



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to Mr. Tokayev, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva**

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
September 7, 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States warmly welcomes Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, to the OSCE Permanent Council. We highly appreciate your suggestions on areas for enhanced cooperation between the UN and the OSCE and we fully agree with you, Mr. Director-General, that our organizations share common values, principles and objectives.

We strongly support UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's overarching efforts to strengthen cooperation between the UN and regional organizations such as the OSCE. We recognize the UN's overall responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and support the crucial role that regional organizations can play in this respect. We fully agree that the aim of our cooperation should be to make the best use of each partner's comparative advantages.

One of the areas in which regional organizations often have a comparative advantage is in the field of conflict prevention and resolution. As you noted, the UN and OSCE have worked constructively in this area in the past. We also see scope for greater cooperation in the future, including in the areas you've mentioned. We also believe that the OSCE should strengthen its capacity to provide early warning and take early action to prevent conflict, and to promote reconciliation between parties to conflict and sustainable resolution of conflicts. In the post-conflict sphere, we believe the OSCE, as well as other regional organizations, should engage with the parties to help solidify the peace process and take action to address the root causes and consequences of conflict, to prevent its recurrence.

The threats we face are increasingly international in scope, planning and execution, and they underscore that some of our greatest challenges to global security are transnational in nature, and are rapidly evolving. Combating these threats is a shared responsibility, and we must integrate our common efforts. OSCE programs to fight transnational threats have helped both OSCE participating and Partner States to develop vital national capacity to counter terrorism, secure cyberspace and prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in line with UNSCR 1540.

Border security is also a principal component of the OSCE's work to combat transnational threats, and much of that work is now focused on the northern border of Afghanistan. The United States believes that the OSCE could play a larger role in fostering peace and security in Afghanistan. We must redouble our efforts to promote border security across the region, and to strengthen security and democratic stability in Afghanistan, which is inextricably

linked to strengthening security and democratic stability in Central Asia, and within the OSCE as a whole.

We must also be prepared to respond to the requests of our Mediterranean Partners for assistance in support of their own transition processes. We believe the OSCE has the requisite experience and expertise to provide such assistance, honed in the transitions that took place in Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War. This is a development which we wholeheartedly support. Adherence to OSCE commitments has helped OSCE participating States become more stable, secure and prosperous. We would hope for the same type of development in our partner countries. Of course, any assistance by the OSCE should be coordinated with that provided by other international actors, to ensure the most effective use of our resources.

As you rightly pointed out, the OSCE's specialized knowledge and tools can provide valuable input to the international response, not only to the transitions underway in some of the partner countries, but also to the situation in Libya. We look forward to hearing more at the September 20 meeting from the Transitional National Council about its goals going forward and what it needs from the international community, as well as its priorities for a potential UN mission in Libya. We will also pay careful attention to the UN's recommendations as we continue to work with our international partners to support the Libyan people.

On addressing the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, we are pleased with the progress made by OSCE to facilitate the 1540 Committee's efforts in assisting participating States' implementation of UNSCR 1540 and its related documents, including the memorandum of understanding between OSCE and the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs. The joint UNODA/OSCE workshop to be held in Kazakhstan at the end of this month is a strong example of combining the comparative strengths of two organizations on a subject that is vital to our collective security interests.

We also want to express our deep appreciation to the Director-General for his efforts to overcome the impasse and bring the Conference on Disarmament to its rightful place at the heart of multilateral disarmament affairs. The United States will continue to do its part to facilitate positive movement on the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, and looks forward to continuing our excellent cooperation.

In conclusion, we would like to thank you again, Mr. Director-General, for taking the opportunity to appear today at the OSCE and we wish you every success in your future work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.