

Original: ENGLISH

## United States Mission to the OSCE



### **Session 5: Sustainable Development and the Environment**

*Ensuring economic growth through promoting technological innovation and modernization in the economies, fostering social development, and capacity-building for environmental governance, while protecting the environment*

As delivered by Shelly Han  
OSCE Review Conference  
Vienna, Austria  
October 25, 2010

Mr. Chairman,

The Helsinki Final Act envisioned technical cooperation between East and West, at least in part, as a way of ensuring that emerging technologies would improve the lives of people from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Every major meeting of the organization since then – Madrid in 1980, Vienna in 1986, Paris in 1990, Maastricht in 2003 – has reiterated the need to cooperate in sharing information and working cooperatively to develop our economies in a sustainable way.

We continue to believe that sustainable development and economic growth can be achieved through the promotion of technological innovation and economic modernization. Further, we believe that this can be done in a way that fosters social development and capacity building for environmental governance.

The United States places a premium on innovation for sustainable development. We believe that new information and communication technologies can empower participatory decision-making, and provide real time information to solve everyday problems, as well as local, regional, national and even global emergencies that might arise.

OSCE field missions are already working with civil society in many places to ensure that workable innovative ideas inform local decision making. For example, the OSCE Center in Astana, working closely with the Government of Kazakhstan and the International Fund for the Aral Sea, facilitates productive dialogue among the affected parties in the Aral Sea Basin. Field missions should

be encouraged to create such opportunities for dialogue that encompass the security, developmental and environmental aspects.

Some of the reform recommendations of the Verbeek report will empower the Economic Coordinator's Office to better support the field missions in this role.

Research and innovation drives and guides new economic opportunities. The U.S. uses a "whole of government" approach domestically to develop and implement new programs. Environmental programs are not the province of just the Environmental Protection Agency.

It depends on the U.S. Department of Education's regional innovation clusters that spur regional economic growth by improving the building technologies needed for energy efficient building designs, and systems.

The U.S. Department of Energy is funding programs for energy efficiency, renewable energy, grid modernization, science research, and carbon capture and sequestration, among many other activities.

And the U.S. Department of Labor is supporting green jobs training, including programs designed to serve populations in high-poverty areas of the United States to train them for employment in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.

Just as the Department of Labor's grants target youth, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau has hosted nine green jobs training projects around the country and 30 roundtables on Women and Green Jobs.

At its heart, "development" means promoting human abilities to create value. The central investment in building the economy around sustainable approaches lies in the spectrum of education and training offering skills and knowledge people need to engage in productive employment that helps support the emerging green economy. Such investments do not lead directly to balanced growth or better management of ecosystems, but an investment in people is a prerequisite.

The United States is committed to reaching sustainable development goals through investing in people, so too we think the OSCE has a similar role. People are the key to sustainable development. Earlier in this review conference we called for an OSCE Academy in Central Asia. As this Academy encourages licit

trade, so too could it provide training in sustainable development. The most productive trade is the trade in sustainable goods and services.

But the OSCE's primary focus cannot be training governing technocrats in isolation. Instead, it educates citizens, the media and civil society to work with government. This Academy can provide a forum for mutual learning and stakeholder interaction. Sustainable development depends on informed community involvement.

In keeping with our commitments, we remain eager to share the progress we have made in promoting sustainable development at home and abroad, in fostering a green economy, and in strengthening institutions for sustainable development, while recognizing that there is still much to be done. The OSCE, as a platform for dialogue and sharing of best practices, is a prime venue for exchanging this information, whether formally through OSCE institutional structures and events, or informally by providing a space for interested parties to come together bilaterally or multilaterally.