



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Release of the annual Human Rights Report

Delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 3, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In line with the commitment of the United States to strengthening cooperation and development of human rights and the rule of law in the OSCE region, I am pleased to inform the Permanent Council that the U.S. Department of State's Annual Country Reports for 2002 on Human Rights Practices have been released.

I bring this to your attention with confidence that this resource will prove to be useful both in the OSCE's work, as well as in your home countries, as we seek to expose and eradicate abuses of human rights.

As Secretary Powell stated, the U.S. Government is, and I quote him here, "strongly committed to working with government leaders, non-governmental organizations, free trade unions and individuals across the globe to improve compliance with international human rights standards".

The carefully cross-checked Report serves as a balanced, accurate, and comprehensive review of human rights conditions in each of the some 196 countries and entities represented. Based on a wide variety of sources, including both domestic and foreign governments and agencies, NGOs, as well as the media, it is a widely accepted basic document on human rights that is often cited by official and private human rights organizations worldwide.

As a member of the OSCE community, I strongly encourage all states to review these reports and provide any information useful in further combating the abuses contained therein. We look forward to an open dialog and also encourage feedback.

Again Mr. Chairman, I encourage delegations to obtain a copy from the Department of State's web site which is at: www.state.gov. If you need further assistance we would be happy to provide it.

Thank you.