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Report to the Congress: U.S. Policy and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
Washington, DC
March 1, 2007

Report Pursuant to Section 5 of 22 U.S.C. 3005 (1976), As Amended by Section 226 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 2003 (As enacted in Public Law 107-228)

This report, submitted pursuant to Section 5 of the "Act to Establish a Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe," 22 U.S.C. 3005 (1976), as amended by Section 226 of the "Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 2003" (P. L. 107-228), discusses overall U.S. policy objectives that are advanced through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This report reviews OSCE activities and initiatives in 2006, including by OSCE institutions such as the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and in the OSCE field missions. This report covers the period from January 1 to December 31, 2006, and looks forward into 2007, presenting U. S. priorities for the OSCE for the coming year.

Overview of U.S. Policy Objectives

U.S. participation in the OSCE advances America's interest in promoting democracy, strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and furthering arms control, economic prosperity and sustainable environmental policies. The pillars of the March 2006 U.S. National Security Strategy -- promoting freedom, justice, human dignity, and effective democracies -- are also the OSCE's prime objectives. The OSCE also has a role to play in helping to win the global war against terrorism through a number of initiatives in the areas of arms control, border and travel document security, and advancing freedom, security, and prosperity. Promoting these and other interests collectively through the OSCE allows the United States to share costs and political responsibility with other states and, at the same time, to coordinate actions to avoid duplication and maximize success.

Promoting democracy and respect for human rights is fundamental to achieving sustainable security in Europe and

Eurasia. The OSCE's core democracy and human rights mission is crucial to that effort. All OSCE participating states have accepted the same commitments to respect fundamental freedoms and human rights, and all are being held to the same standards on implementation of those commitments. The United States is committed to expanding activities in the security and economic/environmental dimensions and preserving OSCE democracy and human rights promotion activities, including the important election observation work done by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

The U.S. contribution (and related costs) to the OSCE's field missions and OSCE extra-budgetary contributions in the region were funded in FY 2006 through the Support for Eastern European Democracy (SEED) and FREEDOM Support Act (FSA) accounts. The U.S. contribution to the OSCE was approximately \$36 million in FY 2006, including funds from Diplomatic and Consular Programs (D&CP), FSA, and SEED accounts. The estimated FY 2007 contribution is \$42.5 million.

Details of OSCE Activities

Promoting Democracy

Drawing on a time-tested standardized methodology, OSCE election observation missions enjoy worldwide respect for their objectivity and credibility. The electoral workload has been challenging, even for an organization with as much experience as the OSCE. In 2006, the OSCE conducted ten election observation and assessment missions, most notably in Ukraine, Serbia, Tajikistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus. In those countries and elsewhere, ODIHR assisted with expertise to improve presidential and parliamentary elections and/or to provide robust election observation missions that documented the degree to which elections met OSCE commitments and international standards. In Ukraine, for example, the OSCE undertook several programs in cooperation with the Government of Ukraine to improve the reliability of voter lists and improve electoral laws; these and other changes greatly contributed to the 2006 parliamentary elections' transparency, which were widely considered to be the freest and fairest in Ukrainian history.

The United States invited ODIHR to observe the November 2006 mid-term congressional elections. The group of ODIHR experts subsequently produced a report on U.S. election methodologies, including improvements since the 2004 presidential election and areas for further improvement. The United States has welcomed ODIHR's election assistance and continues to engage in productive dialogue with its representatives.

ODIHR's election observation methodology, based on sound, standardized criteria applied in an objective and fair manner, represents the gold standard in this field. It served as the model and inspiration for the UN's 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and its accompanying Code of Conduct. Despite that success, there continue to be calls by some states, most notably Russia, to review election-related commitments and revise ODIHR's methodology in an effort to undermine ODIHR's autonomy or effectiveness. The United States considers ODIHR's methodology and practice to be sound and objective, needing at most minor fine-tuning to build on its accumulated experience. The real issue is not methodology but the lack of political will among some participating states to implement existing commitments and to allow the voice of the electorate to be heard. We will continue to lead by example and call on states to act on ODIHR's post-election recommendations and to allow ODIHR to continue its important electoral work undeterred.

Fight Against Intolerance

The OSCE tackles the challenges of intolerance and discrimination through programs and projects in the fields of legislative reform, law enforcement training, capacity building for tolerance-focused NGOs, education on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, and all forms of anti-ethnic, racial or religious prejudice projects to counter media manifestations of hate, while still protecting freedom of expression. The United States has provided significant political and financial support to the activities of the OSCE's ODIHR in these areas and elsewhere.

