



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Maj. Gen. Torres, Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office for Article IV of the Dayton Peace Accords

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 4, 2014

As a proud member of the Contact Group, the United States witnessed first-hand the accomplishments of General Torres and the Parties. Over the past two years, they have made consistent progress toward concluding the transfer of ownership as envisioned by the Parties. Without question, this conventional arms control agreement, stemming from Annex 1-B of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is an exceptional model of sub-regional cooperation.

Since its entry into force in 1996, the Article IV Agreement has significantly contributed to the improved security climate and genuine, positive stability for the people of the Western Balkans. It has provided a concrete foundation for the positive geopolitical changes we see in the region today. The Parties themselves have committed significant political and economic capital to ensure its successful implementation, and the facts speak for themselves: thanks in part to this Agreement, the Western Balkans region has undergone sweeping demilitarization, with more than 10,000 pieces of major military hardware removed or destroyed.

During the 2014 Ministerial in Basel, the Personal Representative and Parties will formally conclude the transfer of ownership. Without question, this will be a historic event. This is not the end of Dayton Article IV; merely a new chapter to an already inspiring story. The United States welcomes the invitation by the Parties for the Contact Group countries to remain involved in Dayton Article IV.

In his career as a professional military officer, Major General Torres has proven his ability to complete missions successfully. Major General Torres has worked with the Article IV Parties to transfer ownership of the Agreement as efficiently as possible. While only a few months remain until the ministerial, all indications are that Major General Torres will complete the mission successfully. The United States extends its deepest appreciation to General Torres as well as to the Parties for 'a job well done.'

To underscore how the United States views the Dayton Article IV, let me close with some very recent and poignant words to the Parties from U.S. Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller that perhaps deserve a broader audience. When she addressed a recent meeting here in Vienna, she said: "Dayton Article IV is a testament to what can be achieved through conventional arms control measures at a time when they are being sorely tested elsewhere in Europe."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.