



## United States Mission to the OSCE

# Response to the Reports of the Three Committee Chairs

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
To the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 16, 2014

We welcome to the Permanent Council the three committee chairs and thank them for their hard work since their last report and for outlining their plans for the remainder of the year. As we look at the work ahead in all areas of the OSCE—including these three committees—we will focus on whether that work strengthens existing commitments and their implementation, addresses crises in the OSCE region, and strengthens this Organization.

Let me start by thanking the Chair of the Security Committee, Ambassador Schroeder, whose leadership has made the Security Committee an effective tool in advancing our comprehensive approach to combating emerging transnational threats. The Security Committee has discussed pertinent issues such as security sector governance and reform, countering the financing of terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism, community policing, border management, and gender issues, among many others. We appreciate the Security Committee Chair's initiative to invite insightful guest speakers along with OSCE experts, including TNT managers and the Department of Human Resources, or field missions to describe our Organization's latest efforts.

Moving to the Second Dimension, we welcome Ambassador Algayerova's report on the activities of the Economic and Environmental Committee, and thank her for her leadership during the past two years. Ambassador Algayerova, your work this year to focus on implementation of past decisions is exactly the sort of approach we need. You have set a strong standard for implementing the 2013 Ministerial Decision on Protecting Energy Networks from Natural and Man-Made Disasters. The workshop held in July, the resulting best practices guidebook currently being prepared, and last Friday's event in Bratislava co-hosted with the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Energy Charter Secretariat, are all important steps in focusing our attention on this topic.

We appreciate the work that you have done to support implementation of the Dublin Declaration on Good Governance and Combatting Corruption. We look forward to next week's Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting where we can discuss this critical declaration, and call on all participating States to focus their attention and resources on continuing to implement its principles in the coming years.

Let me add a personal note of appreciation for the enthusiasm and sincerity with which you have evangelized about the missed opportunities in the second dimension. I share your assessment that there is much more we could be doing together in this area.

Thank you, Ambassador Kvile, for so enthusiastically and wisely chairing the Human Dimension Committee in 2014. The United States greatly appreciates the Committee's plan of work, including your efforts to secure voluntary reports from participating States. As you say, this is a best practice that we should build upon and expand in future years. You have challenged participating States by holding engaging discussions with top level speakers on diverse topics including freedom of expression, national minorities, gender, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and association, the death penalty, and tolerance, to name just a few. These discussions have been enhanced by the participation of representatives of OSCE institutions and field missions, and particularly by civil society. We hope to see continued expansion of civil society participation in OSCE activities, not just at events tailored to them, but as a resource and contributor to our ongoing work. We also appreciate the resources that Norway graciously provides to this committee.

The United States looks forward to future meetings of the Human Dimension Committee that expand upon this broad range of topics, focusing on implementation of OSCE commitments.

And I take the opportunity of Ambassador Kvile's points on the missed opportunity represented by the fact that many of my ambassadorial colleagues don't attend the committee, particularly when there are high-level speakers, and I pledge to do better on that score. I have attended, but I pledge to better, and I invite my colleagues to do likewise.

Again, we extend our sincere thanks and our best wishes to all three committee chairs.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.