



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

As delivered by Deputy Arms Control Delegate Spencer Fields
March 15, 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

After months of failures on the battlefield due in part to the inept leadership of Russia's General Staff and Putin himself, Russia has once again chosen to lash out with air assaults against Ukraine's critical infrastructure – attacks that disproportionately affect ordinary Ukrainians. Despite these attacks and Russia's war crimes, it has failed to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people. Russia's anger at its own military incompetence is still being taken out on unarmed civilians. Last week's air assault, only the latest, involved over 80 missiles, achieved little-to-no military purpose, and killed at least nine civilians. Furthermore, Russia's deadly and senseless outburst resulted in power cuts to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, halting the plant's vital reactor cooling systems and putting everyone in Europe, including Russia's own citizens, at risk. In the words of IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi, who said, quote, "[the] loss of all external power once again demonstrated how fragile and dangerous the situation is for the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant ... Each time we are rolling [the] dice. And if we allow this to continue time after time then one day our luck will run out."

Mr. Chair,

These actions by Russia are cowardly, unconscionable, and hardly befitting a nation aspiring to be a great power. Moscow rattles its nuclear saber, but nuclear weapons alone do not make a country a great power. Russia's military is a shadow of what it once was, around half of its combat systems are in smoldering ruins and nearly 100,000 of its soldiers killed – many abandoned on the battlefield or incinerated in mobile crematoria to conceal their remains. Russia's population is steadily shrinking, its industry is languishing under sanctions, and its infrastructure crumbling as it continues to pour more and more money into its pointless war of choice against Ukraine. The image of Russia's troops ordered into battle without body armor and armed only with shovels just

serves to illustrate that there is clearly nothing super about Russia's power anymore. Russia has only itself to blame for this situation. Indeed, these self-inflicted wounds are the direct result of the Kremlin's actions. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been a counterproductive strategic blunder that has left Russia weaker, poorer, and less influential.

Nevertheless, Russia continues its war against Ukraine and continues to be a destabilizing force in the OSCE region. And as a result, the United States will continue to provide security assistance to Ukraine, as is our right consistent with the UN Charter, the OSCE Principles Governing Arms Control Transfers, and the OSCE Code of Conduct. Furthermore, in response to Russia's barbaric behavior in Ukraine, the United States also supports all international efforts to examine atrocities in Ukraine, including the investigation by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the reporting by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the Expert Missions established by invocation of the OSCE "Moscow Mechanism," the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, and the Joint Investigative Team coordinated through Eurojust. There will be accountability for Russia's war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Mr. Chair,

Recent footage showing the execution of Ukrainian prisoner of war Oleksandr Matsievskyi is despicable and heinous. This monstrous execution appalled, but did not surprise us, and we note that this video carries two serious warnings for Russia. First, such acts will not go unpunished, the victims will be remembered, and the perpetrators will be identified, found, and punished. And second, the last words on the lips of this brave and unarmed prisoner who knew he was about to be killed by Russian troops were "Slava Ukraini." Such courage and defiance in the face of murderous power make it clear that Russia has already lost this war. The United States continues to call for Russia's full and complete withdrawal from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, including Crimea.

Mr. Chair,

On a separate issue, it has come to our attention that the Russian delegation intends to have an outside speaker, a Mr. Maxim Grigoriev, who appears to be online now, to deliver Russia's statement.

If that is the case, it is not clear who this speaker actually represents. It does not appear that the speaker represents a government body of the Russian Federation. Since today is not a security dialogue, we were not aware that the FSC was accepting guest speakers for this session nor were we informed that today's session would be somehow "reinforced."

Nevertheless, two things are clear to us:

First, the content of Russia's statement will undoubtedly be a litany of lies and whataboutism meant to distract us from Russia's war crimes against Ukraine and its people.

And second, there is nothing international about Mr. Grigoriev's so-called International Public Tribunal. It is a kangaroo court that lacks any sort of credibility with the international community and is aimed solely at feeding false narratives and disinformation, first and foremost to the Russian people, and then to the international community.

Mr. Chair,

Regardless of the false narrative that Russia has planned for us today, the world will not be distracted from Russia's atrocities in Ukraine. There will be accountability for the more than 71,000 war crimes perpetrated by Russia-backed forces that have been recorded by Ukraine's prosecutor general.

There will be accountability for Russia's massacre of civilians in Bucha. There will be accountability for Russia's indiscriminate missile barrages against civilian infrastructure. There will be a reckoning, and those who aided Vladimir Putin in carrying out his war of aggression against Ukraine will be held to account.

As we've said, justice can take time, but it is inevitable and inescapable. Both truth and justice will prevail.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.