



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Head of Center in Bishkek Amb. Andrew Tesoriere

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 7, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Ambassador Tesoriere, welcome back to the Permanent Council and thank you for your comprehensive report on the situation in Kyrgyzstan and the work of the Center over the past seven months. In our opinion, the Center in Bishkek continues to serve as a model to other field missions for its excellent programmatic activities in all of Kyrgyzstan's provinces and its strong working relationship with the host country.

The United States fully supports the work of the Center, the strategic framework that you, Mr. Ambassador, have crafted and that the Center is implementing in Kyrgyzstan today. This framework encompasses clearly the comprehensive nature of security that the OSCE seeks to address, while also being tailored to the specific concerns of the host country. We continue to be impressed with the innovative approach of using local provincial coordinators to ensure that the Center's work can reach even the most remote provinces.

Ambassador Tesoriere, we are pleased with the exemplary work of the Center across the three dimensions. We would like to commend the Center in particular for its programmatic activities in good governance and anti-corruption, human rights promotion, legislative assistance, combating terrorism, conflict prevention, and judicial, penitentiary and police reform. The OSCE Academy and the soon-to-be opened Customs Academy also deserve distinct recognition.

None of these programs can be successful without the strong support of the Government of Kyrgyzstan and its commitment to be an active stakeholder in OSCE programs. We urge the OSCE Center and the Government of Kyrgyzstan to cooperate closely to keep Kyrgyzstan on the path to democracy, improve protection for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and further develop civil society.

We are pleased that the Center is taking a strong role in helping the Government prepare for the July 23rd presidential election. We were concerned that in the October local elections, the Central Election Commission did not accredit international observers, including the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute. We would ask Kyrgyzstan to live up to its OSCE commitments and to invite international observers, including the ODIHR,

to observe the presidential election. We strongly urge Kyrgyzstan to implement the recommendations of ODIHR's final report on the 2007 Parliamentary elections.

We urge the Center also to remain engaged as a resource for the Government in making its media laws and regulations more conducive to the development of free and pluralistic media, and we encourage the Government to take into account the advice of the Center and the Representative on Freedom of Media in this process. At the same time, we hope the Center will be a tireless advocate for strong and effective action to protect journalists from violence and for bringing to justice those who intimidate, assault or murder media workers.

The United States thanks you again, Ambassador Tesoriere, and your very capable staff for the important work you are doing.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.