



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report on Strengthening OSCE'S Effectiveness

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 24, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for your report on the progress made to date in implementing Ministerial Council Decisions 18 and 19 from the Brussels Ministerial. We remember these documents well, as they were the result of compromises made on all sides in order to fulfill the Ljubljana Ministerial's mandate for reform. We supported then, and we support today the measures described in these decisions, and are pleased to learn of the progress made to date to implement them.

The 2008 Program Outline document was circulated earlier this week. It is a clear, well-organized, and concise document outlining the multi-year objectives and interim outcomes the OSCE hopes to pursue in the coming year. The 2008 version is a vast improvement over the documents of previous years. The Secretariat, institutions and field missions are to be commended for taking the Ministerial Council's mandate seriously and producing such a helpful document. The thematic overview is particularly useful. We look forward to a lively debate over the coming weeks on the policy priorities described in the Program Outline.

The United States welcomes the Secretary General's increased role at these Permanent Council sessions, in particular his regular reports concerning recruitment issues within the organization. My country continues to second far more people to this organization than any other state, and we urge other participating States to help fill the chronic gaps identified by the Secretary General.

Part of the cause for the recruitment problems that the organization faces is the need for a comprehensive review of the Secretariat's post table, in accordance with MC Decision 18/06. We welcome the Secretary General's efforts in this regard, but urge him to accelerate the process. In our view it is unclear why the review must take another 18 months. We would suggest that the 2008 Unified Budget proposal should include the results of this review, which should lead to a streamlined—and by that I mean smaller—Secretariat better able to respond to current and future needs of the organization. This review should also resolve, once and for all, the augmentation problem that makes a mockery of our efforts to produce more transparent budget documents.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the US wants to express my country's disappointment at the lack of progress on one item included in MC Decision 19/06. There has been no appreciable progress on completion of the financial regulations for the organization. We urge our colleagues and

partners to engage in a serious debate that can resolve the few outstanding issues and put this organization on a more solid financial foundation. As responsible managers, we have no other choice but to give this organization sound financial regulations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.