



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### Response to Slovenian FM Rupel, OSCE Chairman in Office

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
January 13, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is my honor, on behalf of the United States, to welcome you, Mr. Minister, to this Council for the first time as our Chairman-in-Office. We look forward this year to building on our collective successes in 2004 under the Bulgarian Chairmanship and I pledge to you U.S. support and readiness to work through this organization for the full implementation of all of our commitments.

I would also like to welcome a friend and colleague, the United States Ambassador to Poland, who is here today on this important first day of your chairmanship and he is sitting right behind me, Ambassador Ashe.

The United States strongly supports the priorities that you have outlined and it is particularly important to keep in mind that the commitments underlying those priorities stem from norms, principles and values that every participating State undertook at the highest levels to uphold. Respect for those commitments remains as valid today as 30 years ago, since lasting security and stability cannot be achieved without respect for human rights and continued support for democratic transformation.

One of the pillars of President Bush's foreign policy is that there is a single, sustainable model for national success and it consists of freedom, democracy and a free enterprise. Only nations that share a commitment to protecting basic human rights and guaranteeing political and economic freedom will be able to unleash the potential of their people and to assure their future prosperity.

That model enables people to attain their aspirations which are universal and which are to speak freely, to choose who will govern them, to choose whom to worship and to do so as they please; to educate their children, yes, and girls also, to own property, and to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

We look forward to working closely with you and others on the spectrum of specific issues that are before us. Let me now turn to the priorities that you have mentioned.

Concerning revision of the scales of assessment, agreement should be reached on the basis of the four criteria which we agreed to in the 2001 and in the 2002 scales decisions. As to the 2005 budget, a constructive and a serious approach by all delegations is needed.

We share the desire of all participating States to strengthen the OSCE, and its work in all of its dimensions. At Sofia we supported the establishment of a panel of Eminent Persons to review the OSCE and its functions. We look forward to receiving the panel's recommendations in June and we also hope to be able to continue work with other participating States to expand the OSCE's political-military, counter-terrorism, and economic activities.

However, a priority must be resolving the organization's funding issues so that the vital work of the OSCE can continue. While we support efforts to expand the OSCE's focus, we cannot allow the organization's new areas of activity to come at the expense of the valuable work already being done in more established areas. We are open to increasing the OSCE's activities to promote security and economic development, but not if it is at the expense of the OSCE's core democracy and human rights work. This is not a zero-sum game. The time that the Bulgarian Chairmanship invested building a consensus among 54 on funding issues provides a solid base for agreement and for moving forward. Many delegations worked very hard and made difficult compromises to get to where we are. We hope these agreements will be accepted soon.

We must get off to a good start in our efforts to combat all forms of intolerance. Further OSCE efforts in this area, including the follow-up conference on anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance in Cordoba in 2005, must build on 2004's landmark results. We thank the Spanish government for its generous offer to host the Cordoba conference.

Adoption at Sofia of steps to enhance shipping container security, and improved travel document security and control over transfers of MANPADS, small arms and light weapons further demonstrated the very practical role that OSCE can play in promoting our common security. We must carry through on the commitment in the Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century to better coordinate our responses to all security challenges, and to follow through on the steps we agreed to in the economic strategy for good governance and capacity building.

We need to work on a border management concept and to implement the programs for outreach to our partners that our ministers welcomed at Sofia. And, the OSCE should continue to share its rich experience in promoting stability and democratization with Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine by finding concrete ways to help with elections in those places.

We must not forget our duty to focus on conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. While we are pleased to hear that your Chairmanship has Kosovo as a top priority, we urge you to work equally energetically for resolution of the conflicts in Moldova, Georgia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. We urge all parties to work through multilateral processes for successful resolution. We urge Ukraine, Moldova, and other participating States to support establishing a program for international monitoring of the Transnistrian segment of the Ukraine-Moldova border.

At Sofia, Secretary Powell expressed regret that, five years after the Istanbul Summit Commitment in 1999, we could not yet welcome fulfillment of remaining Istanbul commitments on withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova and the duration of the Russian presence in Georgia. We will continue to support efforts to fulfill the Istanbul commitments through the OSCE Voluntary Funds for Moldova and Georgia. We call upon the parties most

directly concerned, and upon the Chairmanship, to make completion of these highest-level commitments a priority for 2005.

Field presences have been one of the OSCE's greatest assets and the source of some of its greatest successes, and strengthening them is essential to the organization's continued high value. They continue to do much of the real core work of the OSCE. Yet field missions need strong CiO leadership, support from participating States and especially from host states, as well as adequate resources. We look forward to increasing the effectiveness of this tool in helping states meet their OSCE commitments. We also hope that the Russian Federation will join all other participating States in supporting the renewal of the mandate for the Georgia Border Monitoring Operation, a mission whose extension the host government so strongly supports.

Elections that meet OSCE standards remain a key not just to democratization, but also to continued stability and peace in the OSCE region. We call on participating States to strengthen implementation of OSCE election standards.

Some events and processes are already on track. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss migration at this year's Economic Forum. We believe the Third Annual Security Review Conference will be as important as its predecessors. We must continue to follow through on political-military measures, including excess ammunition stockpiles. We must further help participating States fight trafficking in human beings and improve policing methods.

The OSCE is a world leader in promoting democratic development and respect for human rights. On economic development, the OSCE promotes good governance and helps countries fight corruption. On political-military issues such as the fight against terrorism, border security, and small arms and light weapons, the OSCE fills a crucial niche. Mr. Chairman, we look forward to your getting the word out on OSCE's valuable work.

From its birth in Helsinki in 1975 – a short period in the history of time, a meaningful period in the history of nations - OSCE has been distinguished by its absolute unwillingness to recognize dividing lines, or spheres of influence. Despite what some people say, there are no new dividing lines. As long as we retain our commitment to those values of democracy, of human rights, of the rule of law, free markets and cooperation on security matters, the OSCE will remain a vibrant and not only a relevant, but an important organization – the conscience of the OSCE region and an essential source of security for all participating States.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, we wish you and your team the best for the year ahead, and look forward to your renewal of the dedication to this organization and to your leadership.

Thank you.