



United States Mission to the OSCE

USG Statement on the OSCE 2009 Budget to the Permanent Council

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 16, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

The United States welcomes the presentation of the 2009 Unified Budget Proposal and thanks the Secretary General and all of the Fund Managers for their hard work in putting together this comprehensive and informative document. Performance-Based Program Budgeting (PBPB) has clearly had a positive influence on this budget document. We look forward to the full implementation of PBPB, including the publication of performance indicators, in the near future.

We note that the 2009 budget proposal calls for a three percent increase over the approved budget for 2008. We had hoped to see a zero nominal growth proposal, and still intend to help find sufficient savings and efficiencies to reach a zero nominal growth budget for next year. To be clear, the United States position is that we support a 2009 Unified Budget of no more than Euros 164,168,200. In our view, the way to achieve that is to focus on those activities of highest priority.

In that regard, we are pleased that, overall, the budget proposal calls for increases in areas of very high priority not only to the United States, but also to the organization as a whole. Clearly the establishment of twenty new Military Monitoring Officers (MMOs) in the Mission to Georgia requires sufficient funding. Indeed, we would argue that funding for the full complement of 108 MMOs should be included in the Mission's budget, and would encourage the Mission and the Secretariat to provide, at the appropriate time, reliable information about the anticipated costs should all 108 MMOs be authorized. As everyone knows, the U.S. also attaches a high priority to the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). That said we would welcome more specifics about the rationale behind ODIHR's proposed increases. Are there contingency needs that should be covered as a result of budget cuts made last year? In addition, although we welcome the organization's priority attention to Central Asia—particularly in the area of border management—we would also appreciate having a more exact figure for this component of the budget.

Mr. Chairman,

During the Program Outline exercise, the United States repeatedly asked the organization not only to focus on priority activities, but also to "sunset" activities that were of a lesser priority, or had outlived their useful life cycle. We outlined our priorities, but were disappointed that others did not take up this challenge. Continuing to pursue this goal, we will seek to fund the

higher priority activities described above by identifying further savings in areas of less importance. To cite one example, we continue to believe that the size and breadth of activities of our Balkans missions remain somewhat out of proportion to the work that remains to be done there. We believe that compensatory cuts in the Balkans can be found without harming the mandates of these missions or restricting the important work that they do (e.g., several unified budget project areas could be financed via extra-budgetary funds).

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to thank the Secretary General and his staff for their restraint in the Secretariat's own budget proposal. While we disagree about some of the priorities expressed therein, we can accept the overall level of funding proposed for the Secretariat. We look forward to the coming budget negotiations, and hope all participating States will approach those discussions in a constructive manner, keeping firmly in mind the priorities and strengths of this organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.