



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Ambassador Jarbussynova, OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine

As delivered by Chargè d'Affaires Gary Robbins
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 6, 2013

The United States welcomes to the Permanent Council the Project Coordinator in Ukraine, Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova. Ambassador, we thank you for your presentation and your ongoing efforts.

The Project Office in Ukraine has undertaken a broad range of useful projects that provide real value to the government and people of Ukraine. Your plan to implement 26 projects in 2013 is impressive. The United States would like to see the Project Office even more substantially engaged, particularly in the areas of democratization and rule of law. We encourage the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to approve projects promptly so that you can have the fullest opportunity to implement them in a timely manner and to assist the Chairmanship in leading by example in its implementation of commitments.

Allow me to take a moment to acknowledge a recent example of our Chairmanship leading by example. On May 25, Kyiv Pride held Ukraine's first Equality March. We understand that Ministry of the Interior authorities reached out to Kyiv Pride organizers to coordinate on security issues. The Interior Ministry ringed the perimeter of the march site with approximately 1,000 riot police and used lines of buses to create a cordon. The riot police behaved professionally and allowed the march to occur peacefully, keeping 300-400 counter-demonstrators several hundred meters away from the march site. When the march ended, the police assisted the departure of 150 marchers and avoided violent confrontations with counter-demonstrators. The United States commends the Government of Ukraine for protecting the rights of free speech and assembly both for LGBT community members and for those who opposed the march. Participating States that claim that their cultural legacy prevents them from allowing LGBT marches to occur can learn much from Ukraine's positive example.

Ambassador, the United States commends your work training Ukraine's Central Election Commission. We congratulate the Project Office on the rollout last month of presentations on the On-Line Training and Recruitment Toolkit for the Central Election Commission that are scheduled to occur over the next two months in 26 events across Ukraine.

Your work with the Interior Ministry and the Prosecutor General's Office to train those who prosecute human trafficking offences and to improve the protection of victims' rights in Ukraine is also commendable. The momentum generated by the Chairmanship's Conference on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings should enable the Project Office to carry out additional work to combat human trafficking in coordination with the Government of Ukraine.

We expect significant attendance at this year's civil society parallel conference to be held during the Kyiv Ministerial. We appreciate the work your office has done to promote the development of civil society in Ukraine, particularly your office's assistance in explaining the new procedures for registering civil society organizations.

We commend the Office's continued efforts in the political-military area, including Ukraine's historic decision to eliminate its nuclear weapons and its outstanding efforts in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament over the past 20 years. In this regard, we strongly support Ukrainian efforts to rehabilitate areas contaminated by explosive remnants of war. We maintain our strong support for the mélange project, an exemplary non-proliferation program that illustrates how the international community and Ukraine work together towards mutual non-proliferation goals. Over the last two years, the United States has provided millions of dollars to remove thousands of tons of toxic mélange from Ukraine. We applaud the assistance provided by the OSCE to strengthen Ukraine's border security system to help ensure that Ukraine can protect against the proliferation of materiel and know-how that could support a program of proliferation concern. We also want to acknowledge your Office's work to train the investigators of cybercrimes.

The United States applauds the work of the Project Office in Ukraine across all three dimensions and looks forward to hearing reports of additional success in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.