



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### Statement on Belarus

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
January 27, 2011

Mr. Secretary General, thank you for your full and comprehensive update. I would like to address the issue you mentioned, the planned closure of the OSCE Office in Minsk.

While we note in your report that Mission management has been instructed to continue closure operations of the Office in Minsk, we reiterate that OSCE assets – which all participating States contribute to – must be handled in a managerially responsible manner regardless of the actual date of cessation of official operations. This being said, we emphasize once again that closing the OSCE Office in Minsk is a mistake. We renew our call on the Government of Belarus to correct this mistake and join consensus to keep the office open. The mandate of the Office has not been fulfilled, and the Office can continue to play a useful role in assisting Belarus to meet its OSCE commitments, particularly in the wake of the December 19 events.

Finally, we welcome the January 18 European Parliament resolution on the Belarusian government's post-election crackdown. We are very much aware and supportive of steps that the EU is taking.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.