



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Address by Lithuania's President, Valdas Adamkus

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 8, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. President, it is an honor to welcome you to the Permanent Council and to listen to your vision for the OSCE. It is encouraging to hear support from leaders such as you about the OSCE's continuing relevance as a values-based organization focused on fostering democracy, stability and regional cooperation. Your statement has particular resonance in this forum given Lithuania's recent history, and the dramatic strides your country has made since regaining independence.

Lithuania is a success story, a prime example of how far states can move forward when they embrace freedom, serve the interests of their citizens, and commit to the path of democracy. Not so long ago, the citizens of Lithuania lived a much different life under the Soviet Union. But Lithuania has joined the front lines of freedom in the modern world. And under your steady and able leadership, Lithuania has continued in its transformation into an independent, prosperous democracy and an important member of the EU and of NATO. My government congratulates the citizens and the leadership of Lithuania for their strength, their courage and their perseverance in pursuing a stable and democratic future.

Lithuania should be proud of its successful transformation to a responsible and active member of the Euro-Atlantic community; this pride is evident in your country's desire to chair the OSCE. The United States welcomes Lithuania's interest in playing a leadership role in this organization.

In Brussels last December, all 56 participating States agreed that any country seeking to hold the chairmanship of the OSCE is expected to exercise leadership and a willingness and capacity to implement all OSCE commitments, norms and values. We certainly believe that Lithuania does that, and therefore has earned the full support of our membership for its candidacy to lead the OSCE.

We wish the citizens and government of Lithuania continued progress and prosperity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.