



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Appointment of a New ODIHR Director

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Gary Robbins
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 8, 2014

When, on March 13, the United States expressed its appreciation to Director Lenarcic, on the occasion of his last presentation to the Permanent Council, we said that the critical attribute of a future Director of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was the fortitude to impartially apply facts to our commitments, in line with the mandate. ODIHR has continued to thrive under Director Lenarcic because of his integrity, his leadership, and his belief in and faithful execution of ODIHR's mandate. As we again offer our thanks to Director Lenarcic today, we move forward with our fellow participating States in welcoming the selection of his successor, Michael Link.

ODIHR's mandate is to assist OSCE participating States to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law; promote principles of democracy; build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions; and promote tolerance throughout their societies. The work ODIHR does – whether it is election observation, the training of police on the investigation of hate crimes, the development of guidelines for the protection of human rights defenders, or the myriad other important projects ODIHR undertakes – contributes to the security of all 57 participating States precisely because ODIHR focuses on the dignity and rights of human beings, not governments.

Today, as we look ahead to the leadership of the next Director of ODIHR, we welcome Director-Elect Link's expressed commitment to work tirelessly in execution of ODIHR's mandate and for comprehensive security across the OSCE space.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.