Thanks to intense efforts by the U.S. Government, in close collaboration with NGO partners, the OSCE in 2005 appointed three Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office on tolerance issues. Throughout 2006, these Representatives - on Anti-Semitism; on Intolerance Against Muslims; and on Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, Including Against Christians and Members of Other Religions - traveled to OSCE states to raise awareness of OSCE commitments and to spread support for projects to assist states in implementing these commitments. The United States strongly supported their reappointment by the Spanish chairmanship in early 2007. The representatives work closely with ODIHR in a cooperative environment, but are free to travel and undertake new projects independent of ODIHR. They also take part in NGO roundtables and OSCE expert meetings throughout the year. The United States supports the Spanish goal of reviewing the role of the three representatives with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

The OSCE's Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance, held in Cordoba in June 2005, kept the spotlight on anti-Semitism as well as other tolerance issues -- racism, xenophobia, and anti-Muslim and anti-Christian discrimination. The United States is working closely with Romania, the new Spanish Chairmanship and other States to develop a high-level conference on Combating Discrimination, Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding, Following Up On the Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance, that will take place in Bucharest in June 2007.

The tolerance decisions approved at the 2005 Ljubljana and 2006 Brussels ministerial meetings called for strengthened implementation of OSCE tolerance commitments in participating states and provided enhanced commitments in the fields of legislation, law enforcement, education, and the media, underscoring the need for governments to speak out against all acts and manifestations of hate. We continue to encourage the OSCE to step up ODIHR education programs to counter intolerance against Muslims and to increase its tolerance work and its training on media freedom in, and with the full cooperation of, the Mediterranean partner states.

Individual projects on law enforcement training and Holocaust education have been introduced in several states in Western Europe and Eurasia. Three expert-level seminars in 2006 -- on hate crimes data collection, tolerance education, and intercultural dialogue -- have provided platforms for the launch of new ODIHR projects. ODIHR's ongoing work to build NGO capacity to combat intolerance allows the OSCE, its participating states, and civil society to work in concert, thus multiplying the effects of our individual efforts to promote mutual understanding and respect for diversity, and in this way to contribute to democracy and stability throughout the OSCE region.

Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Trafficking in persons is a transnational problem, requiring engagement with multiple foreign governments and NGOs; this makes it ideal for OSCE attention. The Maastricht Action Plan of 2003 on combating trafficking in human beings

has provisions for specialized police training, legislative advice, and other assistance, which are being provided by ODIHR and the field missions. The OSCE's Special Representative for Trafficking and the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit are supporting these efforts, in particular by providing the framework and coordination within the OSCE to expand states' combined efforts. The OSCE has taken the lead in the international community in establishing a strong code of conduct for its mission personnel to ensure that they do not encourage trafficking. This issue was addressed on a broader scale with the adoption at the 2005 Ljubljana ministerial of steps to prevent international mission members and peacekeeping troops from contributing to trafficking in persons. The OSCE has also crafted an economic component to its anti-trafficking plan directed toward at-risk individuals in source countries and businesses that might be misused by traffickers, such as hotels and tour operators exploiting the sex trade. The aim is to reduce demand in destination countries by raising awareness about the plight of victims trafficked for purposes of labor and commercial sexual exploitation.

Border Management and Security

At the 2005 OSCE ministerial conference, OSCE states adopted a "Border Security Management Concept," by which they committed to promoting previously agreed OSCE standards for open and secure borders in a free, democratic, and more integrated OSCE area. Now, the OSCE is working to find new ways to facilitate capacity building for border services and reinforce cross-border co-operation in the OSCE region.

The OSCE trained 800 Georgia border guards in a training assistance mission that ended in June 2006 and was replaced by a program (2006-2007) to train trainers in the reconstituted Georgia Border Guards in the Ministry of Interior. The United States will continue to work with the OSCE throughout 2007 to find ways to help targeted states, such as Tajikistan.

Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs

In October 2006, the OSCE conducted, together with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), an expert workshop to address the threat of illicit drugs. The United States used the forum to highlight the need for increased attention to the issue and to promote increased international cooperation through existing tools. The U.S. Government works through our embassies to ensure that U.S.-funded OSCE projects are coordinated with our bilateral programs.

OSCE Field Missions

In 2006, the OSCE, through its field missions and institutions, carried out, with the concurrence of the host governments, an ambitious range of activities that support political stability and democratic and economic development.

Ukraine: The Yushchenko Administration, which took office after the dramatic events of the Orange Revolution in 2004, has been more willing than its predecessors to expand the scope of OSCE activities in Ukraine. The OSCE's project coordinator in Ukraine (PCU) continues to develop and implement projects in all three of OSCE's dimensions. The PCU was actively involved in promoting transparency, civil society, and the rule of law for the parliamentary and local elections held on March 26, 2006. To help strengthen the electoral process, the PCU worked with the Ukrainian Central Election Commission to develop a new, computerized, voter registry and to help implement the new election law. To increase public awareness of the elections and improve coordination of the OSCE's election-related activities with local authorities, the PCU set up regional centers throughout Ukraine.

