

30 June 2011

Original: ENGLISH



United States Mission to the OSCE

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference Opening Session

as delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
30 June 2011

I am pleased to be part of a U.S. delegation that includes the Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Dan Russell, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Celeste Wallander. Tomorrow, as you know, we will be joined by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, who will address challenges facing democratic societies in responding to transnational threats. I hope the level of our delegation makes clear the depth and breadth of the U.S. Government's commitment to the OSCE.

The United States has always been a strong supporter of the Annual Security Review Conference. This conference allows us to review our efforts to strengthen security among the countries represented here today, and beyond. Since many challenges to our shared security originate outside Europe and Eurasia, that work should include efforts to cooperate with OSCE Partners in North Africa and Afghanistan. We agree with the three broad objectives outlined by the NATO Secretary General: a Europe whole, free and at peace; meeting new and emerging threats; and protecting our shared values.

To advance towards those broad, long-term objectives, we must, in the near term, improve our multifaceted approach that allows us (1) to meet emerging threats, (2) to prevent and respond to conflicts, and (3) to strengthen our conventional security agreements. This conference will focus on these three areas, which will be addressed in more detail in individual sessions. Let me briefly touch upon each.

First, the United States believes that transnational threats should continue to be a focus at the OSCE. OSCE's added value is its comprehensive approach to security, engaging governments, civil society, and the private sector. Looking ahead to the December ministerial, the U.S. urges continued work on cybersecurity and supports increased focus on violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism.

Second, we need to improve our early warning systems and create effective crisis management mechanisms. In this regard, the U.S. fully supports an OSCE ministerial decision to enhance the OSCE's capabilities in addressing conflicts. At the same time, we must redouble our collective efforts to resolve Europe's protracted conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, and Moldova, which I think we all agree have gone on far too long.

Third, conventional arms control in Europe has made a lasting contribution to the security of all our peoples. Now, we need to look ahead with a focus on updating the Vienna Document and ending the impasse on CFE. The United States is committed to building on the achievements of those agreements and revitalizing and modernizing those regimes. We must redouble our efforts to move forward in ways that meet today's European security needs. We must devote necessary resources to our verification agencies and institutions to keep the regimes going strong.

Each of the broad areas I've just mentioned is important to our shared security. Last December in Astana, Secretary Clinton rightly reiterated that true security demands democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms within states. She also reminded us that since 1975 this concept of comprehensive security has been a rallying cry for generations of reformers. We reaffirmed yesterday in our session on partnership and cooperation that security in Europe is inextricably linked to that of adjacent areas.

OSCE has experience and expertise that Partners can draw upon to enhance their security. The OSCE can join Partners in working together to fight transnational threats, sharing experiences and best practices, and provide electoral assistance and other capacity-building activities. The United States supports exploring opportunities to assist states in implementing democratic policing and ensuring civilian, democratic control of the armed forces. These are ideas we should discuss in detail over the next two days.

The United States wants to work with other participating States to use the OSCE to the fullest extent to address today's security challenges and to engage with the OSCE's neighbors.

I want to close by reiterating something that is entirely obvious, but worth repeating at a moment in history when many of our governments are focused on economic issues – that security and stability are indivisible from democracy and economic opportunity.

The OSCE has made, and with all of our support, will continue to make a lasting contribution to a more pluralistic, peaceful and prosperous world.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.