

9 June 2011

Original: ENGLISH



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement in Response to H. E. Roza Otunbayeva, President of Kyrgyzstan

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 9, 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam President, the United States warmly welcomes you to the OSCE Permanent Council. Thank you for your remarks today and especially for the vision you have worked so hard to make a reality in Kyrgyzstan. As Secretary Clinton said last year, the United States has been inspired by your tremendous courage, leadership, and tenacity as the first woman to lead a Central Asian nation. And, as President Obama reaffirmed last March, we are firmly committed to supporting Kyrgyzstan's journey towards democracy, a journey for which you have done so much to chart the course.

That journey these past 18 months has been tumultuous for the people of Kyrgyzstan, but also marked by accomplishments and progress towards democracy, including the adoption of a new constitutional system, competitive and peaceful elections for parliament, the approval of a new government, and a lively debate inside new institutions. We know your government continues to work hard on strategies for stabilization and social integration. We are pleased the OSCE has played a supporting role in the development and the stabilization of Kyrgyzstan — especially during some exceptionally difficult days. And we welcome again the willingness of your government to take seriously the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry, to set up a special commission to monitor the implementation of those recommendations, and to work with the international community on addressing many of those recommendations.

There remain, of course, areas of serious concern. The need for reconciliation remains as essential as ever. Continued human rights abuses in the South must be addressed urgently. The lack of due process in many of the trials arising out of the June and April events is deeply troublesome, including in the case of Azimjan Askarov, whose situation we have raised on previous occasions.

With respect to the recommendations contained in the report of the independent, international investigation into the events of one year ago, we urge the Government of Kyrgyzstan to give them — and the recommendations of other reports as well, serious and thorough consideration. It is unfortunate that the Parliament chose to ban the Chair of the Report from returning to Kyrgyzstan.

As you know, Madam President, the OSCE Center in Bishkek has long worked to reduce corruption and promote good governance in Kyrgyzstan. We know that you have also long been a champion of rooting out corruption in your country. Police reform has been a centerpiece of the OSCE's efforts to tackle corruption and promote good governance. We have already begun to see some of the benefits of international police experts working side by

side with Kyrgyz police officials through the CSI program. We hope that the Government of Kyrgyzstan will give an early indication about its needs and intentions for the future of the CSI program and how the work of the program can be improved as it moves forward.

Important measures have been undertaken by your government, Madam President, to protect free speech and these deserve recognition, especially steps to decriminalize defamation and to reform the Public Service Broadcaster; however, we are alarmed by recent cases of violence against journalists and urge the government to use its full authority to investigate and bring wrongdoers to justice.

Finally, as Kyrgyzstan moves toward elections later this year, we recall the impressive turnout of your citizens during the referendum and election which resulted in a new constitution and a new parliamentary system of government. ODIHR gave high marks to the conduct of the voting calling it “a further consolidation of the democratic process.” But as ODIHR also noted, there remains an urgent need for additional electoral reforms. We urge your government to take the steps necessary to work with ODIHR and to implement these measures as rapidly as possible.

Thank you again, Madam President and please be assured of our continued support for you and for all the people of Kyrgyzstan.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.