



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement in Response to Spanish Foreign Minister Moratinos' Opening Address

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 11, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Mr. Minister, for coming to Vienna today to lay out the priorities and objectives of the Spanish chairmanship. The United States is looking forward to working closely with the Chairmanship, and with all of the delegations represented around this table today, to keep the OSCE doing what it does best, and to ensure that our organization remains current, relevant and effective as we face new challenges.

A commitment to preserving the core values of the OSCE, monitoring their implementation, and seeking responsible, effective solutions to our common problems through dialogue and consensus building, remain the key elements of our organization.

Mr. Chairman, we have closed the very difficult issue of reform at the 2006 OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting in Brussels. I take the opportunity to give our thanks to the Belgium delegation for all of their efforts in this regard as well as all of their other efforts during their chairmanship year. Now in 2007 it's time to turn our attention to the substantive issues facing this organization.

Mr. Minister, I was very much struck by the three "Ps" which you laid out in your presentation, that of Priorities, Perseverance, and Patience. I'll try to tailor the rest of my remarks to those three "Ps."

Clearly, areas that deserve our attention and focus for 2007 must include supporting the international community's efforts during this year of decision in the Balkans. We need also to make more progress on the protracted conflicts.

The United States also very much supports, Mr. Minister, the emphasis which you put on strengthening our counter-terrorism cooperation, and making it more effective. And finally we join other delegations who have already mentioned the importance of working further on combating organized crime, managing migration and better integration of minority communities.

In Brussels, we also endorsed a number of decisions of particular importance to my government, including those on tolerance, sexual exploitation of children, arms control and non-proliferation, and trafficking in persons. These are all areas where we will need perseverance in the years to come. You can count on my delegation to continue to press for concrete follow-up during 2007 in these areas.

And finally to the issue of patience.

As an organization which is committed to advancing freedom and security, and respect for human rights, we all know that this is not the work of a day or of a year, but of a much longer term. The OSCE should continue its important work in support of democratization, and political and economic reform throughout the OSCE region.

As we do so, though, I think it is important that we begin to concentrate and migrate our resources to those countries where the pace of transition is greater and the need for support is also greater. We also very much support, Mr. Minister, the emphasis which you put on strengthening our dialogue with the Mediterranean and Asian partners, and you can count on the United States to support you as well in that effort.

We remain strongly committed to ensuring the full and effective operation of the OSCE's institutions and field presences. Finally, I would like to emphasize that we will continue to support ODIHR's ability to operate in an objective and impartial manner.

In conclusion, Mr. Minister, let me simply thank you for coming, and through you, pass on our thanks to Ambassador Sanchez de Boado and the entire Spanish OSCE team for your willingness and dedication to take on leadership of the OSCE in 2007.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.