



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Extension of the OSCE Office in Minsk

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 11, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our government does not agree with the interpretative statement that was made by the delegation of Belarus with relation to PC Decision 874 extending the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk. The United States government believes that one of the greatest strengths of this organization is the flexibility and dynamic action of our field missions under the political direction of the Chairman in Office. The OSCE's field missions are given the mandate to undertake broad program responsibilities, and not to have individual projects micro-managed. The Heads of Mission should be free to develop projects based on their overall mandate, and to operate in all of the OSCE's interdependent areas of work. That is the strength of this organization, and that is the added value of our missions. Mission-reporting should be honest; it should reflect the best judgment of the Head of Mission and should not be subject to censorship or editing by other actors.

We would like to request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.