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United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 8, 2010

The United States warmly welcomes Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to the OSCE Permanent Council, and thanks him for his thoughtful remarks.

The United States supports your efforts to strengthen cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations. We recognize the UN's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and support the crucial role that regional organizations 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. The in-depth local knowledge of organizations such as the OSCE, combined with their familiarity with the security challenges in their regions, enhances their ability to prevent and resolve conflict.

The United States supports the efforts of such organizations to assume a greater role in ensuring regional peace and security. We believe they could strengthen their capabilities in areas such as addressing impediments to humanitarian access, gathering information on alleged violations of human rights, and supporting political processes aimed at resolving conflict. The United States has tabled proposals in the framework of the OSCE's Corfu Process that we believe would enhance the OSCE's capabilities and effectiveness in conflict prevention and crisis management. In the post-conflict sphere, we believe regional organizations, including the OSCE, 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.

In addition, we see scope for further cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations on efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. We believe the OSCE can make valuable contributions in areas in which it possesses unique expertise such as border security and management, police training, and elections - and can potentially engage Afghans in democracy, human rights, economic/environmental issues, and other activities. Your recent visit to Central Asia, Mr. Secretary General, underscores the important work the United Nations is doing there. It also highlights the continued need for regional cooperation on issues such as disarmament, water resources and other regional environmental issues. The UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Ashgabat plays a crucial role and should continue to foster dialogue on the key issues of cross-border threats and challenges such as terrorism, drug trafficking and environmental degradation, especially in connection with the Aral Sea.

Thank you once again, Secretary General Ban, for your appearance here today. We wish you all success in your vital work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.