



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Response to the Report of the Head of OSCE Center in Ashgabat, Ambassador John MacGregor**

As delivered by Political Counselor Elisabeth Rosenstock-Siller  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
June 2, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ambassador MacGregor, welcome back to the Permanent Council and thank you for your informative reports. The United States values the OSCE Center in Ashgabat's work in all three dimensions of security. We commend the Center and the host country's collaboration on national reforms including anti-corruption, good governance, and media development.

The United States supports the Center's efforts on media legislation modernization and media freedom in Turkmenistan. Freedom of expression and journalistic independence have long been U.S. priorities in the OSCE region, including in Turkmenistan. We welcome efforts to discuss practical steps to implement the *National Human Rights Action Plan 2021-2025* and its provisions related to media freedom.

We also underscore the importance of the Center's work in partnership with the Office of the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings.

We appreciate the Center's work to promote respect for international human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. However, we cannot ignore the severe restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms in Turkmenistan. We continue to urge Turkmenistan to fulfill its OSCE commitments.

We remain concerned for the victims of enforced disappearances and call on the government of Turkmenistan to provide specific information about each of the individuals whose whereabouts are unaccounted for after they have entered the prison system. We urge the government of Turkmenistan to end its criminalization of non-violent political speech and to release all political prisoners.

The United States commends the efforts of the Center to promote anti-corruption and good governance. We support the Center's work to align Turkmenistan's anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism with the Financial Action Task Force standards. We note the Center's cooperation with the host country on anti-corruption practices.

Reported restrictions on women raise serious concerns about respect for the human rights of women and gender equality in Turkmenistan, making the Center's work to promote gender equality in Turkmenistan all the more important and necessary. We applaud the six roundtables held on national and international gender-related commitments and the *National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Turkmenistan* for 2021-2025. We support the work to address domestic violence in the country through events for students and training courses for law enforcement personnel.

Ambassador MacGregor, thank you and your staff for your efforts to support the government of Turkmenistan in implementing its OSCE commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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