



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to OSCE Secretary General's Report on Energy Security

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 10, 2011

The United States thanks the Secretary General for his comprehensive report on Energy Security, the result of fruitful discussions held in Vilnius last September. We take note of a number of findings that should inform the work of this organization in the Economic and Environmental Dimension during the Lithuanian chairmanship and beyond.

As the Secretary General's report illustrates, energy security cuts across the three dimensions of security. We note in particular the conclusion that "energy security is more than sustainability, competitiveness, and security of demand, supply, and transport. It is a multidimensional concept, which includes external and internal actors and actions." As we see it, any discussion of an OSCE role in energy security--a role it most certainly possesses-- must include a focus on this multidimensional aspect.

Energy is the lifeblood of a modern economy, and a sound economy in turn is a vital element of security. One area where the OSCE can complement the work of others is in promoting good governance and transparency, in energy as in other economic sectors.

Closely related to good governance and transparency is the concept of confidence building and early warning. These concepts are complementary. When economic systems operate efficiently and transparently, they inspire greater confidence and trust. Thus, when problems or crises emerge, prospects are better for good faith efforts to cooperate on common solutions.

The United States sees a number of possibilities for the OSCE to take a more active role in fostering energy security. As a confidence-building measure for citizens and investors, we still believe the OSCE should promote transparency by endorsing the general principles of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. To prevent disruptions in energy supplies, whether natural or manmade, from becoming crises, the OSCE should adopt a procedure for addressing these disruptions early. In view of the multidimensional nature of energy security, the OSCE should continue to examine its coordinating efforts in protecting critical energy infrastructure.

As a complement to these actions, the OSCE should also examine in more detail the role of energy efficiency and sustainability in ensuring long-term economic stability and prosperity, including, in this era of fiscal restraint, a focus on promoting competitive, market-based solutions.

Mr. Secretary General, the United States commends your efforts in preparing this report and giving us a number of useful suggestions for future work. We look forward to working with the Lithuanian CiO, the Coordinator's office, and our fellow participating States and Partners for Cooperation in realizing many of these suggestions in advance of the Vilnius Ministerial. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.