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United States Mission to the OSCE

Farewell Message to Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 23, 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States wishes to express its deep gratitude to Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut for his dedicated service as the OSCE's Secretary-General.

Marc, in your six years here, you have witnessed -- and helped drive -- momentous changes within the organization and among the participating States. Since taking up your duties six years ago, we have seen the OSCE expand its expertise in activities in the fields of transnational threats -- counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, border security, non-proliferation, and combating trafficking in human beings -- and we have seen increased cooperation for and with Afghanistan. The OSCE has stepped up its defense of fundamental freedoms and human rights in such diverse areas as media freedom and providing for transparent elections. Moreover, the OSCE has broadened its focus on those issues that cut across the three dimensions, such as the role of transparency in political-military affairs, the economy and the environment, and civil society's engagement with governments. The Corfu Process and the Astana Commemorative Declaration, the first high-level declaration in nearly ten years, have given a new impetus for cooperation in our discussions.

At the same time, challenges remain. The protracted conflicts are still a long way from resolution. We have only begun our work to update military transparency measures. Fundamental freedoms remain under siege in many parts of the OSCE. Clearly there is more work that has to be done.

Marc, through all these achievements and challenges, you have provided critical continuity across seven OSCE chairmanships. You have given the OSCE a voice, articulating a vision of what could be as we look ahead to the Vilnius Ministerial and to future chairmanships. You have been a steadfast presence, and for me a source of wise guidance during my first months here, as we think about the best ways to advance the goal of full and faithful implementation of all the OSCE commitments.

On behalf of the United States I would like to thank you, Marc, for your hard work these past six years. And of course, we all, the U.S. Mission, wish you all the best for the future, and of course we look forward to a smooth transition as you pass the torch to your successor.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.