



United States Mission to the OSCE

Pride Parade in Belgrade, Serbia

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 9, 2014

The United States commends the Serbian Government for supporting a safe and successful Belgrade Pride Parade on September 28. Media reported that between 1,000 to 1,500 people participated in the event. We welcome the participation of a number of Serbian officials, including the Mayor of Belgrade, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for European Integration, the Minister of Culture and Information, and several Members of Parliament. The voices of LGBT activists, allies, politicians, and others were heard loud and clear: LGBT rights are human rights, and threats of violence should never be allowed to silence the exercise of human rights.

One of the fundamental commitments of OSCE participating States is to guarantee that all their citizens are able to exercise the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, and freedom of expression. The successful Belgrade Pride Parade underscored the Serbian Government's clear support of these rights – a commitment that we hope will be a hallmark of Serbia's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2015.

On September 27, another Pride Parade took place in Kosice, Slovakia. This was an additional welcome and encouraging step in support of human rights and of fundamental freedoms for all across the OSCE.

Thank you, Madam Chair.