



United States Mission to the OSCE
**Response to Report by the Chief Monitor
of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission,
Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 10, 2014

The United States warmly welcomes Ambassador Apakan back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his thorough report on a Mission that is a primary focus of all delegations around this table. Ambassador Apakan, at the outset, allow me to express my government's most sincere gratitude for you and your team's steadfast commitment and tireless efforts to advance the activities of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. Policymakers from throughout the OSCE rely on your team's objective and unbiased reporting in order to make informed decisions and help secure a prosperous, stable, and unified future for Ukraine. We applaud the timely, balanced, and objective reporting that the Special Monitoring Mission provides and we appreciate the around-the-clock vigilance with which your team advances the OSCE's work. We welcome and strongly support Ukraine's request to extend your mandate for another six months.

Though the Special Monitoring Mission is only this week celebrating the three-month anniversary of reaching its initial deployment of 100 monitors, there is no doubt that it has already been a tremendous success and a symbol of pride for this Organization. Remarkably, the SMM was able to get eyes and ears into Ukraine within the first 24 hours of the mandate's adoption. Regrettably, the success and determination of the Mission from that starting point until now has not come without hardship and sacrifice—such as that endured by the eight SMM monitors for over one month as they were illegally held captive by Russian-backed separatists.

As Ukrainian and world leaders gather to discuss concrete efforts to foster a peaceful settlement to the crisis, all eyes continue to be on the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to monitor progress and results. In order to advance the peace process, the SMM should continue to monitor what is happening on the ground as the situation changes. Mr. Ambassador, we welcome SMM monitors observing the situation in Slovyansk and Kramatorsk and we encourage you to continue to monitor the situation in other areas that the government of Ukraine frees from separatist control as soon as the security situation allows. The period immediately following such a change in control is precisely when unbiased monitors are needed most. We also urge the SMM to deploy monitors to all Ukrainian-controlled crossing points along the border with Russia.

We take this opportunity to remind this Council that Crimea is an integral part of Ukraine and is subject to Special Monitoring Mission observation, especially as reports of abuses continue to surface. We urge the SMM to meet with Crimean Tatars and others who have left Crimea in order to better understand the treatment of minority groups in Crimea. We call on Russia,

as the occupying power in Crimea, to allow the SMM teams into Crimea so they can report on the facts on the ground. We do not accept the illegal attempted annexation of Crimea and call on Russia to reverse it.

Though the Special Monitoring Mission has—at every call for assistance—risen to the challenge, its success also depends on the good-faith actions of all participating States around this table. Securing Ukraine’s border with Russia against the flow of arms and fighters remains an essential component of efforts to ensure the security of the SMM and of Ukraine. As such, we call on Russia to implement the commitment it made in the July 2 statement of the four Foreign Ministers to invite the OSCE to monitor its border with Ukraine. Since operations on Russian soil fall outside the purview of the mandate of the SMM, we urge the Chairmanship of this Organization to call a meeting at the earliest convenience to find consensus on a mandate for a new OSCE mission to observe the Russian side of the border.

The United States fully supports the Special Monitoring Mission and we have demonstrated our commitment by contributing to its funding and offering experienced personnel. Nevertheless, we understand that the Special Monitoring Mission requires other tools, resources, and equipment to carry out its mandate. We endorse previous calls for communications and protective equipment that would help to ensure a safe, secure, and well-resourced monitoring Mission. We continue to call on others around this table to join us in financially supporting this critical mission and contributing to the success of this Organization and a peaceful outcome in Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.