



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Russian Federation's Concern about Rule of Law in Sweden and the United States

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a. i. Carol Fuller
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 26, 2011

The United States would like to thank Ambassador Azimov for his remarks this morning. Although his comments appear at first hearing to consist largely of reiterations of earlier comments to which we have already responded, we believe there is great value in our mutual accounting to one another on how we are implementing our solemn commitments to human rights and the rule of law. We do not see this as an "abuse of the Permanent Council for exerting political pressure," as suggested by the Belarusian ambassador.

As we have said before, we take the expression of Russian concern to be a reflection of the values they place on this Forum where we can respectfully and objectively dialogue with one another – or at least begin to dialogue.

As I said, we have previously responded to most of the observations of the Russian and Belarusian delegations, but we reserve the right to examine and return to any new points that may have been raised.

Rather than enter into a point-by-point response, which would greatly extend today's meeting, we also intend to make a presentation in the near future to the Human Dimension Committee under the agenda item of "Implementation of Commitments." We would welcome further dialogue with colleagues in that forum.

In general, however, let me reiterate that the United States is committed to the principles of rule of law essential to our constitution, manifest in our history, and embodied in our shared OSCE commitments. We welcome this exchange on rule of law and we would also welcome from our Russian friends a response to our observations about the rule of law in the Khodorkovsky case.

Thank you, Chair.