

**United States Mission to the OSCE****On the Postponement of Elections in  
Macedonia**

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Kate Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
May 26, 2016

The decision by Macedonia's Parliament to postpone the June 5 elections presents a renewed opportunity for the Parliament and the political leaders to demonstrate through their actions a firm commitment to the Przino Agreement and its principles – rule of law, accountability, inclusiveness, and credible elections. This framework remains the best way to move the country out of the current crisis.

President Ivanov should rescinding the April 12 pardons with urgency, and in a way that preserves the principle of accountability, avoids selective justice, and counteracts serious concerns about impunity. It is a fundamental democratic principle that all citizens should be equal before the law. Parties should unequivocally support the Special Prosecutor's Office. This office's unhindered operations are crucial to ensuring accountability for possible wrongdoing related to the wiretaps, and for moving Macedonia beyond the current crisis.

Difficult reforms lie ahead. The reform process must be inclusive and incorporate the perspectives of opposition parties and civil society. Such inclusiveness is critical to introducing and establishing the checks and balances that are crucial to democracy. The United States will not endorse approaches that do not respect these principles.

As a friend of Macedonia, the United States strongly urges the government and political parties to implement these reforms and ensure Macedonia remains on a path toward credible elections and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Thank you, Madam Chair.