The PCU and the regional centers continue to build on their efforts to provide ethics training for journalists on covering elections, information to Ukrainian citizens on their legal rights as voters, the judicial system relating to the election process, and to assist local authorities in updating voter lists. The PCU continues to implement projects to support the transition of former Ukrainian military personnel to civilian life through seminars on entitlements and retraining opportunities, assist the Ukraine judicial system and legislature to resolve contradictions between civil and commercial codes, increase public awareness of trafficking in persons, and promote economic capacity-building. Finally, at the end of 2006, the PCU began implementation of a project to destroy dangerous stockpiles of old ammunition at Novobogdanovka.

Georgia: The OSCE Mission helps Georgia to continue its development into a liberal, market-based democracy. The Mission's election reform efforts continue, with training for the election commission and NGOs as well as with support for strengthening local self-government. The Mission assists with the integration of persons belonging to national minorities. The Mission supports the monitoring of official anti-corruption initiatives, the development of small- and medium-size enterprises by offering entrepreneurial training, and water management in the Black Sea and Caspian basins. The Mission supports the professional capacity of regional outlets and is assisting in the establishment of a public broadcasting service. The Mission offers human rights training at state institutions, monitors and handles human rights cases, and assists authorities and civil society in fighting trafficking and torture. The Mission has major programs to help reform the justice and penal systems.

The United States supports a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. Resolution of the Georgia-South Ossetia conflict remains a major OSCE priority, and the Mission participates in the work of existing conflict resolution mechanisms, such as the Joint Control Commission and meetings in Vienna. The Mission's winter 2006 Needs Assessment Study for South Ossetia led to a donors' conference that raised pledges for short- and long-term projects, now being implemented, that bring ethnic Georgians and Ossetians together and benefit all residents of the conflict zone. The Mission supports weapon destruction and recycling throughout Georgia. The Border Guards Training Program of 2006-2007 will have trained a cadre of trainers by the time it ends in June 2007. Reform of policing in Georgia will continue, with a special focus on coordinated international efforts.

Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the Istanbul Commitments: On May 30, 2005, Georgia and Russia agreed on a Joint Statement addressing key remaining issues relating to the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit commitments on Russian forces in Georgia. Since then, withdrawals have continued from two Russian bases. Issues remain regarding the withdrawal from a third Russian base at Gudauta. The joint statement also identified other steps that Georgia and Russia have agreed to take in order to complete the Istanbul commitments.

Moldova and Transnistria: The OSCE and its Mission in Moldova are working to find long-term solutions to the situation in the breakaway region of Transnistria. The United States strongly supports the work of the OSCE in Moldova, which assists in our own strategy -- as well as that of the EU -- for finding a peaceful resolution that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova. The United States has urged all sides to work transparently with the OSCE to make concrete progress toward a political settlement, and has urged Russia to fulfill the commitments it made during the OSCE's 1999 Istanbul Summit to complete withdrawal of its forces from Moldova.

In late 2005, the two sides and three mediators of the conflict negotiations (Russia, Ukraine, and the OSCE) agreed to invite the United States and the EU to join the talks as observers. While this was a positive step, there was little

progress during the next several rounds of negotiations due in large part to Transnistrian intransigence, such as on proposals to reduce tensions through sharing military data and permitting the inspection of Transnistrian military-industrial enterprises. In March 2006, the Transnistrian side suspended its participation in the talks over the decision by the Ukrainian government to implement its bilateral customs agreement with Moldova and to invite the EU to assist in monitoring the Ukraine-Moldova border.

There was no progress during 2006 on fulfillment of Russia's 1999 Istanbul commitment on military withdrawal from Moldova. The United States and NATO allies have made clear that they regard fulfillment of Istanbul commitments on both Georgia and Moldova as essential for NATO allies to move forward with ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty.

Belarus: The Government of Belarus' unabated repression of fundamental freedoms and human rights remains a significant concern of the United States and many other OSCE participating states. The United States welcomed the Belarusian invitation to the OSCE to observe the March 19 presidential elections, but was deeply concerned by increasing attacks by the Belarusian government against the political opposition, independent newspapers, and civil society in the run-up to the elections. The OSCE has played a crucial role in the international community's efforts to address Belarusian authorities' harassment and detention of the opposition and independent media before and after the Belarusian election.

The OSCE office in Minsk has offered to help Belarusian authorities meet OSCE commitments and to help NGO groups work for the benefit of the country; it has also been able to meet with political prisoners in jail and report on developments in the country. However, the government continues to stymie the office's work. It insists on a cumbersome government approval process for all office projects and has criticized the office's reporting activities. The United States coordinated closely with the EU and other concerned partners to bring public pressure to bear on the Belarusian government to live up to its OSCE commitments.

