



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Presentation of the 2014 Unified Budget Proposal

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 10, 2013

The United States welcomes the presentation of the 2014 Unified Budget Proposal and thanks the Secretary General and all the fund managers for their diligent work on the preparation of this very important budget document. A budget proposal that satisfies the interests of all participating States is an enormous task, and we are grateful for this document, which we believe presents a strong basis for funding OSCE priorities in 2014.

The United States considers the OSCE to be a major contributor to regional security and stability. We are encouraged that the Organization continues to take a strategic approach to all three dimensions across the OSCE space.

We are particularly pleased to see the proposed inclusion of the Border Management Staff College in the Unified Budget, demonstrating recognition by participating States of the value of the College in managing transnational threats in Central Asia and the region. We commend those who have contributed to the success of the College, as evidenced by the positive results of a recent evaluation by an independent consultant. Bringing the College into the Unified Budget will help to ensure its continued success.

We are encouraged to see that the priorities in Central Asia are consistent with that of OSCE's mission to continue to improve border security, promote economic security and good governance, and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. We commend the Balkans for the savings and efficiency realized this past year, and for the progress and advancement made in this region.

We are also pleased to see a proposed increase in funding to support institutions, particularly significant with the addition of Mongolia as the 57th participating State and the increase in election monitoring activities in the region.

We continue to operate, however, in an environment of declining resources. We remain concerned about the growing share of the budget going into the Secretariat and encourage fund managers to seek creative ways to achieve savings in Vienna, in both staff and operational costs, without compromising the important work of the field missions. This will require prioritization and strategic thinking, but it is within OSCE's capacity, and will help accelerate the reforms and progress sought by all.

Finally, the United States looks forward to working with Switzerland, as it takes the lead on budget negotiations for 2014. We commit ourselves to working constructively to reach a consensus on a realistic budget that supports the top priorities and mandate of the OSCE, to promote and ensure security and stability across the OSCE space.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.