



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Final Statement**

As delivered by Ambassador Larry Napper, Head of Delegation,  
to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw  
October 15, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

It has been 15 years since the fall of the Iron Curtain, which divided East and West and deprived so many people of democracy and the freedoms of expression, association, religion, and movement. However, today there are still people throughout the OSCE region who struggle – sometimes at great risk to their personal safety or the safety of their loved ones – for fundamental freedoms and human rights. It has been our job at this meeting to listen to the concerns of these human rights defenders and to support their work in the name of democracy and common security.

In that regard, we are disappointed by the absence, for the fifth year, of any representatives of the Government of Turkmenistan at this meeting. We welcome the participation of several NGOs from Turkmenistan. It is essential that human rights advocates have the right to leave and return to their countries in safety when they participate in meetings such as these. It is also crucial that the OSCE participating States support this right, remain engaged on developments in Turkmenistan, and continue to urge Turkmenistan to implement the recommendations in the report of the Moscow Mechanism Rapporteur. If the Government does not hear us, we trust the people of Turkmenistan will.

Mr. Chairman, the Human Dimension is important to peace, stability and economic cooperation in the OSCE region. The U.S. welcomes proposals to enhance and develop initiatives in the political-military and economic-environmental dimensions. However, we will not pursue them at the expense of human rights and democratization, lest we begin to erode an indispensable pillar which has made the OSCE so strong. Thankfully, the three dimensions are neither competing nor mutually exclusive.

All 55 participating States agreed at the Istanbul Summit in 1999 and last year in the OSCE “Strategy to Address Threat to Security and Stability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” that “respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law is at the core of the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security.” There are no double standards in OSCE commitments or activities related to democracy and human rights; all OSCE participating States voluntarily pledged to uphold the same commitments that comprise a single standard for all. Ensuring compliance with those commitments should be welcomed as a vital part of the OSCE’s core mission. In this regard, we welcome the vigorous statement this morning in support of the OSCE issued by over 100 NGOs from the OSCE region. It is a concrete manifestation of the contribution that civil society can make in all OSCE participating States and to the OSCE as an institution.

Mr. Chairman, one of the striking features of this year's meeting was the number of excellent side events organized in conjunction with the formal sessions. These events allowed for focused discussions and dynamic debate on specific topics. The NGO contribution to these sessions was invaluable: NGOs added breadth and depth to virtually every agenda item of this meeting.

Last week, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Detainee Affairs, Matthew Waxman, used the side-event forum to explain the steps that the United States has taken to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for the abuses of detainees in Iraq and to ensure that similar issues do not re-emerge. These acts were wrong and inconsistent with U.S. policies and values. The United States was appreciative of the opportunity to make that explanation here in Warsaw and to stress that torture is not acceptable under any circumstances. We encourage other participating States also to explain what they are doing to address and prevent human rights abuses in their own countries.

The United States and France also organized an event on Holocaust education. It is a tribute to the important work of the Task Force on International Cooperation on Holocaust Education that a growing number of countries are seeking to ensure that the horrible lessons of the Holocaust will never be forgotten.

Mr. Chairman, we strongly believe that we need to build on the momentum of the Berlin and Brussels Conferences and continue our work to combat anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, and discrimination. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office should appoint a Personal Representative on Anti-Semitism and a Personal Representative on Racism, Xenophobia, and Discrimination to encourage States, at a high political level, to implement the Maastricht Ministerial commitments and the Berlin and Brussels Declarations. These appointments should not wait until the Sofia Ministerial; we need to move forward with this work now. We also welcome the leadership that France has shown in bringing to the OSCE's attention the issue of hate propaganda on the internet and look forward to continuing discussions concerning follow-up to the Paris meeting.

Mr. Chairman, there is never a shortage of good ideas for continued engagement in the human dimension. As we look at the 2005 calendar, there are several subjects that deserve attention at human dimension events next year. These include: migration and integration; protection of religious freedom in the fight against terrorism; the challenges of new election technologies, such as electronic voting; and the role of defense lawyers. In addition, we welcome the Spanish offer to host a follow-up event on tolerance next year in Cordoba and believe that tolerance should remain on the agenda next year, so we recommend that next year's HDIM should include another special topic day on the fight against anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination. We also would propose that at least one of the Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation Meetings next year be held outside of Vienna. The current modalities already allow for this, and we believe it would make the meeting more dynamic and would allow participants to take part who might not normally be able to travel to Vienna.

Thanks to those who actively participated and did so at senior levels, and I call on those who were not here to come next year! I would also like to thank ODIHR and its staff for organizing this meeting, the translators for their hard work, and everyone here for their participation and their comments. The HDIM truly is a unique and important human rights forum. Of course, what is important is not simply what we say here, but what we do when we return home. I hope that all participants leave this meeting energized to redouble our efforts to ensure the protection of human rights in our countries through the OSCE. We look forward to follow-up discussions on the HDIM in two weeks at the Permanent Council meeting in Vienna.