



**United States Mission to the OSCE**

**Response to Report  
by Dr. Halil Yurdakul Yigitgüden,  
Coordinator of OSCE Economic and  
Environmental Activities**

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Gary Robbins  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 6, 2014

The United States welcomes Dr. Yigitgüden to the Permanent Council as he presents his latest report as OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities. We appreciate the activity in which he and his staff have been engaged since his last report, and look forward to a continuation of this great work.

The United States firmly believes that the OSCE can and should do more in the Second Dimension. The Ministerial Declaration on Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism charts an approach to an urgent challenge for our time. Its principles and commitments should be at the core of all the work we do in the OSCE's Second Dimension. Dr. Yigitgüden, you and your staff have taken on this declaration as a guiding document for your activities, and we offer our continued support for that focus. We again wish to highlight specifically the work done by your staff and field mission personnel on anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, asset recovery, and transparency. Allow me to reiterate—corruption stands as one of the most dangerous threats to our collective security, and the fight against it is one of our most important challenges here at the OSCE. We should all do more to support the Coordinator, his staff, and the field missions in these efforts.

The Helsinki Final Act saw the economic and environmental aspects of comprehensive security as virtually inseparable, and the fight against corruption in many ways reflects this fact. We speak often of the economic damage done by corruption, but there is a clear environmental risk as well. Corrupt businesses often do not feel bound by environmental standards and legislation, and pay little attention to the environmental impact of their business operations. Similarly, corrupt government officials usually seek short-term payoffs, at the expense of healthy ecosystems and the responsible management of their country's natural resources. The Helsinki Final Act recognized this broader connection, and we should take care to avoid creating an artificial dividing line between economic issues and environmental issues. We encourage Dr. Yigitgüden and his staff to resist this tendency, to approach issues from both points of view, and to avoid compartmentalizing the economic and environmental sides of challenges.

We look forward to the Coordinator's work on the two recent decisions from last year's Ministerial Council, on the environmental footprint of energy and on protecting critical energy infrastructure. There are many opportunities for us all to proceed with the implementation of these two decisions, and we anticipate more detail from your office on where we might go from here.

Lastly we greatly appreciate the work you and your office are doing to apply the OSCE's Second Dimension skills and resources to the ongoing challenges in Ukraine. We stand ready to assist you in that effort as the government and people of Ukraine strive to reinforce principles of transparency, good governance, and the sound use of economic and environmental resources.

Dr. Yigitgüden, you have our full support for your work, and we thank you for this report.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.