



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

### **OSCE Annual Security Review Conference Closing Session**

Remarks as delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
June 30, 2016

As we have seen over the past three days, the large turnout of officials from our capitals demonstrates that our governments take seriously the opportunity provided by the ASRC to review the implementation of our OSCE security commitments. The United States values this forum highly, and our delegation included a Special Assistant to the President, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, and a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense.

We also value highly the opportunity to hear from outside experts, as we did during today's sessions on the OSCE's conflict response capabilities and counterterrorism. These experts challenge us to think creatively about how we can better address the security challenges we all face.

While we covered many topics, and heard different views, there were some common themes during this year's ASRC. From our perspective, here are some of the key takeaways in terms of ideas presented, and recommendations for how we might take them forward. The United States would like to pursue further work on these with our colleagues here:

1. The implementation of our OSCE commitments is a means to ensure comprehensive security and maintain our European security architecture and the rules-based international order. This was the major theme heard throughout the conference, and it received nearly universal endorsement. As Celeste Wallander said during the Ukraine session, the political commitments made at Helsinki and in the years since are a special asset of Europe and its security architecture. These were hard fought and we should not lose them.
2. The means to reach a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine are at hand. As you said, Mr. Chair, these are the full implementation of the Minsk agreements and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of Ukraine. While discussions toward these ends take place in the Normandy Format and the Trilateral Contact Group, here in Vienna, participating States should engage with the Chairmanship and Secretariat on discussions regarding planning for a security mission for elections in certain parts of Donetsk and Luhansk.
3. Progress in addressing the protracted conflicts is possible. We heard from Ambassador Meier-Klodt and others about the progress made through the resumption of the 5+2 talks after a two year hiatus, and the outcomes of the meeting held in April. Ambassador Meier-Klodt called upon the parties to maintain the ambition to keep and consolidate this trend.

We should look at how this modest success was achieved, and consider how to apply it to other situations. Mr. Chair, I take this opportunity to say that we fully support the Chairmanship's efforts to see implemented the agreements made May 16 and June 20 between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

4. There is a significant role the OSCE can play in assisting participating States as they respond to the migration and refugee challenge. We heard details of the discussion Ambassador Wild has been leading, and look forward to his full report and implementing its recommendations. We also heard an impassioned plea from the UN's Peter Sutherland for all of us to take seriously our moral responsibility for our fellow human beings that are fleeing conflicts and suffering. This is a sentiment that should guide us as we consider the practical responses of the OSCE and our individual participating States.

5. There was a nearly universal support expressed for using fully the arms control tools at our disposal, in particular the CFE Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty, and the Vienna Document. A number of participating States, including the United States, Poland, and Germany, have made concrete proposals in the Vienna Document context to be able to respond quickly in situations of crisis. We urge all participating States to engage productively in the discussion of these proposals in the coming months.

6. The instruments we currently have in the OSCE toolbox should be provided the political and financial support necessary to ensure their effective use to head off crises and conflicts. We should develop additional tools such as a sustained rapid reaction capability that would allow the deployment of OSCE personnel capable of monitoring and reporting on emerging crises, or responding to crisis and conflicts when they flare up. We look forward to further discussion on this topic.

7. There are additional technical steps we should take to enhance our ability to counter the terrorist threat, such as providing information on airline passengers and improving security at our airports. The United States looks forward to additional discussions within the OSCE on these and other technical topics as we enhance our global partnership against violent extremism, including by empowering a broad-based coalition of government and non-governmental actors to address violent extremism.

In closing, let me offer the thanks of the United States, and my entire delegation, to the German Chairmanship for organizing this event, and the many useful side events. We look forward to following up on many of the ideas and proposals put forward over the past three days.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.