The Balkans: The majority of the OSCE's resources continue to be invested in missions in the Balkans, a legacy of the OSCE's major role before and after the Balkan wars. In general, missions in the Balkans, many of which originated as part of immediate post-conflict international stabilization efforts, are much larger than the field presences in the former Soviet Union. Overall, the OSCE's work in the Balkans is a success story. Problems that still require assistance in the form of resources and attention of the international community include trafficking of drugs, weapons and human beings, and organized crime.

OSCE success stories in the Balkans include:

- Kosovo: the development of functioning institutions at central government and municipal levels, and the creation of a model police school.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: substantial progress toward the formation of a unified and professional military; arms control.
- Macedonia: inter-ethnic cooperation and integration in the wake of 2001 violence; elections and human rights monitoring.
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Serbia: legislative, judicial and police reform; reconciliation and stabilization in South Serbia.

- Croatia: development of democratic institutions; training of police; enhancement of media freedom.
- Albania: judicial and election reform; police assistance.
- Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia: capacity building for domestic war crimes trials.
- Region-wide: government transparency and accountability; capacity building and awareness-raising to combat trafficking in human beings; promotion of NGOs and civil society; progress on return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Eighty percent of all OSCE field mission personnel are working in the seven Balkan missions (the other eleven missions, in the former Soviet Union, make up the remaining twenty percent). At the urging of the United States, the OSCE has made some progress in reducing the size and budgets of its Balkans' missions, but additional reductions are needed.

Kosovo: During 2006, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) expanded its field presence by establishing municipal monitoring teams of human rights and democratization officers in each of Kosovo's 30 municipalities. Roughly half of OMiK's staff of 1,000 is now deployed throughout Kosovo while the other half continues to work out of its main headquarters in Pristina. The expansion of the field presence has improved OMiK's ability to monitor and report on developments in the municipalities and to serve as the international community's eyes and ears in the field once a status settlement is reached. The Mission has continued to perform its traditional institution- and democracy-building functions. It also played an important role in monitoring human rights, building local governing capacity, and contributing to the development of a professional police and judiciary.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: As the overall international presence continues to draw down, the work of the OSCE Mission remains essential for assisting BiH's democratic transition. The Mission played a key role in helping the government develop its military reform laws, which have created a single, national armed forces under civilian control. Passage of this legislation constituted a major step in fulfilling the requirements for future NATO membership. In addition, the Mission has focused on education reform in a country where many schools are still ethnically divided; trial monitoring (particularly of war crimes and human trafficking trials) to ensure fairness in the judicial system; public administration reform to improve governance at the local level; and overall political reform following the October 2006 national elections. The Mission monitors legal cases that have been transferred to Bosnia by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) pursuant to Rule 11 *bis* of the ICTY's Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

The Mission is also working to help government authorities implement the reform pledges outlined in their "Jobs and Justice Agenda." The agenda focuses on promoting reform in five strategic areas: the economy, law enforcement, defense, education and public administration. The OSCE Mission's role is becoming increasingly important as the role of the High Representative is reduced.

Macedonia: Among the primary tasks of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje are monitoring and assisting with the implementation of the 2001 Ohrid Framework Agreement. Many of the Mission's activities focus on preventing

ethnic tensions through the implementation of confidence-building measures and the training of a multi-ethnic police force. It has expanded its focus to training police in community-based law enforcement, enhancing rule of law, and improving local self-government and the media. The Mission designs, or identifies and supports grassroots projects that promote inter-ethnic co-operation and confidence, including projects in primary and secondary education. Other activities support border training and judicial and electoral reform. The Mission's monitoring function will play an important role during 2007, when a decision over the future status of neighboring Kosovo is expected.

The Mission maintains two field offices outside of Skopje in areas of past tensions. The Mission has largely succeeded in its most resource-intensive project, increasing minority representation in the police force, and is gradually drawing down. From 2005 to the beginning of 2007, the Mission reduced its total staff from 338 to 259; the Mission currently has a staff of 72 international personnel, less than a third than it had in September 2001.

Serbia: The Mission continues to focus on reform activities that are designed to prepare Serbia for integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Mission activities emphasize strengthening the rule of law, including the judiciary, especially to combat organized crime; security sector reform, including law enforcement; and strengthening democratic institutions, including parliament. The Mission also pays special attention to South Serbia, national minority/tolerance issues, and reconciliation/regional cooperation issues. The Mission enjoys solid support at all levels of government in Serbia.

