleagues,

As Russia's brutal and unjustified war in Ukraine continues to produce horrific events on a near daily basis, we witnessed the Russian Federation reversing its unilateral suspension of its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative and deciding against willfully further exacerbating the global food crisis. However, Russia only resumed its participation after significant damage had already been done to international food prices, which have since increased. Furthermore, the Initiative is set to expire on November 19 and must be renewed. Although diplomats are working unceasingly to manage the international ramifications of Russia's war in Ukraine, the reality is that until Russia halts this disastrous war of choice the terrible costs will continue to accumulate for the suffering people of Ukraine, the global community, and Russia itself. The only individual who can end this conflict is President Putin. Unfortunately, we have seen no signs that he is prepared to stop his aggression and atrocities in Ukraine.

The United States will continue to support Ukraine for as long as it takes for Putin to decide that this war is no longer in his or Russia's interests. In the meantime, we are keeping our promise to the brave people of Ukraine, who every day are defending their freedom and their democracy, and we are continuously demonstrating our commitment through our political, humanitarian, financial, and material support. For example, on October 28, under authority delegated by the President, the Secretary of State directed our 24th tranche of additional military assistance to Ukraine since September 2021, valued at up to \$275 million, from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) inventories. Despite the lies, derision, and disinformation we heard from our Russian colleague last week, the United States continues to responsibly provide our assistance to Ukraine, and the Ukrainian government is committed to appropriately safeguarding and accounting for the transferred defense equipment it receives.

Nevertheless, as in any conflict, we must remain vigilant to the possibility that criminal and non-state actors may attempt to illicitly acquire weapons from

sources in Ukraine, including members of the Russian military, during or following the conflict. In fact, we assess that pro-Russian forces' capture of Ukrainian weapons – including donated materiel – poses the greatest risk of diversion at this stage that could result in onward trafficking. As a result, the United States is implementing steps to counter the illicit diversion of advanced conventional weapons. This plan will not only further enable the safeguarding and accounting for arms and munitions in Ukraine and neighboring countries when they are transferred, stored, and deployed, but it also will enhance regional border management and security and help build the capacity of security forces, law enforcement, and border control agencies to deter, detect, and interdict illicit arms trafficking. However, until Russia ultimately reduces illicit proliferation risks by ending the war that it started and withdrawing its forces from all of Ukraine's sovereign territory, we will continue to coordinate on this challenge with an unsurpassed group of Allies and partners. Together, we will build on decades of international cooperation in security assistance, conventional weapons management, export control, border security, technology security, and law enforcement capacity building in the region.

Mr. Chair,

While the United States and our Allies and partners have been responsibly providing assistance to Ukraine for its own defense, Russia has been irresponsibly seeking and obtaining assistance from countries under UN sanctions, namely North Korea and Iran, to further its aggression. Our information indicates that North Korea is covertly supplying Russia's war in Ukraine with a significant number of artillery shells, while obfuscating the real destination of the arms shipments by trying to make it appear as though they are being sent to countries in the Middle East or North Africa. Furthermore, in light of the well-publicized and illegal transfer of Iranian drones to Russia, the United States, Ukraine, the UK, France, and Germany submitted written requests to the UN Secretary General requesting that the UN investigate Russia's non-compliance with UNSCR 2231. Meanwhile, we will continue to vigorously enforce all U.S. sanctions on both the Russian and Iranian arms trade, make it harder for Iran to sell these weapons to Russia, and ensure Ukraine has what it needs to defend itself against Russia's destructive use of these illegally obtained arms against Ukraine's civilian infrastructure and cities.

Russia's ongoing airstrikes in Ukraine, and now resulting in effects impacting Moldova too, represent grave threats to these two countries' energy infrastructure. With winter approaching, these kinds of strikes are another example

of Russia's disregard for civilians, which has deprived them of shelter, food, water, and heating. There will be accountability for all of Russia's actions. While the perpetrators and instigators may be able to hide in Putin's shadow for the time being, there will be few other places where they can rest easy. The United States is doing everything it can to support those who are compiling evidence to investigate and prosecute those responsible for any crimes committed, and we are absolutely committed to bringing those who are responsible to justice. We also stand ready to appropriately support national courts around the world in the event they establish jurisdiction over individuals accused of committing international crimes. Make no mistake, the day of reckoning for Russia's crimes will come. It's not a matter of if, but only a matter of when.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.