



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Turkic Council, and Mr. Jandos Asanov, Secretary General of TURKPA

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 23, 2015

Secretary General Hasanov and Secretary General Asanov, the United States welcomes you to the Permanent Council. We thank you for your remarks.

We look forward to working with the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States to promote peace and comprehensive security in the OSCE region and beyond. Our joint efforts to advance the basic principles of democracy – including good governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms – are key to the region's political and economic development.

The United States is concerned about the increasingly constricted space for freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression for individuals and the media within member states of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States. We would be interested in hearing more about the Council's assessment of the exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression in its member states, as well as practical actions the Council has undertaken to improve the environment for free expression by independent media.

Much has been said by both speakers this morning about economic development, and experience has shown that the kind of economic development that leads to broad-based prosperity and supports political stability is not achievable without the transparency and good governance that a free and independent media reinforces.

Secretary General Asanov you mentioned the European Games which also shined a spotlight on the continuing challenges faced by independent journalists.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.