Montenegro: Following Montenegro's independence, an OSCE mission was established there in June 2006. The Mission is supporting democratization processes, and judicial and police reform. It conducts police training, assists legislators in drafting national laws, and is helping to create a national mechanism for monitoring prisons to help prevent torture.

Albania: A primary focus of the OSCE Presence in Albania in 2006 was electoral assistance, particularly in the lead up to the February 2007 local elections. Together with ODIHR, the Presence worked with government and electoral authorities to help further enhance the electoral process in line with prior OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. Throughout 2006, the Presence also provided technical assistance to Albanian authorities on property restitution, police training, parliamentary capacity building, legislative and judicial reform, good government, anti-corruption measures, and combating trafficking in human beings. The four field offices of the Presence are crucial in allowing the OSCE to carry out programs efficiently outside of the capital, and have also assisted other international organizations and governments with local contacts and support for complementary projects.

Croatia: The OSCE Mission is approaching a wind-down phase and has focused its work on a limited number of key issues, in particular refugee and IDP return and housing restitution. The Mission is supporting the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) by monitoring domestic war crimes trials, including cases that have been transferred to Croatia by the ICTY pursuant to Rule 11 *bis* of the ICTY's Rules of Procedure and Evidence. It also is working on promoting rights of persons belonging to minorities, on police training, and on electoral reform. The Mission is planning on a December 2007 closure of the OSCE presences in Croatia, with administrative wrap-up work to conclude by the middle of 2008.

Armenia and Azerbaijan: The OSCE's focus in these two countries in 2006 remained on advancing democratization and respect for human rights, and resolving the unresolved conflicts. In Armenia, the OSCE field presence carried out programs to combat corruption and trafficking in human beings, to reform the penal system, and to ensure the safe disposal of surplus toxic rocket fuel (mélange) left over from the Soviet era. The OSCE Office in Baku used its monitoring of trials of Azeri opposition members to develop recommendations for judicial reform in Azerbaijan. The

office monitored and reported on the parliamentary elections and continues to track Azerbaijan's efforts to address shortcomings that became apparent. The Office is active in promoting media freedom and protection of journalists; in October 2006 it organized a visit by the OSCE's Special Representative on Freedom of the Media for a series of high-level meetings.

Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Meetings of the "Minsk Group" co-chairs (United States, Russia, and France) with the OSCE and with the Foreign Ministers and presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan continued throughout 2006. In February 2006, the presidents met with each other and with the co-chairs in France. They met again under the co-chairs' auspices in Bucharest in June and Minsk in November. Although a hoped-for breakthrough did not materialize by the end of 2006, the sides were close to agreement on basic principles for a settlement agreement. The co-chairs will continue to meet with the two sides in 2007 and hope for visible progress after the May elections in Armenia.

Central Asia: U.S. goals in Central Asia are to support the development of democratic, market-oriented, and fully sovereign states contributing to regional stability, security, and human rights. The United States seeks to revitalize ancient ties between Central and South Asia, and to create new links in energy, trade, transport, and communications. At the same time, we continue to support further integration of these nations into the Euro-Atlantic community. The OSCE plays an important role in advancing these goals. The OSCE conducts key human dimension activities, especially through its field missions, including its anti-torture program, and work to strengthen the freedom of media and rule of law and to assist independent journalists. Equally critical is addressing the abuse of law, stemming restrictive NGO legislation, and halting crackdowns on civil society.

A promising growth area for OSCE programming in Central Asia in support of U.S. goals are those activities focused on transnational issues, such as terrorism, trafficking (human beings, drugs and arms), border security, and police training. Several Central Asian states have shown willingness to cooperate with the OSCE on these issues, including implementation of the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism and the activities of the OSCE's police unit. The United States is exploring possible ways to increase cooperation in these areas. Several Central Asian governments have expressed an interest in increased activities in the Economic and Environmental Dimension. The OSCE is doing excellent work through its Environment and Security program to address environmental hot spots that could be destabilizing. The Central Asians have shown enthusiasm for this program, which centers on promoting technical and scientific cooperation between states.

Kazakhstan: Participating states are pressing the Kazakhstanis to bring their country in line with OSCE standards given Kazakhstan's bid to chair the OSCE in 2009. The OSCE Center in Almaty has sought to assist Kazakhstan to uphold OSCE core principles through programs promoting free and fair elections, legal education for lawyers, police training, and civil society development. The OSCE's efforts may be complicated by the Government of Kazakhstan's insistence in late 2006 to limit the OSCE Center's mandate to six months rather than the previous length of one year -- a bureaucratic move that will necessitate future twice-yearly discussion and negotiation of the Center's mandate. Kazakhstan's human rights and democracy records remained poor in 2006. Beginning in November 2006, local government officials executed surprise demolitions of Hare Krishna homes, despite negative publicity and diplomatic pressure to cease. Against the OSCE Media Freedom Representative's recommendation, President Nazarbayev signed into law restrictive amendments to Kazakhstan's media law. Libel laws in Kazakhstan still restrict freedom of expression, as journalists continued to be convicted in 2006 for allegedly insulting the dignity and honor of the president.

