



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report of Major General M. Torres, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson- in-Office for Article IV of Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Gary Robbins
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 5, 2013

The United States warmly welcomes Major General Torres to the Permanent Council, and thanks him both for his excellent stewardship over Article IV and for his detailed presentation today. We appreciate General Torres' personal commitment and dedicated engagement with the Parties.

As a proud member of the six-country Contact Group, the United States commends the Parties for their success in implementing the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control, and for committing themselves to the Ownership Process now fully underway.

Since 1996, the Article IV Agreement has contributed to improved security and genuine, positive stability for the people of the Western Balkans. It has provided a concrete foundation for the positive geo-political changes we see in the region today. The Parties themselves have taken major strides to ensure its successful implementation, and the facts speak for themselves: thanks in part to this Agreement, the Western Balkans region has undergone sweeping demilitarization, with more than 10,000 pieces of major military hardware removed.

We know that much remains to be done, and we fully affirm our support for the Parties, as well as for the Personal Representative and his staff. We fully agree with the General's view that Full Ownership by the Dayton Parties is "not a signal for the international community to disengage." On the contrary, the United States stands ready to provide appropriate assistance, and we look forward to the completion of the transfer of ownership process at the end of 2014.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.