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**United States Mission to the OSCE**



**On U.S. Membership in  
the UN Alliance of Civilizations**

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
May 20, 2010

Recognizing the value of the Alliance of Civilizations as an important initiative seeking to improve understanding between cultures and peoples, the United States has joined the 119 member countries and international organizations in the Alliance's Group of Friends.

The Alliance of Civilizations, a joint Spanish-Turkish initiative under the auspices of the United Nations, was created in 2005. It has as its goal improved understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples, and across the world's many cultures, to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

The goals and activities of the Alliance complement President Obama's vision of active U.S. engagement with other nations and international organizations to advance American security interests and meet the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The United States looks forward to working with other friends of this voluntary initiative to further strengthen the innovative, inclusive and apolitical approach it has come to represent.

On May 28 and 29, the government of Brazil will host the next Alliance of Civilizations' Forum in Rio de Janeiro. The United States will attend this Forum as our first event as Group of Friends members.