



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report by the Head of OSCE Programme Office in Astana

As delivered by Ambassador Michael Carpenter
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 22, 2023

Dr. Frobarth, welcome back to the Permanent Council and thank you for your detailed report on the OSCE Program Office's work. We greatly value your cooperation with the Government of Kazakhstan as well as the office's outreach to civil society, the private sector, and academia.

We very much support the work you're doing to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Kazakhstan remains a valuable partner in the field of counterterrorism, and your Office's assistance to the host government in advancing regional cooperation in this area is critical.

We also commend your Office's efforts to strengthen the rule of law and support justice reform in Kazakhstan through partnerships with Kazakhstan's Ministry of Justice, training seminars on best practices for defense lawyers, and a conference on accountability and transparency in court rulings. We also support your work on penal reform, better treatment of prisoners, and improving conditions in detention centers.

Your Office has done a lot to advance gender equality, counter gender-based violence, including sexual violence, and advance the role of women in law enforcement and counterterrorism efforts. We commend your efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, which include strengthening anti-trafficking efforts that are victim-centered and trauma-informed and specialized trainings for judges and prosecutors. And your long-standing support to Kazakhstan to implement its pledge to increase representation of persons with disabilities and efforts to raise awareness of women's rights, support gender equality, and prevent harassment of women in public spaces and at the workplace is especially laudable.

Promoting freedom of expression is another important focus area. We recognize your significant contributions to this in Kazakhstan through webinars, conferences, and trainings, and your close cooperation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine, which not coincidentally has been accompanied by brutal repression of independent journalists within Russia, demonstrates the importance of media freedom both online and offline.

Finally, and particularly in light of the July 7 High-Level Conference on Climate Change convened by the Secretary General, we encourage your team to continue its close partnership with OCEEA and the host government to assist in addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Dr. Frobarth, thank you and your team for your consistent work to support the government of Kazakhstan in implementing its OSCE commitments.

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