



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

### **Response to the Opening Address by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Switzerland's Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Kate Rebholz  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
January 15, 2026

Foreign Minister Cassis, welcome back to the Permanent Council. We appreciate Switzerland assuming the chairmanship during this crucial year, 2026.

This Organization was established to advance peace among participating States and to provide a forum for cooperation and dialogue among nations, nations that disagree. At this moment when we are focused on restoring peace in Europe, that mission matters more than ever. But as the United States said at the Ministerial Council in December, reform is necessary to ensure the OSCE can fulfill its mission of furthering security in Europe and to continued United States participation and engagement.

OSCE must reform so that it is prepared for the responsibilities of this century. The first step is to focus on core functions and ensure that resources are spent on supporting peace and stability. The OSCE must find efficiencies; however, this is not austerity for its own sake. A tightened budget demands prioritization; it exacts managerial discipline to realize results. The Unified Budget for 2026 must include a reduction of at least fifteen million euros, an 11% cut from the 2021 Unified Budget baseline.

These financial reforms must be matched by structural and programmatic reforms so that participating States are able to pursue work on pressing security issues. We welcome that this approach aligns with key elements of the Chairmanship's vision. The United States will work to drive the reform within the OSCE. We invite all delegations to join us in shaping an OSCE worthy of its origins in Helsinki and prepared for the responsibilities of this century.

Foreign Minister Cassis, we look forward to working closely with Switzerland to implement a reform agenda that will ensure the OSCE is best positioned to contribute to comprehensive security and prosperity in the region.

###