



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on Political Agreement in Macedonia**

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Kate Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
July 16, 2015

The United States commends Macedonia's leaders for reaching agreement to resolve the political crisis, following the constructive negotiations in Skopje on July 14 and 15. The agreement serves the best interests of the people of Macedonia by strengthening Macedonia's prospects for Euro-Atlantic integration. Full implementation of the agreement will also aid Macedonia in fulfilling its commitments to uphold and promote OSCE principles.

We would like to express our great appreciation for the efforts of EU Commissioner Hahn, and Members of the European Parliament, Ivo Vaigl, Richard Howitt, and Eduard Kukan, who, together with the EU and U.S. Ambassadors in Skopje, facilitated this agreement.

The United States and other international partners, including the OSCE, can continue to help Macedonia to implement this agreement, including on the difficult reform work that lies ahead. We anticipate ODIHR will play a significant role in ensuring that the early parliamentary elections, planned for April 2016 as part of this agreement, will live up to OSCE standards. We invite Macedonian leaders to call on the various OSCE institutions, including the Representative on Freedom of the Media, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, the Special Representative on the Western Balkans Ambassador Stoudmann, and the OSCE Field Mission in Skopje, for expertise and support. These bodies can provide critical assistance, and we offer our full support for their efforts and for the efforts of Macedonia's leaders and people as they work to move their country forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.