



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Arrests of Journalists in Turkey**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
December 18, 2014

The United States is concerned by the December 14 raids and arrests in Turkey, which appear to target media outlets that have been openly critical of the current Turkish government. Media freedom, due process, and judicial independence are key elements in every healthy democracy and are enshrined in the Turkish constitution.

We echo the Representative on the Freedom of Media's December 15 press release, in which she wrote, "Yesterday's arrests point to a resurgence in the threats against journalists...Laws should not be used to curb dissenting views in a society." Freedom of expression includes the freedom to criticize the government. Voicing opposition does not equal conspiracy or treason. As we have made clear in the past, we remain concerned about government interference with freedom of expression.

As Turkey's friend and ally, we urge the Turkish authorities to ensure their actions do not undermine these core values and Turkey's own democratic foundations. And we encourage Turkey to engage with the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media in seeking ways to align their OSCE commitments with the needs of their country.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.