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United States Mission to the OSCE

Reply to Russia on the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Kate M. Byrnes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 27, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Russian Federation referred to the Office of the High Representative (OHR) as an obsolete international guardian that should be dismantled.

Briefly, the United States looks forward to the day when the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is such that the Office of the High Representative can close its doors. For over nine years, we have been clear on what needs to happen to make that possible. Until these criteria are met and the country has made significant progress toward EU membership, there is an important role for OHR to play in monitoring implementation of the Peace Agreement. We urge leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to focus on making the decisions and creating an environment that will permit closure of OHR.

The international community continues to foster Bosnia and Herzegovina's development into a modern, democratic, and prosperous state. Responsibilities remain for the United States and our partners in the international community, and we will continue to follow through on those responsibilities while encouraging Bosnia and Herzegovina's leaders and institutions to take ownership of the country's future.

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