



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Head of OSCE Office in Zagreb, Ambassador Fuentes

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 26, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

We would like to welcome Ambassador Fuentes back to the Permanent Council. Ambassador, thank you for your effective leadership and for your detailed report.

The United States believes that Croatia is making good progress on all areas of the OSCE Office's mandate.

We continue to see progress on refugee returns and are pleased to see the Croatian government progressing towards its targets set in consultation with the international community. The UNHCR report of March 9, 2009 noted significant progress on provision of housing allocations. The government of Croatia should continue its commitment to fulfill its obligations under the Sarajevo Declaration.

We commend the Office for the fine work it continues to do on monitoring war crimes cases. Croatia's actions have shown that it is prepared to cooperate with the international community on resolving war crimes issues. We encourage the Office also to focus on training for Croatian civil society, in order to build capacity for domestic monitoring after the Office closes.

Ambassador Fuentes, we commend your leadership of the Office, which has been invaluable in assisting Croatia to get to this point. The United States believes that the OSCE office can be closed at the end of the 2009.

As this is your last address to the PC as Head of the Office, we want to thank you, Ambassador Fuentes, for your hard work, your dedication and your objectivity, which have been pivotal in helping the OSCE and Croatia accomplish their mutual goals. Your leadership has facilitated the kind of collaborative relationship with the Government of Croatia that all OSCE field missions aspire to. We wish you all success in your future work.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.