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ENGLISH only

United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Urgency of the Budget Timeline

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Darrell Owens
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 22, 2026

The United States would like to thank the Secretary General for his comments last week on the budget. Unfortunately, we are running out of time as too many of us around this table wait for the process to play out. We do not have time to waste so let me be completely clear. The United States will only accept a 2027 budget with zero nominal growth – ZNG – and we will not, I repeat not, join consensus on a ZRG budget.

We acknowledge that this will require hard decisions – but hard decisions do not get easier with time. We all know that we need a concrete decision to freeze salaries for one year. We understand that the United Nations is considering a similar freeze, but waiting for the UN to lead is a fool's errand. The Permanent Council, when we adopt the budget, should issue a decision to freeze salaries for one year. This would give the Secretariat the clarity it needs to move forward.

In addition, while we do not oppose in principle efforts to restructure the secretariat, it needs to be done in a thoughtful deliberative way that gives participating States time to review the implications of any changes. Given the limited time available to resolve the budget, we do not have time to do complicated restructuring. Additionally, we support the role of the Senior Representative for CTHB and would oppose any restructuring that diminishes the ability of the SR to work cross-dimensionally, as envisioned by the Ministerial Council decisions that established the office and position.

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