



United States Mission to the OSCE

**RESPONSE TO ADDRESS BY
UKRAINIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
KOSTYANTYN GRYSHCENKO**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 22, 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States welcomes the visit of Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko to the Permanent Council today. Ukraine and the United States have a strategic partnership, and we are pleased to work constructively on a broad range of issues.

Mr. Minister, we thank you for your review of Ukraine's foreign policy priorities and we thank you for your statement of interest in playing a leadership role in this organization.

We welcome your support for addressing European security within the framework of the OSCE and your assessment of the important role the OSCE can play in strengthening regional and global security.

The persistence of conflict in the OSCE region threatens the lives of our citizens and undermines their hopes for the future.

It remains to be seen whether this organization will contribute significantly to the international community's response to events in Kyrgyzstan. Europe's unresolved conflicts remain a great threat to security among and within States and are a serious and longstanding challenge for the OSCE. In particular, we welcome your support for the efforts to find a Transnistrian settlement via the "5+2" process, and would welcome resumption of formal negotiations in that format. We support your view that we should act now to enhance the OSCE's capacity in early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, and post-conflict rehabilitation; relevant proposals put forth during the course of the Corfu Process should be given serious consideration.

Regarding the human dimension, we are encouraged to hear that Ukraine places particular importance on human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, and democratic institutions. Like Ukraine, we continue to value highly the participation of civil society in our work – this is what sets the OSCE apart from other organizations. We welcome your statement of full confidence in the internationally-recognized expertise of ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in election observation, and your support for their neutrality and autonomy.

We take note of Ukraine's human dimension priorities and we would welcome greater emphasis on all fundamental freedoms, in particular the freedom of assembly and association.

Regarding freedom of the media, we welcome your invitation to the Representative on Freedom of the Media to visit Ukraine, and your assurances that the Government of Ukraine will uphold media pluralism and OSCE commitments on media freedom, including combating violence against journalists. We urge your Government to continue to be wary of steps that could limit freedom of assembly or potentially threaten media freedom.

We believe the relationship between the Project Coordinator in Ukraine and the Government of Ukraine should serve as a model, and we congratulate the cooperation that has resulted in the successful conclusion, in two days time, of the first stage of a project to remove 16,000 tons of the rocket fuel “mélange.” We likewise strongly support the cooperative initiative to eliminate excess stockpiles of conventional “Remnants of War.”

We welcome your support for revitalizing efforts to move forward on the CFE Treaty and to strengthen the implementation of arms control and CSBM instruments.

Mr. Minister, we look forward to continuing discussion of Ukraine's proposed priorities for the OSCE both bilaterally and multilaterally in the coming months.

Finally, on a personal note, I'll use the occasion of the distinguished Foreign Minister's visit to add a word of thanks to one of our colleagues who will be leaving us, unfortunately, any day now. Ambassador Yel'chenko has been a constructive, effective voice in Vienna for over five years. If the reports about his next assignment are accurate – and I don't doubt that they are – he will be moving on to head one of Ukraine's largest and most significant embassies. On behalf of the United States of America, I bid him a fond farewell and wish him much success in his future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.