Kyrgyzstan: Throughout 2006, Kyrgyzstan stalled on constitutional reform. Protests in November finally forced the adoption of a new constitution that gave some hope to those wanting to see less power concentrated in the president and more checks and balances. However, many of these hopes were dashed when a second revised constitution that restored many presidential powers was drafted in December and enacted in January. The Government of Kyrgyzstan failed to rescind restrictive libel laws or to transform state TV and radio into independent entities as promised by President Bakiyev. Nevertheless, Kyrgyzstan maintains one of the most vibrant civil societies and media in Central Asia.

The OSCE's work in Kyrgyzstan has also contributed to progress. The OSCE's police assistance work in particular is a noteworthy success story. The police have handled recent public demonstrations well due partly to the anti-riot training they have received. The public's attitude towards the police has improved since the OSCE began its program, and the OSCE has delivered a variety of police equipment, which has received extensive positive press coverage. This assistance is designed to aid transparency and fight corruption within the police force by providing the tools needed to train those who are in a position to uphold the rule of law and maintain a reputable, honest, and respected police force.

Tajikistan: Tajikistan hosts the largest of the OSCE Central Asian field presences. Its activities include de-mining and civic education for youth. Tajikistan has been an active and enthusiastic supporter of OSCE counter-terrorism and border initiatives, including strengthening travel document security. The OSCE Center in Dushanbe's Small Arms/Light Weapons (SALW) and conventional ammunition programs, under the guidance of the OSCE SALW and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition Documents, is a major success story, with at least seven countries, including the United States, making financial and in-kind contributions to infrastructure and capacity-building, as well as destruction of surpluses. The OSCE has worked with the Tajiks on election reform and other basic OSCE commitments; Tajikistan's revised election law promulgated in 2004 was an improvement over previous legislation, but significant shortcomings remain.

Presidential elections were held on November 6, 2006 in Tajikistan. ODIHR assessed that democratic practices were not fully tested in this election because of the lack of genuine competition. The election process also revealed substantial shortcomings, according to the Election Observation Mission's preliminary report, including the lack of a credible challenger, election legislation requiring significant improvement to meet OSCE commitments, and media which is still largely under government control. However, some aspects of the election merited positive comment, including a calm and peaceful election period, an election process that was administered efficiently, and free media time afforded to candidates. NGOs are still perceived as a threat and the Government of Tajikistan continues to enforce bureaucratic roadblocks to NGOs seeking to register. In the case of media, some local independent media stations have not received broadcast licenses, and other independent media outlets have been prevented from broadcasting.

Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan continued to take numerous steps backward on political reform during 2006. According to a little-known 2002 parliamentary resolution, Uzbekistan's next presidential election is to take place in December 2007. To date, Uzbek authorities have not indicated a desire to receive assistance in preparation for the election. During 2006, the government continued to pressure international NGOs and to repress civil society and opposition activities. In 2006, the Government of Uzbekistan forced 16, U.S.-based NGOs to close. In addition, throughout much of 2006, the OSCE Center in Tashkent was prevented from conducting any projects, and the Government of Uzbekistan successfully lobbied to change the Center to a project coordinator's office, seeking a much narrower focus for the OSCE's work in Uzbekistan. Nonetheless, the project coordinator's office was allowed to engage in a few projects by year's end, and still serves as an important resource and venue for human rights and democracy supporters.

Turkmenistan: The OSCE is the only international organization in which Turkmenistan is a full member and which is

present on the ground in Ashgabat, offering the government and people opportunities for concrete cooperation to build a democratic future and reminding the government of its human rights obligations. In 2006, the OSCE maintained pressure on Turkmenistan to improve human rights, particularly regarding access to prisoners, freedom of association and religion, public access to the internet, and loosening restrictions on NGOs. The United States will continue to work with other OSCE members to improve the situation in Turkmenistan. The change in leadership due to President Niyazov's death in December 2006 may present opportunities for additional engagement with Turkmenistan in 2007, particularly on border security issues, combating drug trafficking and electoral reform.

Issues Affecting OSCE's Activities and Effectiveness

Russia, as well as a number of participating states (mostly from the CIS) that host OSCE field missions, continue to be strongly critical of the OSCE's field operations and the work of ODIHR. They assert that there are "double standards" on human rights, ODIHR "interference" in domestic issues, excessive concentration of OSCE activities in the former Soviet republics, and lack of balance in OSCE activities that emphasize the human dimension over the economic and security dimensions. They have singled out for special mention the OSCE's election-related activities, specifically election observation procedures, asserting that a lack of standardized election criteria has led to politicized election assessments.

