



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Secretary General's Presentation of the 2026 Unified Budget Proposal

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 9, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Secretary General.

We appreciate hearing about your priorities for the OSCE in 2026 and your perspectives on the 2026 budget.

In today's global landscape, funding for international organizations is both limited and fiercely contested. Every organization seeking support must demonstrate its unique capabilities, the tangible results it achieves, and prudent stewardship of resources.

The OSCE is no exception. Fiscal discipline, efficiency, and effectiveness are not mere ideals—they are imperatives essential for the OSCE's credibility and our continued support. Our capitals and the more than one billion citizens in the OSCE region rightly demand that the OSCE deliver a clear return on investment, ensuring that every dollar, or euro, or crown, or ruble, or other currency entrusted to the OSCE advances our collective security.

In this context, a proposed 16.6% increase in our budget is untenable. We must optimize and modernize OSCE operations and resources to meet the pressing security challenges of our time and to live within our current budget.

There are savings to be made and I am glad that the Secretariat and the Secretary General are looking into these. We know for example that some field presences saved on overhead to pay for salary alignment. Back office administration functions could be moved from Vienna to cities with lower labor and overhead costs. Many of our field presences could - and I would argue should - be rightsized. Can we argue that a Mission with 400 employees is proportionately more effective than one with 50?

The Secretary General has rightly said that if participating States want the OSCE, we have to fund it. That said, participating States need to know exactly what we are paying for and make tough decisions about cuts. I should emphasize, and as the Secretary General himself noted, that what many of us are asking of the OSCE is no different than what we are experiencing in our own governments and foreign ministries. Many of us are enduring painful cuts to programs and personnel. We know all about the tough decisions.

The OSCE should redouble its commitment to deliver value where it has comparative advantage, maximize efficiency, and prioritize mission-critical initiatives. This is essential

not only for sustaining the confidence of participating States but also for fulfilling the mandate entrusted to us by the people we represent.

We are, in some areas, living beyond our means, and in others not adequately funding those activities that make this organization unique. The OSCE has many special qualities that distinguish it from other entities. This is where we should focus. We need to work together to take the tough decisions.

We look forward to working with the Finnish Chair, the incoming Swiss Chair, and participating States to determine how best to do that.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary General and Mr. Chair.

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