



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement in Response to Christopher Patten, EU Commissioner for External Relations

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Paul W. Jones
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 15, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would first like to welcome Mr. Patten to the Permanent Council, and thank him for his remarks, which highlighted a number of areas in which the OSCE and the EU have common interests and goals.

As mentioned by Mr. Patten, there are a number of critical elections that will be held in OSCE participating States in the coming months. Elections in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan will be particularly important for the future of those countries. In this regard, we would underscore the importance of Mr. Patten's call for an early Belarusian invitation for an OSCE election monitoring and observation mission. In all of these countries, democratic elections, with a range of candidates and opposition political parties, with domestic election monitoring, unimpeded voting, and with free and independent media that can report on the campaign, conduct of the voting and tabulation of the results capture a wide range of important OSCE commitments. In short, well-conducted elections mean that many other OSCE commitments are on track.

The United States acknowledges the critical role that good border management plays in assuring stability and security, and looks forward to close EU – OSCE cooperation on this issue. We wholeheartedly share Mr. Patten's view, however, that lasting security and stability calls for meaningful political and economic reform and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In regard to Mr. Patten's reference to illicit traffic across the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, the United States would like to reiterate its support for strengthened border controls, including with the use of international monitors, to assist both Ukraine and Moldova in clamping down on the illegal movement of goods and persons. The United States welcomes the EU's determination to assist Moldova in furthering its goal of drawing closer to European standards and institutions.

The United States welcomes the establishment of the European Neighborhood Policy, and sees it as a complement to OSCE efforts to promote the rule of law, good governance, human rights and economic development. We encourage the participation of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the European Neighborhood Policy, in order to facilitate greater European integration of the southern Caucasus region.

The United States supports EU progress on the path toward greater integration and enlargement. A Europe united and more capable to meet the risks and challenges of the twenty-first century is in all of our interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.