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United States Mission to the OSCE

Kazakhstan's Reform Agenda

As delivered by Ambassador Michael Carpenter
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 8, 2022

Deputy Foreign Minister Vassilenko, dear Roman, welcome back to the Permanent Council.

Following the November presidential elections in Kazakhstan, we look forward to continuing to work with President Tokayev and his government to advance our common objectives. The United States also reiterates its unwavering support for Kazakhstan's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, which has been the bedrock of our partnership for over 30 years.

The United States welcomed Kazakhstan's invitation to ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to observe its November presidential elections. I welcome your statement now of your desire to maintain a dialogue with ODIHR. I'm going to go a bit away from my text. I will note that one of the preceding speakers used his intervention to attack ODIHR which is not surprising given that it stands for democratic reforms which that particular country is antithetical to. We are confident that you and your country's leadership will choose the way forward that benefits your interests and you will make use of ODIHR as an appropriate tool in doing so. We applaud the emphasis on democratic reforms which should be noted and which should be encouraged.

The United States also welcomes the stated aims of the wide-ranging reforms proposed by President Tokayev this year, including growing the private sector, demonopolizing the economy, and combating corruption, while creating more space for political opposition and strengthening checks and balances, the rule of law, and human rights protections. The development of strong democratic institutions and of a vibrant civil society will be critical to Kazakhstan further realizing its sovereign goals. We stand ready to support these ambitious aims and call on the government to fully implement these reforms for the benefit of the people of Kazakhstan. Again, I want to thank you personally for your commitment to dialogue and transparency, for your knowledge and willingness to use the toolbox of this organization, and then not least for your gracious hospitality recently in Astana.

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