



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report by the OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Affairs, Mr. H. Yurdakul Yigitguden

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 7, 2013

The United States welcomes Mr. Yigitguden to the Permanent Council as he presents his first report as OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA). We appreciate the wealth of experience in economic and environmental issues that he brings, and look forward to his leadership on a number of activities.

Mr. Yigitguden has outlined an ambitious work plan for the OSCE in the Second Dimension in 2013, and we welcome the opportunities that it will provide to increase the visibility and relevance of the OSCE's work in economic and environmental issues. The Ministerial Declaration on Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism was a significant achievement for the OSCE this past year. We applaud plans to focus now on implementing this declaration, in particular as it relates to anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, asset recovery, and transparency. The busy schedule of workshops, seminars, publications, and joint work with such organizations as UNODC, EBRD, and the OECD is just what we hoped to promote with last year's declaration.

The Coordinator's plan for 2013 also anticipates increased interaction between the OCEEA and the OSCE's field missions, something that we support wholeheartedly. The field missions are, in fact, where this declaration can truly come to life, and we encourage the Economic and Environmental Officers at the field missions to support participating States in their efforts to implement the commitments we have all made in this most recent declaration, and the other declarations and decisions involving the Second Dimension.

We particularly appreciate the Coordinator's plans to work on further implementation of the Ministerial Council Decision on Strengthening OSCE Engagement with Afghanistan. As we approach the drawdown of ISAF forces in 2014, the OSCE has an important role to play in preparing Central Asia and the larger OSCE area for the opportunities and challenges that drawdown will bring. The Second Dimension will be at the center of those opportunities and challenges, and we must begin now to work towards an Afghanistan that is directly tied into the economies of Central Asia and Europe.

The Coordinator has recommended that civil society actors can and should be involved in discussions with governments on fighting corruption. We agree with this recommendation, and suggest it can apply not only to combating corruption, but across all of the topics covered by the Second Dimension. Economic and environmental issues often affect citizens the most broadly, and ensuring that those citizens are involved in policies and decision-making contributes directly to their underlying sense of security.

The United States is committed to ensuring that the Second Dimension takes its rightful place in the OSCE alongside the Politico-Military and Human Dimensions. To this end, we urge other participating States to provide high-level participation at this year's Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) meetings in Kyiv and Prague, and also the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting here in Vienna. The Ukrainian Chair-in-Office's theme for the year in the Second Dimension has great potential, as evidenced by the many productive presentations and discussions at the February meeting of the EEF here in Vienna. These and other discussions which take place in the Second Dimension should garner greater attention from all of our capitals. We look forward to working with all of you, and with the Coordinator, to make it so.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.