



United States Mission to the OSCE

Reply on ODIHR Election Observation in Canada

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 22, 2015

I'd like to also respond to the statement made by the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation, who has now left the room.

We should engage on the subject matter of this statement, and obviously the Russian Federation has offered some of these arguments before, and they have been debated-- and in my view been refuted -- several times before. But just to reiterate something that our distinguished Norwegian colleague has said, ODIHR has much more limited resources than it should have-- partly because several participating States routinely deprive ODIHR of the enhancements to its resources that it needs to have in order to fully fulfill its mandate. And therefore it has to prioritize.

And as our distinguished Norwegian colleague has also said, while we all have opportunities for improvement, in some places the need for the credibility and confidence that an OSCE ODIHR and Parliamentary Assembly election observation mission can bring is greater.

ODIHR has a tried and tested method that has earned it the reputation-- that is admired by other regional organizations and civil society actors, and by other governments the world over-- for being the kind of organization that can deliver the kind of high quality election observation that gives confidence to people on the ground in the quality of their electoral process. And that is a service that it does for governments that are in good faith working to ensure a high quality democratic process.

We continue to support ODIHR, its independence and its tried and tested methodology.

Thank you, Madam Chair.