



United States Mission to the OSCE

U.S. Statement for the Forum for Security Cooperation: Opening Statement

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires Katherine Brucker
April 17, 2024

Thank you, Mr. Chair, dear Mario.

It is my pleasure to welcome Croatia as the new Chair of this important body.

We applaud Croatia’s plans for the FSC and its choice of security dialogue topics for this trimester: Humanitarian Demining and Emerging Technologies are timely topics and of grave importance in the midst of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. Military Education and Women’s Contributions to Peace and Security are essential to building a solid foundation for lasting security.

The mandate of the FSC, to which all OSCE participating States committed, requires us to respect each other’s sovereign equality and territorial integrity, and to refrain from the threat of, or the use of force, against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. And so, for more than two years now, the predominant issue addressed by the FSC has been Russia’s brutal war against Ukraine, aided and abetted by Belarus.

We cannot ignore an unprovoked war against a peaceful neighbor, a war with an explicit objective to change borders by force and to overthrow the democratically elected government of a sovereign state. This is a war in which Russia has inflicted incalculable damage to Ukrainian cities, callously destroyed critical infrastructure and food supplies, committed atrocities, and ruthlessly killed and terrorized Ukrainian civilians.

We are now in the third year of Russia’s brutal war. This organization’s principles have not changed. Ukraine’s rights as a sovereign nation have not changed. Russia’s and Belarus’s obligations to respect Ukraine’s rights have not changed. The Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter have not changed. And so, our position

has not and will not change: Russia must end this war and withdraw from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

If Russia continues as it has for the last two years, it will do everything in its power to avoid discussion of its illegal war. We can expect continued attempts to threaten the Chair with demands for unqualified speakers to join security dialogue panels. We can expect obstruction, walkouts, insults, and distractions.

But we can also expect the solidarity of 55 participating States to grow as Russia's and Belarus's isolation intensifies. Mr. Chair, the United States will stand with you and with all other participating States as we uphold and defend the OSCE's principles and values.

In the Troika, you have the tested experience of Cyprus and the new energy from Denmark to draw upon. We bid Canada a fond farewell from the Troika and congratulate Jocelyn and her team for a job extremely well done. I am confident that, among friends and partners who share the values upon which this organization was founded, we are in very good hands.

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