



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Report on Border Security by CPC Director Ambassador Salber

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 17, 2009

Madam Chair.

Welcome, Ambassador Salber, to the Permanent Council. The United States applauds the valuable work of the Borders Unit in the important field of border security, which is so critical to the security of all participating States. We share the strategic goals you have outlined for us today.

My government remains a strong supporter of the Border Management and Security Concept adopted at the 2005 Ministerial Council. More recently, in the framework of the Corfu Process, we have spoken about the need for cross-dimensional approaches. Through the OSCE Border Management programs, the OSCE can address many interrelated threats. A comprehensive approach to border management is essential given the daunting challenges of drug, human, and weapons trafficking that destroy individual lives while destabilizing entire regions. A comprehensive approach can also help support participating States to address threats in the form of weak governance, corruption, terrorism and its financing, and illegal migration. The OSCE, acting especially through its field missions, can and should be a chief resource in assisting states to implement their border-related commitments.

As many projects are just getting off the ground in Central Asia right now, we realize much of our attention will be focused on this region and the implementation of these projects. We also support efforts to evolve the OSCE's approach to confronting new threats at the border, including the smuggling of materials, commodities and technologies that can be used in the creation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. In that respect, we hope the borders unit can make an active contribution to the ability of participating States to fulfill their commitments under UNSCR 1540 and as emphasized in UNSCR 1810 which underscored regional approaches. The United States stands ready to coordinate our various bilateral border security-related programs with the OSCE.

The United States supports a regional approach for border projects, to include inviting officials from all participating and Partner States to engage in training. We also continue to see the valuable opportunity to integrate our Afghan partners into OSCE Central Asian border projects as a critical component of a comprehensive border security approach. Such an approach contributes to building substantial and relevant linkages between Afghanistan and its Central Asian neighbors. The joint training projects already undertaken with Afghan neighbors Turkmenistan and Tajikistan are an important start to dealing with border security from this regional perspective. Moreover, the United States believes that border security projects within Afghanistan as well could also play a valuable role in promoting enhanced regional cooperation. We look forward to reaching consensus on this approach in the near future.

We have high expectations that joint training at the Border Management Staff College in Tajikistan and the Customs Academy in Kyrgyzstan, for example, will open new lines of

communication and cooperation among border officials. Such training may be a good area for us to form partnerships among OSCE participating States to provide expertise and seek opportunities for the sharing of experiences and information.

As we know, training assistance is sustainable only if it is part of a long-term effort, based on a clear strategy and a thorough needs assessment. The United States therefore urges the continuation of the successful work to conduct comprehensive border assessments in partnership with participating States. We recognize the significant value represented by the assessments already completed in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and hope the lessons learned can be applied to other assessments.

Thank you, Madam Chair.