



United States Mission to the OSCE

US Country Reports Released

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Tuesday in Washington, Secretary Rice announced the publication of the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2007. These congressionally mandated annual reports speak to America's continued support for those fundamental freedoms embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The report is global, and gives details in key human rights categories. If we concentrate on the OSCE region, we have seen some progress in the last generation regarding respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. But there have also been a number of countries whose records remained poor or continue to regress.

Human rights defenders and nongovernmental organizations, so essential to a nation's success, remain under pressure. In too many countries in the OSCE region, a disturbing number of countries passed or selectively applied laws and regulations against NGOs and journalists. NGOs and journalists also were subjected to extralegal measures.

We hope that these reports will be a source of information and accountability for governments and societies everywhere. We will circulate a statement over the delegates' network that will provide you with the website on which the country reports can be found: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007>.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.