



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Maxim Ryabkov, Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 11, 2010

The United States would like to extend a warm welcome back to the Permanent Council to Dr. Maxim Ryabkov. Since your last appearance in 2005, Doctor Ryabkov, there have been major developments in the program, the professionalism and the reputation of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, all to the benefit of this organization – and, more importantly, to the students that pass through your halls each year.

You and your staff deserve our support and thanks for the hard work that has resulted in the Academy truly becoming a flagship OSCE operation and a regional academic institution that is attracting more and higher-quality students each year. That there have been more than 2,000 applicants to the Academy since 2004 is a telling signal that a growing body of discerning students has come to regard the OSCE Academy with the same esteem that we do. Moreover, that a full 89 percent of your graduates hail from Central Asia is another gauge of the extent to which the Academy has become an established option within the region for graduate students who want to remain in Central Asia and see their home countries continue to prosper and develop.

Dr. Ryabkov, as the film you presented today also makes clear, a special debt of gratitude is owed to the Government of Kyrgyzstan for the support it has rendered to the Academy, through its provision of premises, its provision of internships at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the other forms of support it provides to the Academy. These contribute to invaluable learning opportunities.

We also applaud your creative efforts to reach an ever wider audience of potential students through, for example, the 12-week Summer School on Advanced Journalism for Central Asia and plans for the Academy to develop a second Master's degree program. These are important initiatives worthy of our continued support.

Finally, Dr. Ryabkov, the United States is proud of the work being done at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and equally proud to be counted among your 20 OSCE participating State donors. We see the U.S. donation towards the Master's degree program this year as a modest but important investment in the long-term positive development of Central Asia. We hope to see continued success as the Academy's alumni base grows to fill vital roles in the region.

Let me conclude by wishing you and your excellent staff, Dr. Ryabkov, our thanks and our heartfelt wishes for every continued success.

Thank you Mister Chairman.