

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/602/19
30 May 2019

Original: ENGLISH



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Occasion of the Farewell to OSCE SMM Chief Monitor Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Harry Kamian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 30, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chair, his Excellency.

Ambassador Apakan, on behalf of the United States of America, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude for your work and dedication in serving five years as the SMM's first Chief Monitor. Your commitment to bringing peace to eastern Ukraine has driven your actions from the beginning. You presided over the growth of a versatile team that now includes more than 800 monitors and 420 local staff operating under extremely challenging political and security conditions.

Mr. Ambassador, The United States would like to thank you in particular for your outstanding leadership after U.S. citizen and SMM paramedic Joseph Stone was killed after his vehicle struck a mine in April 2017 in territory controlled by Russia-led forces. On the heels of this tragedy, you led an effort to re-examine security, operations, and management oversight of the Mission that improved the safety of monitors and enhanced the effectiveness of the SMM. We will always be grateful to you for these efforts. Your tireless work with the Trilateral Contact Group reaffirmed the centrality of dialogue in achieving a peaceful outcome to this conflict, while working to mitigate the dire conditions Russia has created for Ukrainian civilians living in the zone of conflict.

Ambassador, we greatly appreciated your regular appearances at the Council, which helped participating States in our oversight responsibility. As you consider what comes next in your distinguished career, please know you have made a positive, lasting impact in Ukraine that will not be forgotten. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.