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PC.DEL/1093/26
30 October 2026

ENGLISH only

United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to ODIHR Director Maria Telalian

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., Kate Rebholz
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 29, 2026

Director Telalian, dear Maria,

The United States welcomes you back to the Permanent Council and thanks you for your report.

ODIHR has for the last three decades helped participating States implement their OSCE commitments. We share your view that ODIHR's role in promoting direct dialogue between civil society and governments delivers unique value. Senior U.S. officials and experts welcomed the opportunity for such exchanges at the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference earlier this month. Our support for ODIHR's mandate rests on results: an ODIHR that is efficient, effective, and focused on its core functions.

At the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference, the United States did what we told this Council we would do. We pressed for accountability regarding fulfillment of commitments related to countering antisemitism and anti-Christian bias across the OSCE region.

As we did in Warsaw, I would like to urge every participating State that has not already done so to take the following three steps:

- **Report antisemitic hate crime data to ODIHR**, as we all committed to do in Berlin in 2004 and ensure the data is disaggregated, so that ODIHR has the information it needs to fulfill its mandate and participating States' decisionmakers and law enforcement personnel have the granularity of information they need to tailor effective countermeasures.

- **Endorse and apply the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism**, including its illustrative examples.

- **Endorse the Global Guidelines for Countering Antisemitism** and begin implementing them, including by adopting a national strategy or action plan and appointing a designated envoy or coordinator with the necessary resources and empowerment to be effective.

We believe it is important to record progress on these issues at the Lugano Ministerial. We recognize that some States face institutional, technical, or legal hurdles. We urge those states to come to the Lugano Ministerial with a concrete strategy to fulfill all three steps within the next year. We are confident that ODIHR can provide help if needed, including by building national capacity to record, collect and report antisemitic hate crime data.

Mister Chair, earlier this month we told this Council that this organization must begin preparing now for the day when a durable peace is established in Ukraine. We appreciate that ODIHR is already working with the Ukrainian parliament and Central Election Commission to prepare for elections when security conditions allow. It is clear that there will be significant logistical and security challenges to overcome. We note ODIHR's Extrabudgetary Project aims to help the OSCE get ready to conduct election monitoring in Ukraine. This is the sort of disciplined planning we have asked of this organization.

We appreciate ODIHR's work to organize a substantial election observation mission for the snap parliamentary elections in Serbia. We look forward to working with you and colleagues here in Vienna to conduct subsequent missions for future elections in Serbia.

Director Telalian, thank you and your team for your work to deliver real, measurable outcomes across our region.

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