



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Report by OSCE Head of Mission to Armenia

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 20, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We too would like to welcome Ambassador Pryakhin to the Permanent Council in this, his first appearance as Head of Office, although it is not his first appearance within these sacred halls, and to recognize his rapid engagement on the host of complex issues in his new assignment.

The OSCE Office in Yerevan continues to carry out critical work in all of the OSCE's dimensions.

To begin, the United States is encouraged by the OSCE Office's proposals to train parliamentary staff, to assist in developing a Code of Conduct for parliamentarians, and to work with the government on electoral reform. These efforts can be very valuable, and electoral reform is essential if Armenia's next election is to meet OSCE standards. We urge the Armenian parliament and electoral authorities to take full advantage of these offers of assistance.

The United States is also glad to see that Armenia is moving forward on counter-terrorism legislation and measures. As Ambassador Pryakhin's noted in his report, his office has conducted a Counter-Terrorism Workshop and a seminar on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373, which we applaud.

Ambassador Pryakhin's office is also to be congratulated for its progress in identifying areas in which the Memorandum of Understanding on Police Service Reform can be implemented. The United States stands firm in its willingness to assist in this important task.

We further congratulate Ambassador Pryakhin for organizing the preparatory seminar for the OSCE Economic Forum that was conducted this week in Yerevan. The theme of this seminar, "Supporting the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises", reflects the importance of these ventures to economic growth and development.

Although Ambassador Pryakhin has been in his position for only a few weeks, it is clear that he has quickly assumed his new duties and is continuing to push forward on several important projects initiated by his predecessor.

The United States looks forward to continuing to work closely with Ambassador Pryakhin and the OSCE Office in Yerevan, and reiterates its commitment to assist in the strengthening of Armenian democratic and economic institutions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.