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United States Mission to the OSCE

**Response to Head of the OSCE Center in
Bishkek, Ambassador Sergey Kapinos,
and to the Director of the OSCE Academy
in Bishkek**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 2, 2016

We welcome Ambassador Kapinos and Dr. Dunay to the Permanent Council and thank them for their reports.

The United States supports the work of the OSCE Center in Bishkek, including the stated priority areas of strengthening inter-ethnic relations, promoting good governance and anti-corruption, combating transnational threats, and promoting human rights, rule of law, and gender equality.

We welcome the Center's work on assisting with countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism, as well as support for new legislation on combating terrorist financing and money laundering. We urge the Center to have a continued focus on police capacity building, including community policing. This is particularly important as a means to continue the work done by the Community Security Initiative.

The United States also strongly supports the Center's work on parliamentary capacity building and increasing outreach to constituents, strengthening the judicial system and trial monitoring, and penitentiary reform and preventing torture.

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek is a key element of the Center's work. Educating the next generation of leaders is one the most important things we can do to enable our countries to have secure and successful futures, and we welcome that the Academy has received the necessary credentialing and registration. The United States recently made an extra-budgetary contribution of \$100,000 to the Academy.

We thank the Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Steinmeier, for recently visiting both the OSCE Center and the Academy, demonstrating both his and participating States' strong support for both institutions.

The United States positively notes the May 12 rejection by the Kyrgyz Parliament of a draft law on non-commercial organizations, which could have restricted civil society if it had passed. The work of non-governmental organizations is crucial to democratic development throughout the OSCE region, and we look to the Center to help enhance the strength of civil society in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Once again, I would like to thank Ambassador Kapinos and Dr. Dunay for their work and the work of their team.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.