



United States Mission to the OSCE

Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE)

As delivered by Ambassador Michael R. Carpenter
To the Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the
Permanent Council
Vienna, November 8, 2023

The United States deeply regrets Russia's final withdrawal from the CFE Treaty, a long-time cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic Security, which takes place at the same time that Russia wages a brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. The combination of Russia's withdrawal from the CFE Treaty and its war of aggression against another CFE State Party has fundamentally altered the circumstances that were essential to the CFE States Parties' consent to be bound by the treaty, and radically transformed the obligations under the treaty.

In light of this fundamental change of circumstances, the United States will suspend the operation of all CFE Treaty obligations between itself and every other State Party, effective December 7, consistent with our rights under international law. We have informed the Netherlands as the treaty depository and are hereby informing all of our OSCE partners.

As every participating State in this organization knows, Russia's war against Ukraine contravenes the basic objectives of the CFE Treaty, and its withdrawal from CFE removes the largest military force in Europe from the treaty's accountability.

Russia's withdrawal has therefore placed the United States and other States Parties in an unacceptable position – one where our armed forces would continue to be constrained by the CFE Treaty while Russian armed forces – which are currently waging the largest-scale war of aggression in Europe since World War II – would not.

The United States has made this decision together with many other States Parties, who likewise intend to suspend their CFE Treaty obligations.

Again, we regret that we have been compelled by Russia's action to take this step. The United States remains committed to effective conventional arms control as a critical element of Euro-Atlantic security. We will continue to pursue measures with responsible partners to bolster stability and security in Europe for all by reducing risk, preventing misperceptions, avoiding conflicts, and building trust.

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