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

### **On the Assessment of the Structured Dialogue in View of the Ministerial Council**

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Harry Kamian  
to the Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the  
Permanent Council, Vienna  
November 29, 2017

Dear Chairpersons,

-- First let me express my gratitude for the work that Structured Dialogue IWG Chair Ambassador Eberhard Pohl has done this year to advance the goals set forth in the Lisbon to Hamburg MD. Ambassador Pohl has helped us to launch "a structured dialogue on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area to foster a greater understanding on these issues that could serve as a common solid basis for the way forward."

--We have started that process, and the Structured Dialogue has been a useful platform for all nations to raise their security concerns frankly.

--The challenge ahead for 2018 is to deepen that dialogue and provide opportunities for nations to discuss the issues that have been put on the table, both with reinforced sessions and among delegations to allow time for expert discussion to enhance mutual understanding. We are far from completing the real work that needs to be done in this regard.

--Looking at how to energize our work in 2018, compiling a catalogue of threat perceptions voiced by pS could be one way to advance this initiative in the coming year.

--Most of the threat perceptions that have been put on the table are not susceptible to easy resolution. By better understanding the source of these perceptions, however, we can shed light on past developments, potentially alleviate pS' enduring concerns, and certainly improve our ability to understand one another's language and intentions. All of this can only help us to address concerns raised in other OSCE venues.

-- We also should aim in 2018, in the Structured Dialogue, to gain a better understanding of each other's concerns about military activities, force laydown, and other activities that impact European security. This will improve the quality and depth of discussions in other fora and enrich our critical efforts to modernize the Vienna Document and rebuild military transparency in Europe.

--Many of the concerns raised in the SD fall outside the expertise resident at the OSCE, but there are several areas where we can generate meaningful, forward momentum. We know well that OSCE has expertise in border security and is developing its toolbox of best practices for countering violent extremism. These are both issues of high relevance in the context of concerns that have been raised in the SD about the nexus of migration, economic dislocation,

and terrorism. The OSCE also has done significant work fleshing out cyber best practices and exploring cyber insecurity.

--Dear Chairpersons,

If the SD can help us focus our work on key threat concerns, that would be a good result. And as we have said from the beginning, the Structured Dialogue must have no preconceived outcomes or false deadlines.

--To achieve the type of value added that we envision, it is critical that all discussion in the Structured Dialogue be among nations, not think tanks. The goal is to afford nations the opportunity to exchange views and ask questions frankly and openly, with the goal of improving mutual understanding of security threats, increasing transparency, and identifying constructive avenues to help address concerns.

--If we can accomplish this, the Structured Dialogue can serve as a confidence and security building measure in and of itself.

--We believe that we should return in 2018 to a discussion of key threat perceptions in order to offer opportunities for genuine expert discussion on the root causes of instability and security concerns in the OSCE area and how best to address them.

--Now is not the time to relaunch conventional arms control, at a time when one pS is violating, selectively implementing, or not implementing key conventional arms control agreements and treaties and principles that underlie those agreements. While rebuilding military transparency through full implementation of the Vienna Document and its modernization can help address some of the concerns raised, in fact most of the security concerns raised in the SD do not appear susceptible to arms control solutions.

--We were pleased with the general outcomes of the initial November 2017 mapping workshop, but note that the mapping exercise is only a tool intended to support and facilitate the overall Structured Dialogue. It must firmly be anchored in it.

--We also believe that papers reporting on the work of the IWG should avoid attempting to draw broad conclusions or making interpretive statements – something that is more likely to retard rather than facilitate dialogue. They should instead focus on capturing what the participating States said.

Dear Chairpersons,

In closing, I would like to thank again the Structured Dialogue IWG Chair Ambassador Eberhard Pohl and his team for the work we have done together this year. We look forward to renewed discussion and dialogue in the Structured Dialogue in 2018.

Thank You.

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