



United States Mission to the OSCE
**Response to Address by Ukrainian
Foreign Minister
Kostyantyn Gryshchenko**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 20, 2012

The United States welcomes the return of Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko to the Permanent Council today. Ukraine and the United States have a strategic partnership, and we are pleased to work constructively on a broad range of issues.

Mr. Minister, we thank you for your review of Ukraine's priorities for its Chairmanship, and we look forward to working with you as Ukraine prepares to assume the mantle of the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013. As you noted in your remarks, the OSCE is a uniquely comprehensive platform for regional cooperation and political dialogue on a range of issues, including both current and newly emerging security-related concerns in Europe.

Europe's unresolved conflicts remain a great threat to security and are a serious and longstanding challenge for the OSCE. We appreciate Ukraine's support for efforts to find a settlement to the Transnistria conflict via the "5+2" process and welcome the resumption of formal negotiations in that format. The United States also welcomes Ukraine's active support for full implementation of the OSCE's politico-military instruments, including the Vienna Document, and your commitment to conventional arms control in Europe. We share Ukraine's special interest in non-proliferation and look forward to continuing our close cooperation in this area, especially in support of UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

The United States looks forward to working with your Chairmanship and all participating States as we explore ways to address energy-related activities in the OSCE region. This is a timely subject and an area that we need to address collectively.

We are encouraged to hear that Ukraine places particular importance on core Human Dimension commitments. The United States sees the OSCE's work in the Human Dimension as a main priority, where implementation of commitments affects everything this organization does. We join Ukraine in noting that our core objectives remain to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law, as well as to combat intolerance and discrimination. At the same time, we must address negative developments, such as increasing restrictions on the fundamental freedoms of expression, association, assembly, and religion or belief, as well as growing xenophobia, and strive to protect and advance respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms exercised online and off line across the OSCE region.

As participating States, we all must do our utmost to meet our OSCE commitments. In particular, it is incumbent upon those participating States preparing to serve in OSCE

leadership capacities to act as role models for implementing their OSCE commitments. One clear way Ukraine can do so is to cease politically motivated prosecutions and free Mrs. Tymoshenko and the other senior officials of the previous government currently in detention. We believe they should have an unrestricted ability to participate fully in political life. In the same vein, we urge the Government of Ukraine to honor its pledge to conduct the October parliamentary election according to international standards for democratic elections.

We welcome your statement of full support for the neutrality and autonomy of the OSCE institutions – HCNM, ODIHR, and RFOM – as well as the important contribution of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

We are heartened to hear that enhanced cooperation with our Partners for Cooperation and the implementation of Decisions increasing the OSCE’s engagement with Afghanistan will be a priority for the Ukrainian Chairmanship.

The United States offers its congratulations to Ukraine on the June 1 loading and shipment of 715 tons of the toxic rocket fuel component “mélange” out of its territory, an important OSCE project also supported by the United States. We likewise strongly support the cooperative initiative to eliminate excess stockpiles of “Explosive Remnants of War.”

Mr. Minister, we look forward to continuing discussions of Ukraine's proposed priorities for the OSCE both bilaterally and multilaterally in the coming months.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.