The United States strongly disagrees with these criticisms. Supported by the vast majority of participating states, we have continuously stressed that there are no OSCE double standards on human rights. All OSCE states signed on to the same commitments to respect fundamental freedoms and human rights and hold free and fair elections. There are also no OSCE double standards on election assessments: OSCE observer missions have standard assessment criteria, listed in a publicly accessible election observation handbook, and standard advance training. The OSCE's human dimension work is not concentrated exclusively to "east of Vienna:" while the core mandate of the OSCE's field missions is to help countries meet OSCE standards, efforts to combat trafficking in persons are directed toward the entire OSCE region, and several events in 2006 were concentrated in western European capitals on anti-Semitism and racism. CIS criticism of ODIHR "interference" in domestic affairs is also unwarranted: participating States agreed in Moscow in 1991 that human dimension commitments are "matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating states and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the state concerned."

While the United States is always open to suggestions on ways to make the OSCE more effective, adaptations or changes must not come at the expense of its democracy and rights promotion activities. At the same time, we oppose revision of the OSCE's democratic principles and election monitoring standards.

OSCE Scales of Contribution and Budget

Following U.S. consultations with its major OSCE partners, the OSCE's 56 states agreed to a 2007 budget of \$220 million (zero nominal growth from the adopted 2006 budget), a budget that is sufficient for the OSCE to carry out its core activities to promote democracy and human rights. The OSCE Scales of Contribution for 2008-2010 will need to be renegotiated over the course of 2007. Given very tight U.S. budget constraints, we will seek to reduce the level of our contribution to the organization. This effort will meet stiff resistance from most other major players, who believe the United States is capable of paying much more, rather than less, of the organization's costs.

Brussels Ministerial

The December 4-5, 2006 OSCE ministerial in Brussels allowed the United States to achieve a number of significant goals, including protecting ODIHR and the operation of the OSCE generally, while putting an end to the time-consuming reform process that had dominated discussions over the past year. The ministerial endorsed a number of draft decisions of importance to the United States on issues such as tolerance (including references to the three tolerance representatives and a conference on anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance), a U.S.-initiated decision on the sexual exploitation of children, and trafficking in persons. Other decisions adopted included those on counter-terrorism, criminal justice, and economic issues, including energy security. The United States capitalized on opportunities at the ministerial to demonstrate support for the Istanbul commitments and proposed positive ideas for movement on the unresolved conflicts in Moldova, Georgia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. In the political-military arena, three decisions were taken on managing and destroying stockpiles of excess small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition, as well as on support for full implementation of UNSCR 1540 relating to better controls on weapons of mass destruction and related components.

The reform process launched by the Ljubljana Roadmap Decision in 2005 concluded in Brussels, with agreement on several decisions on the internal functioning of the organization, the Secretariat, and the inter-governmental process. These included formal agreement on rules of procedure (which codified existing practice); elimination of the moribund senior council; creation of three sub-committees of the Permanent Council on an experimental basis; and agreement to launch negotiations on a convention on legal status and privileges and immunities for the OSCE.

The ministerial deferred a decision on the question of the chairmanship of the OSCE in 2009 to no later than the Madrid ministerial at the end of 2007. The decision adopted in Brussels welcomed the interest by Kazakhstan in chairing the organization in 2009, but also pointed out that the highest functional responsibilities of the OSCE are a reflection of willingness and capacity to exercise leadership on the implementation of OSCE commitments, norms, and values. The decision took note that Kazakhstan has committed to a program of political action and reforms, and also committed to exercise leadership in upholding OSCE standards.

Implementing the U.S. Agenda in 2007 and Beyond

Priorities for 2007

In 2007, U.S. priorities for the OSCE include:

- Increase the OSCE's effectiveness in transformational diplomacy to help all OSCE participating States reach their objectives to become fully democratic and prosperous nations at peace and helping to improve collective security;
- Continue to promote final settlement talks and resolution of regional conflicts in Moldova, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Georgia, including:
 - In Georgia, continue to support the OSCE Mission's implementation of projects identified by the needs assessment survey for South Ossetia; continue to develop broader international support for resolution of the conflict;
 - In Moldova, engage the parties to the Transnistria conflict in the U.S. role of observer in the negotiating process,

while working with the mediators to press the Transnistrian authorities to return to the negotiations;

- In the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the United States will work with its fellow Minsk Group co-chairs (France and Russia) to resolve differences between the Armenian and Azerbaijani sides in pursuit of a settlement agreement;

