



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

### **2nd Right of Reply to Russia on the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Harry R. Kamian  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
January 18, 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just wanted to exercise my right of reply in response to one point that my esteemed Russian colleague mentioned. I would like to assure the esteemed Russian Ambassador – who has a tremendous amount of experience in the area of media – on behalf of his government, that the Russian Federation, and the participating States: it is very, very important that you understand that U.S. legislation does not in any way hamper competition. It simply requires certain entities under U.S. law to register. So, rather than hampering competition, I think it is more important to look at it in the context of increasing transparency. I take, perhaps, your point – which you haven't mentioned directly – that perhaps the need to register might not be something that some organization wants to do. But under U.S. law, registration doesn't hamper competition. It simply increases transparency.

Secondly, I'm fortunate that I come from a country that embraces competition. With competition, sometimes there are winners, sometimes there are losers. I think, in this case, everyone's a winner. I can't speak on behalf of all of the three-hundred-plus million Americans, but I feel quite happy that American citizens in my country have the freedom to watch whatever sort of TV or radio or news that they want. If an American chooses one radio station over another, that is his or her choice. I may have a personal view on that, but I am very proud to be from a country that allows its citizens to engage in freedom of choice as it relates to media. And so, on one given day an individual might choose this station or might choose another. That's kind of how the cards fall – a phrase you're familiar with. I'm not quite sure, as I understand your law, that Russian citizens have that same freedom of choice. And so, I would just respectfully ask that, as you look at FARA, if you have any questions, I would discourage you, or respectfully ask, that you not refer to it as legislation that hampers competition, but rather encourage you to look at it as legislation that some Russian outlets may not welcome – and I respect the view of those outlets if that's their position – but it's quite transparent.

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