

Original: ENGLISH

United States Mission to the OSCE**Statement on the U.S. Country Reports on Human Rights**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 11, 2010

From its foundation, the United States has embraced a number of rights as inalienable and the birthright of every woman, man, and child.

The Annual Country Reports on Human Rights are an essential element of the United States' effort to promote respect for human rights worldwide. They inform U.S. government policymaking and may serve as a reference to other governments, international institutions, non-governmental organizations, human rights defenders and journalists. The Country Reports aim to advance worldwide efforts to end abuses, to help strengthen the capacity of countries to protect the human rights of all, and to shine a spotlight on countries that fail to live up to their international human rights commitments.

The Country Reports assess each country's situation independently against universal human rights precepts. Each Country Report is intended to stand on its own. The Country Reports are not compared to each other or placed in any order other than alphabetically by region.

While the focus of the Country Reports is on the human rights performance of other governments, the United States also examines its own human rights record in periodic reports required by human rights treaties to which it is a party. For example, the United States reports to a range of UN bodies, including the Committee Against Torture, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, not to mention peer review within the OSCE.

The United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review process is a unique way of evaluating the human rights records of each of the 192 UN Member States once every four years. The United States' human rights record will be reviewed in December of 2010 based on a report submitted by the U.S. government as well as input from civil society organizations.

Secretary Clinton is expected to forward to Congress and publicly release the 2009 Country Reports on Human Rights this morning in Washington. A live video feed of the press conference will be available today at 17:15 Vienna time at <http://www.state.gov>. We will forward copies of the report to delegations after that time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.