



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Secretary General's Presentation of the 2016 Unified Budget Proposal

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 8, 2015

The United States welcomes the draft 2016 Unified Budget Proposal (UBP) and thanks the Secretary General and the fund managers for all their hard work.

The role of the OSCE as a major contributor to regional security and stability has taken on increased significance, as demonstrated *inter alia* by the demanding work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. Despite budget constraints and ongoing challenges across the OSCE region, it is vital that participating States provide the organization with the necessary resources to carry out its mandate effectively. To that end, Mr. Secretary General, we believe that the proposal you presented provides a reasonable starting point for our budget discussions.

We welcome the inclusion of the Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in this year's UBP. The BMSC crucial for the OSCE, as it is the only platform for regional border security cooperation and exchange in Central Asia, with a proven track record for successfully training border security officials from participating States and Partners, including Afghanistan. In the joint committee meeting of the three committees just this week, many participating States noted that the BMSC is an asset that may prove useful in supporting a constructive response to the refugee and migrant crisis.

We also take special note of the inclusion of another new cross-dimensional program on human security in Ukraine that promotes safety for communities and vulnerable people. We are encouraged to see the proposed increased in funding to the OSCE's independent institutions. The increase for the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and Representative on Freedom of the Media support the increasing demands from the participating States. Nonetheless, the proposed increase still would not provide a level of funding adequate for the OSCE to meet its core obligations to participating States in the field of advancing human rights and fundamental freedoms, tolerance, rule of law, media freedom, and election monitoring. We urge participating States not to politicize the budgets for these institutions, as they uphold commitments essential to our shared concept of comprehensive security.

We continue to see progress in Southeastern Europe toward greater European and Euro-Atlantic integration and consolidation of democratic reforms. This progress has resulted in the handover of successful reform programs to international and local actors. At the same time, security and governance challenges continue to grow in Central Asia. The OSCE field missions in this region should also have the resources they need to support efforts to improve border security, promote economic security and good governance, and protect human rights and fundamental freedom.

Finally, we remain concerned with the growing share of the budget going to the Secretariat, and encourage the Secretariat to implement additional cost-containment measures and offset any proposed increases with programmatic reductions and cost efficiencies. Mr. Secretary General, I heard your message today too.

The United States looks forward to working with Germany as it takes the lead on budget negotiations for 2016. We welcome discussions to reform the budget cycle in conjunction with the Helsinki+40 effort to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of the OSCE in the modern security environment. We stand ready to work constructively to reach consensus on a budget that supports the mandate of the OSCE to promote comprehensive security across the OSCE space.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.