



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

### **Parliamentary Elections in Turkey**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
November 5, 2015

The United States congratulates the people of Turkey on their participation in Sunday's parliamentary elections.

The United States notes the OSCE preliminary assessment said that parliamentary elections offered voters a variety of choices, were well-organized by the election administration, and noted that candidate registration was overall inclusive. The assessment, however, also raised concerns, including "the challenging security environment, in particular in the southeast, coupled with a high number of violent incidents, including attacks against party members and campaign staff, as well as on party premises, hindered contestants' ability to campaign freely." The OSCE preliminary assessment also said that "media freedom remains an area of serious concern, and the number of criminal investigations of journalists and the closure of some media outlets reduced voters' access to a plurality of views and information."

The United States has raised similar concerns over the past weeks, including that media outlets and individual journalists critical of the government were subject to pressure and intimidation during the campaign, seemingly in a manner calculated to weaken political opposition.

We urge Turkish authorities to ensure their actions uphold universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the democratic values enshrined in Turkey's constitution.

The United States looks forward to working with the newly-elected parliament and with the future government. We are committed to continuing our close cooperation with Turkey to advance our shared political, security, and prosperity agendas.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.