



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the CIO Personal Representative and the High-Level Planning Group

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 10, 2016

The United States warmly welcomes the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, together with the Chairmanship's Personal Representative, and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group, to the Permanent Council. We reiterate our strong support for their work and appreciate their unwavering engagement with the sides to advance a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The United States was alarmed by the escalation of violence along the Line of Contact in April, and concerned about allegations of atrocities. As a Co-Chair country, the United States took immediate steps to reduce tensions. Secretary Kerry took the initiative to organize a 3+2 meeting in Vienna on May 16, recognizing that the joint efforts of the United States, Russia, and France at the highest levels could help the sides stop the violence and advance the peace process. The Summit produced tangible results. The sides reaffirmed their respect for the ceasefire, and indeed, the situation along the Line of Contact quieted significantly.

The sides also agreed to expand the OSCE Monitoring Mission and agreed to work on a proposal to establish an OSCE investigative mechanism. We call on the sides to support the expansion of monitoring by the Office of the Chairmanship's Personal Representative, as agreed upon during the Summits in Vienna and St. Petersburg, and hope that this expansion can eventually be reflected in the 2017 OSCE budget. We also call on the sides to work on a proposal to establish an OSCE investigative mechanism.

The United States supports confidence-building measures and increased dialogue between Armenians and Azerbaijanis that can help stabilize the security situation and create a more constructive atmosphere for negotiations.

The United States appreciates the close collaboration of the German Chairmanship and Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Kasprzyk, in supporting the Co-Chairs' mediation efforts and stabilizing the situation on the ground.

We share the frustration of the sides that this conflict has gone on far too long. There can be no military solution to this conflict. As a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, the United States remains deeply committed – as Ambassador Warlick has emphasized this morning – to working with the sides to find a lasting and peaceful resolution to the conflict.

We join others who have expressed this morning their good wishes to Ambassador Andrieu as he continues on his journey, and we welcome his successor, Ambassador Visconti -- we look forward to working with you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.