



**United States Mission to the OSCE**

**Response to  
Ambassador Adam Kobieracki,  
Director of the Conflict Prevention Center**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 9, 2014

I warmly welcome you, Ambassador Kobieracki, back to the Permanent Council, and thank you for your report and frank assessment of the work of the Conflict Prevention Center (CPC). We appreciate that your report mirrors the current focus of our efforts on the crisis in Ukraine. We commend the CPC for its support to the Chairmanship, its Special Envoy, the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (SMM), the Vienna Document observation teams, the National Dialogue Project, and the Border Observer Mission. We also commend the CPC for spearheading the Secretariat's efforts to quickly operationalize Permanent Council decisions on the deployment of the SMM and the Border Observer Mission at the checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk.

In Ukraine, the CPC has helped set up a mission that is operating in a significantly more complex environment than previous OSCE missions. The OSCE's conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts cannot succeed when one participating State takes actions that fuel the conflict, run directly contrary to its Helsinki commitments, and violate international law. Although the OSCE was able to respond to the crisis in Ukraine and deploy monitors within 24 hours of adopting the mandate, the SMM's critical work has been hindered by: the ongoing destabilizing actions of Russia-backed separatists; lack of access to Crimea—an integral part of Ukraine; restricted access to the Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 downing site; and significant limitations on the team's freedom of movement to exercise its mandate fully. We also recall the bravery and commitment shown by the SMM and Vienna Document monitors and their Ukrainian interpreters, who endured intolerable hardships when they were, unacceptably, taken hostage.

Ambassador Kobieracki, we share your concerns that the OSCE field operations in some participating States are prevented from conducting early warning and conflict prevention and agree that this has a negative impact on the Organization's crisis response capacity. We strongly agree with your assessment that participating States should seek to include monitoring and reporting functions in the mandates of field missions, where those functions are not already reflected. Field presences must be able to work in all three dimensions with interlocutors throughout the government, at all levels, and engage independently with civil society. And, the field offices should not be hamstrung by bureaucratic and lengthy project approval processes. We remain concerned, therefore, about recurrent efforts to restrict OSCE mandates, including in Azerbaijan recently, and now in Kazakhstan.

We are seriously concerned when field missions are not allowed to conduct the activities that all participating States agreed to in issuing their mandates. This is an issue with regard to

access and patrolling by the OSCE Mission to Moldova. The Mission must have unrestricted access to all of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, to perform its mandated activities, including the conduct of observation patrols throughout Moldova and to provide unbiased reporting on the situation on the ground to the international community.

It is also critical that the OSCE be able to respond affirmatively in cases where a participating State would benefit from an OSCE presence. We continue to call on progress toward a meaningful OSCE mission in Georgia. Mongolia's open request for a field office also demonstrates the value and appeal of the OSCE. Never before has the OSCE refused a request of a participating State for an OSCE field presence; it is high time to answer Ulaanbaatar and deploy a mission to Mongolia.

Finally, a short point on gender and security: The CPC's collaboration with the Senior Gender Advisor and her team to ensure that gender issues are taken into account when crafting crisis responses is commendable. As all individuals are affected by conflict and can contribute to security and stability, the involvement of women in crisis response is imperative. It is now time to ensure that women are represented in the Organization's work to prevent and respond to conflicts, including the conflict in Ukraine.

Ambassador Kobieracki, today is your last scheduled appearance at the Permanent Council. Since your appointment in June 2011, you have effectively shaped many of the OSCE's successful responses to security challenges. I applaud you for your stewardship of the CPC and thank you and your team, as you did, for your firm commitment and tireless efforts to promote peace and security in the OSCE region.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.