



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, H.E. Konstantin Zhigalov on an OSCE Summit

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Special Permanent Council, Vienna
June 25, 2010

Welcome again, Mr. Minister, we are always glad to get the benefit of your views.

The question of whether there will or will not be an OSCE Summit later this year is a pivotal one – not only for our calendars but also for the scope, pace and direction of our work here in Vienna.

As you know, the continuing position of my government has been that a decision on a summit has to be driven by the substance. And, as we all know and appreciate, developing potential results worthy of our political leaders takes time and careful preparation. We believe a summit should make a significant contribution to security and cooperation in Europe and Eurasia across all three of the OSCE's dimensions and position the organization to play an appropriate role in European and Eurasian security in the 21st century. We also believe a summit should take a hard look at how we can improve the impressive range of existing OSCE tools while also considering what types of mechanisms and new commitments we may need to develop a more secure region.

The crisis in Kyrgyzstan serves as a sobering reminder of our commitments to one another, and a test of OSCE's capabilities and our political will. The question is whether we are prepared to move forward, to meet OSCE's potential. Deliberations on a summit must surely take into account the ability of OSCE to muster the political will to deal with grave crises in its own region. Mr. Minister, I greatly appreciate your clear call to the OSCE to act in this crisis and, of course, we are beginning to do so.

We realize that some believe the absence of a summit for nearly eleven years risks sending a signal of neglect and lack of interest in the OSCE. That is certainly not the signal my government wants to send about this organization. But we are also concerned that a premature or ill-prepared meeting of Heads of State and Government could do even more damage.

The United States is not in a position at this point, almost midway through the year, to decide on timing and venue for an OSCE summit. The Interim Report draft and our constructive Corfu dialogue on June 23, along with positive trends and developments elsewhere demonstrate to us that the potential ingredients for a successful summit are there – but need to be developed and moved toward consensus.

Mr. Minister, your suggestion that we develop an Action Plan on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security could represent one key ingredient. It presents, in our view, an optimum way to direct the Corfu Process and take it forward to a stage where our national leaders could

provide the necessary political impetus to allow us to realize needed and lasting improvements to security in the OSCE region.

If we want to hold a summit this year, then we need to get behind a focused agenda, with three or four priorities, such as the European Union has suggested. Minister Zhigalov, you also outlined some priorities in your remarks and we are very appreciative of that strategic vision. The important thing is that we need to have a consensus for a strategic vision. This meeting is a step in the right direction, and I hope we can continue the kind of focused discussion that can lead to a decision whether to hold a summit this year by the time of the Informal Ministerial meeting in Almaty.