



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

# **Reply 2 to the Russian Ambassador on Ongoing Violations of International Law and Defiance of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 19, 2015

Just to be clear: there was an agreement that there will be local elections in line with international standards and we've heard time and time again from the President of Ukraine that he is prepared to engage with the people who emerge from that process.

If they are in line with international standards, then they are not chosen by the central authorities, they are chosen by the people who vote in the local elections.

This is another case where the Russian Federation makes accusations of others which are actually true about themselves: What's really going on here is that the Russian Federation is trying to force the government of Ukraine to engage with the Russian Federation's chosen representatives. They engineered the political theater of the farce elections last November, and now they want to avoid real elections.

If the Russian Federation really cares about engagement with the people who live in the areas that are now designated as applicable for the special status law, it should be doing everything in its power to make sure that those local elections can happen in a free and fair environment as soon as possible, so that dialogue can actually move forward. And "everything in its power" means securing the international border under international monitoring, getting its weapons out, and fighters out.

It's simply not credible for the Russian Federation to say it cares about dialogue while it continues to pour weapons in – that's not dialogue, that's extortion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.