



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Death of Foreign Service Officer Anne Smedinghoff in an Attack in Afghanistan

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
11 April 2013

Our State Department family is grieving over the loss of one of our own, an exceptional young Foreign Service officer, Anne Smedinghoff, killed April 6 in an attack in Zabul province, along with American service members, a Department of Defense civilian, and Afghan civilians. Four other State Department colleagues suffered injuries, one critical. We also honor the U.S. troops and Department of Defense civilian who lost their lives, and again the Afghan civilians who were killed as they worked to improve the nation they love.

Our American officials and their Afghan colleagues were on their way to donate books to students in a school in Qalat, the province's capital, when they were struck by this despicable attack.

Secretary of State John Kerry met Anne Smedinghoff in Kabul the week before she was killed. He called her "everything a Foreign Service officer should be: smart, capable, eager to serve, and deeply committed to our country and the difference she was making for the Afghan people." Secretary Kerry added that Anne "tragically gave her young life working to give young Afghans the opportunity to have a better future."

We recognize the sacrifices that many of the countries sitting around this table have made in Afghanistan, and especially those made by the people of Afghanistan themselves, in working to defeat those who prefer death and destruction to the values and principles that we all pursue here each day.

In the memory of my fallen colleague, I ask that we all rededicate ourselves to efforts toward our comprehensive approach to security. I ask that we all not only hope for, but work for, a world where the lives of people like Anne and our dedicated coalition and Afghan colleagues, and all the people of Afghanistan are not cut short by such terrible acts of violence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.