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## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to Ambassador Robert Bosch, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
September 9, 2010

Ambassador Bosch, we warmly welcome you to the Permanent Council and thank you for your thorough report.

Several positive developments have occurred since your last report, notably in efforts to protect individuals from discrimination, fight human trafficking, reduce corruption and organized crime, and improve environmental governance. Albania deserves recognition for these accomplishments.

You give due attention to both the progress Albania has made in implementing important reforms and to the challenges remaining in certain key areas. One of these is electoral reform, particularly in light of the upcoming local elections. We continue to believe that the recommendations contained in the most recent OSCE/ODIHR report provide useful guidelines for further improving Albania's electoral system.

The United States highly values the Presence's work in this and other areas, particularly in efforts to bolster the independence and transparency of judicial institutions, build the capacity of the Assembly, promote gender equality, and strengthen efforts to combat corruption. We also value the Presence's continued support to the police and to the demilitarization process. There is much the Presence can still do to help build on and consolidate progress in these areas and to promote further improvements in others, such as protecting the rights of minorities and strengthening transparency in media ownership and financing.

You and your team have done effective and important work, Ambassador Bosch, and we appreciate your efforts over the past years to prioritize activities and streamline operations to make the most of limited resources. Your reduction in the number of projects shows your intent to continue this process, and we commend your ongoing focus on outcome-oriented activities.

We also commend your close attention to coordinating the Presence's work with the Government of Albania and with other local and international actors, particularly the EU. We note the positive relationship between the Presence and the government.

We sincerely thank you for your work as head of presence, Ambassador Bosch, and wish you all the best in your future endeavors. The United States looks forward to continued close cooperation with your team.