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## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to the OSCE Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Kate M. Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 16, 2017

The United States welcomes Dr. Yigitgüden back to the Permanent Council for his final report as Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities.

Dr. Yigitgüden, when you assumed the role of Coordinator four years ago, you outlined an ambitious plan to increase the visibility and relevance of the OSCE's work on economic and environmental issues. Coming on the heels of the 2012 Dublin Ministerial, which resulted in a Declaration on Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money Laundering, and the Financing of Terrorism, your efforts brought much-needed focus on this crucial area of work and resulted in a number of important projects. Promoting good governance and preventing, combating, and prosecuting corruption is vital to participating States, and we appreciate your leadership and sustained emphasis in this area.

Under Dr. Yigitgüden's leadership, the Office of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities increased interaction with OSCE field missions, civil society, academia, and the business community. The United States wholeheartedly supports this approach, which enables the voices of all stakeholders to be heard, particularly those at the grassroots level who are working hard to bring positive change. Economic and environmental issues can have profound effects on citizens; ensuring their involvement in policies and decision-making results in better outcomes and increases our collective security. For this reason, we also applaud your efforts to closely align the OSCE's environmental work with the 60 Aarhus Centers throughout the OSCE region. We encourage the Office of the Coordinator to continue to expand its outreach to these and other relevant groups, including other international organizations.

During the past four years, Dr. Yigitgüden has worked to ensure activities undertaken in the Second Dimension have assisted participating States with the implementation of their OSCE commitments, thereby advancing the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security in the political military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions. The United States appreciates Dr. Yigitgüden's efforts, and looks forward to working closely with the incoming Coordinator, Ambassador Žugić, to ensure this continues.

Dr. Yigitgüden, thank you again for the tremendous efforts of you and your team. As you depart the OSCE to begin the next chapter of your life, we wish you every success.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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