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## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Invitation to Observe November 6 General Election in the United States**

As delivered by Political Counselor Christopher Robinson  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
February 16, 2012

Millions of Americans will exercise their human right to vote in the General Elections in the United States on November 6, 2012. These elections will see American voters cast ballots for the Presidency, for 33 seats in the U.S. Senate, and for all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. On the same day, the people will elect eleven state governors, congressional delegates from the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories, and many state legislators.

On behalf of the United States Government, I want to take this opportunity before the Permanent Council to extend an invitation to the OSCE participating States to observe these elections.

We welcome observation of American elections, and we have sent letters of invitation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. We have also invited ODIHR to conduct a Needs Assessment Mission in the United States in preparation for a possible OSCE observation mission.

Within the U.S. federal system, the responsibility for organizing elections rests with state and local governments. The Department of State will therefore facilitate the Needs Assessment Mission and election observation mission, and assist ODIHR in its efforts to contact elections officials throughout the United States in connection with its organization of elections observation.

The United States values the OSCE's important work, in particular its election observation efforts, in promoting free and fair elections throughout the OSCE space, from "Vancouver to Vladivostok." We welcome the presence of OSCE observers as an opportunity to demonstrate the United States' dedication to fulfilling its OSCE commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.