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United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 30, 2014

The United States welcomes Dr. Yigitgüden to the Permanent Council as he presents his latest report as OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA).

Dr. Yigitgüden, you and your staff have done a great deal of work during the past several months, including coordinating with the Swiss Chairmanship to organize and prepare the Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague last month, and the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting (EEDIM) last week here in Vienna. Both were well-organized and informed delegations about ongoing and potential activities for the OSCE in the Second Dimension. We look to you and your office to provide us with guidance on how to continue improving the effectiveness of these meetings, both in terms of the format and the quality and relevance of the presentations.

On several occasions in the past we have called for reporting from your office that gives us a better understanding of your office's activities and those of the field missions' Economic and Environmental Officers. As we stated last week during the EEDIM, we were particularly pleased with the recent Information Note on implementation of the 2012 Dublin Declaration, including the thematic background it provided on that declaration, current challenges to the declaration's implementation, and some examples of successful OSCE activities related to good governance and anti-corruption. We need more of this type of reporting – solid background focused on particular Second Dimension commitments, the activities undertaken by the OSCE related to those commitments, and most importantly, what their impact has been or is expected to be.

Dr. Yigitgüden, we continue to call for greater attention in the OSCE to combatting corruption. Your office has done well in developing anti-corruption projects, but we need more. We challenge you in particular to work together with the Conflict Prevention Center and the Project Coordinator in Ukraine to develop additional ideas and project concepts, in partnership with the Ukrainian government, to help the government and people of Ukraine combat corruption. There is a tremendous desire, among both the elected leaders and the citizens of Ukraine, to eliminate the corruption that plagued their society for so long, and led to the courageous protests on the Maidan last winter. The OSCE should be involved in supporting reform efforts, and we look to you for leadership here.

Dr. Yigitgüden, the United States continues to believe there is untapped potential in the Second Dimension. You have our support for your work, and we thank you for this report.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.