



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

### **On the 2019 Unified Budget Proposal**

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires Gregory Macris  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 3, 2018

The United States welcomes the 2019 Unified Budget Proposal and, as always, thanks the Secretary General and the fund managers for their hard work.

The OSCE is an important and relevant institution for European and Eurasian security, and the United States will work to ensure that the Organization receives the resources it needs to operate effectively. In that context, we understand the challenges facing the OSCE in controlling costs while responding to growing demands from the 57 participating States as well as its commitments to its own staff. This task is difficult – budgeting inevitably requires detailed planning and tough decisions. The United States will engage with the Secretariat and the other participating States on this proposal in an effort to achieve a satisfactory outcome for all concerned.

In particular, the United States supports the efforts of the OSCE’s independent Institutions – the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media – and will seek to ensure that resources for these Institutions are a priority as we weigh the full array of funding needs within the Unified Budget Proposal. Moreover, we urge participating States to refrain from politicizing the budgets for these Institutions.

The United States is committed to ensuring the effectiveness of the OSCE’s field operations and calls on participating States to maintain robust support for the Organization’s field presences. We also support the proposal to enhance the OSCE’s efforts in Central Asia in all three dimensions of security. It may be worth exploring a partial realignment of resources among the different regions to strengthen this effort. In this regard, even as the OSCE proposes focusing additional attention on Central Asia, we note – for a second year running – the omission of funding resources for the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe from this year’s Unified Budget Proposal and will work with fellow participating States to find a way to provide this important effort with a reliable and predictable flow of resources.

Finally, we applaud the efforts to identify cost-containment measures and to offset budget increases with greater efficiencies. As the Secretary General has noted in the Unified Budget Proposal, still more can be done in this regard. But we do not underestimate or fail to appreciate the hard choices and sincere efforts that have been made to date. The United States believes that the fiscal goal of the OSCE should be zero nominal growth. Achieving this goal will demand additional focus and discipline not just within the Secretariat and executive structures of the OSCE but among the participating States ourselves. We also

believe a reform of the budget process is worth further exploration, with the goal of transitioning to a two-year budget cycle.

The United States will work closely with the Slovak Chair of the Advisory Committee for Management and Finance in the upcoming discussions on the budget. We will work toward consensus on a timely budget that ensures the Organization has what it needs to carry out its mandate as determined by the participating States throughout the entire OSCE region.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.