



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Sergey Lebedev, Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States

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

The United States welcomes Mr. Sergey Lebedev to the Permanent Council today and thanks him for his presentation on the CIS's current priorities and activities.

We are pleased that the CIS attaches importance to coordination and cooperation with the OSCE. The United States values the OSCE's practical, results-oriented cooperation with other organizations, including the CIS. We believe the best way to implement this cooperation is by coordinating our efforts in a flexible and informal way.

We support the close contacts established between the OSCE and the CIS at the expert level on topics such as counter-terrorism and trafficking in persons. In the area of counter-terrorism, we believe the cooperation on harmonization of criminal legislation with universal conventions and protocols against terrorism has been particularly useful. We also support the efforts of the Office of the Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings to elaborate and deliver a training course for law enforcement and migration officers from the CIS and other areas. We encourage our respective Secretariats to continue to pursue these types of joint activities in all three dimensions.

Election observation is another area in which the OSCE and CIS have been assiduously increasing collaboration. The OSCE/ODIHR standards on election methodology have been continuously refined over the years, and have served as a model for numerous other organizations, including the United Nations.

We believe cooperation between our two organizations in other areas of the third dimension could also be beneficial. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are under threat in many parts of the OSCE area, including in the CIS. In particular, threats against defenders of human rights - and the impunity of those who attack them - must be given our careful attention.

Thank you once again, Mr. Lebedev, for coming here today. We wish you every success in your work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.