



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Croatian Prime Minister Sanader

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 10, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We warmly welcome Prime Minister Sanader here to the Permanent Council.

Croatia is rapidly becoming an OSCE success story. The Mission and host government authorities have had an excellent, cooperative relationship. Croatia has made good use of the assistance provided by the OSCE mission. Enough progress has been made that several areas of the Mission mandate were completed and closed last year including media, political freedom, police reform, and civil society.

We agree with you that these reforms are important, not primarily because they fulfill the OSCE Mission mandate, but because they ensure Croatia's continuing democratic development.

As you, Mr. Prime Minister, have pointed out, work remains to be done concerning refugee returns as well as war crimes trials. President Bush reinforced our support for your democratic reform process at your recent meeting in Tirana. We look forward to continued progress on these issues.

You and the Mission have agreed on specific goals that should be achieved by the end of this year. We appreciate your personal commitment to resolving remaining issues, and your leadership remains extremely important. We agree that if you meet the goals you have set, further engagement by the OSCE Mission in its current form beyond 2007 will not be necessary.

We appreciate your proposal to establish a follow-on structure to address any remaining issues after closure of the Mission. We look forward to discussing this with your delegation and other participating States as we move forward toward a decision on this matter at the Madrid Ministerial.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman