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United States Mission to the OSCE

Prompt Action Still Required in Kyrgyzstan

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 9, 2010

The United States welcomes Ambassador Salber back to the Permanent Council and recognizes, once again, the tireless efforts you and your staff made in support of the OSCE Police Advisory Group in Kyrgyzstan. We appreciate the clear-eyed and very sobering assessment that you just made. We also acknowledge and thank Mr. Markus Mueller who of course has joined you in meeting with Kyrgyz authorities.

On July 22, the Permanent Council unanimously agreed that as a result of the deplorable ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, extraordinary collective action by this body was warranted. We, with the full support of the Kyrgyz representatives and the government of Kyrgyzstan, authorized a Police Advisory Group to be deployed immediately to facilitate the strengthening of trust between the police and the people of all ethnicities in southern Kyrgyzstan. We agree that the voices of several ethnic minority communities who support the deployment of the PAG are not being heard in the public domain in Kyrgyzstan. The deployment of the Group has been irresponsibly mischaracterized in Kyrgyzstan by various parties as an attempt to partition the country. We believe that quite the opposite is true. The PAG deployment would be completely neutral with the specific aim of helping avoid further violence and support the continued integrity and stability of Kyrgyzstan.

We very much regret that despite the great efforts of Ambassador Salber, Mr. Mueller, the Secretary General and the Chairman in Office, progress on the deployment of the Police Advisory Group has stalled. We strongly believe this deployment would play a positive role in reducing tensions and we urge Kyrgyzstan to set aside political differences, to agree to the Memorandum of Understanding, and to facilitate the deployment of the Police Advisory Group. This coming week, the visit of Special Representative Karibzhanov should provide additional opportunities for progress.

We are grateful that President Otunbayeva has spoken publicly and strongly in support of the Police Advisory Group and urge Kyrgyzstan's leaders to follow her example. Ambassador Salber's suggestion that the initial team could be expanded among those already appointed and could travel to Bishkek as soon as possible to begin preparations for the full PAG deployment after the elections is a sound, although unfortunately constrained, approach. Much more needs to be done.

With the parliamentary elections one month away, Kyrgyzstan is at an important junction. The OSCE can help the country deal with the inter-ethnic tensions through the proposed PAG and participating States should continue to advocate for pre-election deployment. As it has done in the past, the OSCE will also monitor the elections in October, with a view of

supporting the democratic processes in the country. Kyrgyzstan and all its citizens deserve our complete support.