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

### **Statement on Violence in Egypt**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a. i. Gary Robbins  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 13, 2011

The United States is deeply concerned about the violence in Egypt that has led to a tragic loss of life among demonstrators and security forces. We express our condolences to the families and loved ones of all who were killed or injured, and we stand with the Egyptian people in this painful and difficult time.

Now is a time for restraint on all sides so that Egyptians can move forward together to forge a strong and united Egypt. As the Egyptian people shape their future, the United States continues to believe that the rights of minorities—including Copts—must be respected. All people have the universal rights of peaceful protest and religious freedom.

We also note Prime Minister Sharaf's call for an investigation and his appeal to all parties to refrain from violence. We echo these calls and stress the importance that the investigation be a transparent and credible process beginning immediately and holding accountable all responsible parties with full due process of law. To further protect religious freedom, we also support the Egyptian government's decision to consider a Unified Places of Worship Law governing church construction and an anti-discrimination law within two weeks.

The tragic violence that has marred Egypt's transition should not stand in the way of timely elections and the country's continued transition to democracy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.