- Enhance OSCE activities in Central Asia and the Caucasus, including efforts at regional cooperation on border control, combating terrorism, and implementation of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs). Press for fundamental democratic reforms and protection of human rights, including freedom of assembly, the media, and religion;
- Seek ways to utilize OSCE expertise in developing and implementing programs aimed at combating terrorism, particularly through the strengthening of border security management;
- Increase the OSCE's outreach to partner countries, particularly Afghanistan, as well as the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation. In Afghanistan, seek ways the OSCE could become more actively engaged in the reconstruction and stabilization effort, such as designing a program to strengthen border management and security, and encouraging participation by Afghanistan in OSCE programs aimed at promoting religious and ethnic tolerance and democratic institution-building;
- Consider areas where the OSCE could lend particular expertise on current problems, such as on providing a forum for dialogue on countering radical Islam, and addressing the pressing issue of energy security within the OSCE's Economic and Environmental framework.
- Participate actively in negotiations on a convention to give the OSCE international legal status, while ensuring that such negotiations do not reopen the acquis of OSCE commitments.

Promoting the Human Dimension

- Work to keep the annual OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) an effective forum for raising human rights cases, supporting human rights defenders, defending U.S. positions and practices on issues such as human rights and capital punishment, and integrating follow up on issues raised at the HDIM into the OSCE Ministerial agenda; ensure that NGOs remain able to participate fully in the HDIM and the OSCE's other human dimension events.
- Prepare OMiK for its role in Kosovo after a settlement is reached on Kosovo's final status. Once a status settlement is reached, we expect the OSCE Mission in Kosovo to operate as the international community's eyes and ears in the field, proactively monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the terms of the agreement;
- Intensify efforts to strengthen implementation of existing OSCE election standards, and ensure that the OSCE continues to be able to provide election-related assistance and effective monitoring and recommendations, including:

- Support OSCE election observation missions: Russia, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and others will hold elections in 2007;
- Continue to defend the OSCE's frank and public assessments of whether elections meet OSCE standards;
- Support ODIHR follow through on recommendations from election observation missions;
- Continue to work with Russia and other CIS countries to increase their participation in election observation missions; such participation carries the potential for strengthening support for improved election procedures in these countries;
- Intensify efforts to promote rule of law, not "rule by law";
- Combat the growing trend of using restrictive NGO legislation to repress civil society;
- Develop more effective ways to help human rights defenders;
- Promote implementation of the OSCE's Action Plan to Combat Trafficking and engagement by the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit;
- Continue efforts in the Balkans to build democratic institutions; promote human rights, including inter-ethnic tolerance and protection of national minorities; fight organized crime and corruption, and bring persons indicted for war crimes to justice.
- Work closely with EU members and other OSCE participating states to maintain emphasis on a Belarusian democracy after the presidential elections and to press the Belarusian Government on accountability;
- Ensure a successful conference on Combating Discrimination, Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding, follow-up to the Cordoba conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance in Bucharest in June.

Focusing the Political-Military Dimension

- Continue to strengthen the OSCE's work in the political-military dimension;
- Continue to engage Russia actively on security issues, including discussing new initiatives on counter-terrorism and on practical ideas for strengthening the political-military dimension;
- Encourage continued progress on implementation of Istanbul commitments relating to the Russian military presence in Georgia, and continue to press for resumption of Russian military withdrawal from Moldova. The United States remains committed to moving ahead with ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty as soon as Russia fulfills its

1999 commitments on troop withdrawal, as well as to helping Russia to complete the withdrawals that it has set for itself;

- Increase counter-terrorism work by using the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), the newly created Security Working Group and the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) to encourage participating states to meet existing commitments and to identify additional measures that the OSCE can take to fight terrorism;
- Counter proliferation of weapons, by promoting implementation of political-military agreements, including on Man Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), small arms and light weapons (SALW), and stockpiles of conventional ammunition; continue to coordinate the development of best practice guides for stockpiles of conventional ammunition;
- Support full implementation by the participating states of UNSCR 1540, which bars non-state actors from obtaining weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and activities by the OSCE to work in cooperation with the UN 1540 Committee in New York;
- Promote full compliance with all political-military commitments, including Vienna Document 1999 and the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, to maintain security and stability in the OSCE region;
- Work closely with the Russian Federation on a May 31-June 1 conference, organized by the OSCE's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU), which will focus on ways public-private partnerships (PPP) can help governments combat terrorism. A wide range of NGOs, government officials, and private sector representatives are expected to attend.

Strengthening the Economic and Environmental Dimension

- Press the Economic and Environmental Subcommittee to focus more on a concrete program of activities;
- Energize the Economic Dimension by developing additional areas in which the OSCE can provide added value, particularly in the field of energy security.



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