



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the 65th Anniversary of the End of World War II

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 6, 2010

Today, nearly 65 years after the end of World War II, we remember the millions of people who lost their lives as victims of battle, the Holocaust, occupations, and acts of repression. We remember those who fought against fascism, dictatorship, and oppression to ensure victory for tolerance, human dignity, and freedom. We honor the veterans of the conflict who are still living. And we hail the progress that has been made in the last 65 years in overcoming the tragic legacy of the war.

Twice in the last century the United States has sent its young men and women to fight in European wars. Some half a million Americans paid the ultimate price. We chose to fight because we recognized that we needed to defend fundamental values we share—above all individual liberty—and that our own future and prosperity were inextricably linked with Europe's.

After 1945, we understood that our continued presence was necessary in order to guarantee the survival of freedom and maintain the peace. Our futures will remain intertwined.

The OSCE has played an important role in helping to maintain peace and security; promote economic prosperity; and advance democracy, human rights, and the fundamental freedoms we enshrined in the Helsinki Accords 35 years ago. But our work is incomplete. New times have brought new threats, and a changing world has introduced new challenges.

We are determined to work collectively in the OSCE, with the aim of ensuring comprehensive security across the OSCE region. This remains our common purpose.

Finally, let's also remember that this is another anniversary, the 20th for the Charter of Paris, where we declared an end to conflict and confrontation. We still have work to do in that regard, and I call on us to remain faithful to the sacrifices of our parents and grandparents, and finish the job of guaranteeing peace, prosperity and liberty across the entire OSCE space.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.