



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Response to OSCE PA President Bruce George**

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
May 27, 2004

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to warmly welcome President Bruce George to the Permanent Council here today. If we are not able to see him again before his term as President of the Parliamentary Assembly ends this summer, we would like to thank him for his work, and for the constructive dialogue we have had over the past two years.

The United States believes that the Parliamentary Assembly is making a significant contribution to the overall work of the OSCE. In this regard, we support the involvement of the Parliamentary Assembly in OSCE election observations. We also commend the work of the Parliamentary Assembly's democracy teams, which have played a valuable role in helping to resolve disagreements among OSCE members.

We are pleased that President George has appointed – as he and you, Mr. Chairman, have noted – U.S. Congressman Chris Smith to be the Parliamentary Assembly's Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. While I will avoid commenting on the timing of the appointments, I will say that we do believe that a parliamentary perspective can greatly contribute to our growing OSCE efforts jointly to fight this scourge.

We value the input that the Parliamentary Assembly provides through the documents adopted at its annual summer session and we look forward to the results of the Edinburgh Meeting in July.

We also value the Parliamentary Assembly Liaison Office here in Vienna, and we hope we can claim to have a good working relationship with Ambassador Nothelle.

Mr. Chairman, the United States believes that interaction between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Permanent Council has strengthened during Mr. George's term. One concrete example of this interaction is the joint Parliamentary Assembly-Conflict Prevention Center meeting on Parliamentary Oversight of Armed Forces, and Police and Security Forces held earlier this week – as an aside, I might mention this perhaps get the prize for the longest title of any OSCE conference in recent history. U.S. Congressman Alcee Hastings participated in what we believe was an interesting discussion of an important topic. Such joint initiatives, which contribute to strengthened cooperation and exchanges between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Permanent Council, benefit everybody.

We also, of course, very much appreciate President George's input, as he has just outlined to us, concerning the necessity for outreach to OSCE Partners for Cooperation.

We look forward to the meeting later this afternoon of the Working Group on Outreach, at which we hope to hear from the Partners themselves about where they would like to enhance cooperation and dialogue with the OSCE and its participating States.

One idea that we could support is to have the OSCE begin a regular dialogue through its institutions with representatives from Partner countries on OSCE norms, principles and commitments. We would expect that this regular contact would include government and parliamentary representatives, as well as representatives of civil society in Partner States, including those from Non-Governmental Organizations and political parties.

In closing Mr. Chairman, please allow me to wish President George every success as his term in office comes to an end and in the future.

I thank you.