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United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Report by the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 30, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We welcome Mr. Snoy back to the Permanent Council, and thank him for his comprehensive report. We commend the leadership Mr. Snoy has provided during his tenure. He has been an active Ambassador for the Second Dimension, and has raised both the level and the visibility of the OSCE's activities in many issues of concern in the OSCE region.

The United States reiterates its full support for the work of the Office of the Economic and Environmental Coordinator. We also thank the Coordinator for his thorough report on the environmental impact assessment of the Georgian conflict.

The Participating States often talk about strengthening the Dimension, but this aspiration needs to be translated into concrete action. Specifically, we recommend focusing only on activities that have a direct and strong link to security, stability, and conflict prevention, such as energy security, promoting rule of law and good governance, and helping us to put into practice rules and regulations that aid in the fight against corruption, organized crime, and money laundering. Other issues, where the OSCE's impact is likely to be more limited, are best left to fora that have an appropriate mandate, such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in the case of climate change.

We have carefully read the food-for-thought paper on the future of this dimension. We agree it is time to do away with the Annual Theme, which taxes the resources of the Secretariat and reduces the coherence of activities in this dimension.

Mr. Snoy, thank you again for your hard work over the past years and for your contributions to the OSCE's activities throughout the region. We wish you well in your future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.