



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Response to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania**

As delivered by Ambassador Michael R. Carpenter  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
September 21, 2023

Ambassador Berton – welcome to the Permanent Council and thank you for your report on the OSCE’s impressive efforts in Albania. Some of the most visible OSCE successes come from field mission activities. The OSCE Presence in Albania is a prime example of how the organization is working creatively and effectively in all three dimensions of security to help governments put their commitments into practice and make tangible improvements for their people.

The success of our collective efforts to promote OSCE commitments, and by so doing enhance security across our participating States, demonstrates the value of the OSCE. We are delivering results despite Russia’s efforts to eviscerate the organization. We fully support your office’s mandate to **strengthen** the rule of law and justice system, **advance** good governance at all levels, **counter** transnational threats, **contribute** to a healthier media environment, **promote** and engage civil society, and also gender equality in Albania. We appreciate your core set of programs that enhance security cooperation, strengthen the judiciary, advance democratic electoral processes, fight corruption, and combat human trafficking. Your work has made a profound positive impression on the people of Albania, if I may say so; we were impressed but not surprised to learn that the OSCE presence is among the top three most trusted organizations in the country.

The United States is pleased to provide extrabudgetary funding for your efforts to combat human trafficking by training future prosecutors, judges, and police officers. Supporting the OSCE’s anti-trafficking programs advances our shared goals of raising awareness among potential victims and helping governments prevent and deter trafficking. We are also proud to contribute to the office’s program to train and support the judges and staff of Albania’s Constitutional Court on protecting human rights. We look forward to the continued success of these projects and welcome your thoughts on other related programs that could advance your goals and those of the mission.

The United States lauds your work to promote freedom of expression, including for members of the media, in Albania. I understand you hosted a successful workshop in February on the importance of communication between public institutions and the media. Then you demonstrated support for young talent in May by revisiting the Tirana Media Platform at the South East Europe Media Conference. Your office’s leadership was an important contribution to promoting the role of young journalists in the future of media.

Ambassador Berton – thank you for your leadership of the OSCE Presence in Albania during this period between Heads of Mission. The United States applauds your team for its strong partnership with the government of Albania and Albania’s civil society to advance the implementation of its OSCE commitments. I wish you continued success.

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