



Information about recent or ongoing OSCE projects with major contributions by the United States of America.

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This issue focuses on projects within the OSCE's "first dimension" ([politico-military](#))

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Crew members check the equipment in the nose of an An-26 aircraft used by the Hungarian Air Force to fly observation missions under the Open Skies Treaty, July 2004. (OSCE)

20 Years of Fostering Transparency in Military Activities under the Open Skies Treaty

The major milestone on the horizon for the Open Skies Treaty is the 20-year-anniversary of its signature on March 24, 2012. The [Open Skies Treaty](#) allows its 34 [State Parties](#) to carry out unarmed military [observation flights](#) over each other's territories. The treaty was signed in March 1992 and has been in force since January 2002. State Parties include the [United States](#), Canada, most European states and the Russian Federation. It is the most wide-

ranging international effort to date to boost mutual understanding and confidence by promoting openness and transparency regarding military or other activities.

Open Skies is one of three conventional arms control regimes that foster transparency of military activities. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document 2011 Confidence and Security Building Measures are important tools for preventing conflict in Europe, contributing to the further development and strengthening of peace, stability and co-operative security. Open Skies also facilitates the monitoring of compliance with existing or future arms control agreements and strengthens the capacity for conflict prevention and crisis management within the framework of the OSCE.

The [Open Skies Consultative Commission](#) (OSCC) is the implementing body for the Open Skies Treaty; it has been in session since the treaty was signed in 1992. During the past 10 years of treaty implementation, the parties have collectively established an impressive track record. Accomplishments include:

- Certification of 10 types of aircraft and multiple sensors;

- OSCC adoption of 157 Decisions, approval of 20 Chairman’s Statements, and 40 notification formats;
- Conduct of over 836 observation flights and numerous training missions
- Accession of eight new State Parties;
- Conduct of two Review Conferences (negotiated under OSCE auspices);
- Allowing joint certification of multiple aircraft, rather than individual national events;
- Leasing Parties’ aircraft to others on a regular basis;
- Observation flights are routinely shared by two or three States, rather than on a single nation basis;
- Sharing observation flights between NATO Allies and Russia; and
- Using Open Skies assets for natural disaster monitoring.



U.S. and Russian servicemen on board a plane before a joint Russian-Swedish flight over the territory of the United States under the Open Skies Treaty, March 2, 2008. The Treaty establishes a regime of unarmed aerial observation flights. (OSCE)

Major advantages for the State Parties operating under the Open Skies Treaty include the low cost for exchanging imagery between and among State Parties. This is especially advantageous for nations that may not be able to afford national aircraft to participate in, and gain verification from, Open Skies activities.

The OSCC conducts a review conference every five years. The United States chaired the [second review conference](#) in Vienna in 2010. In a [video address](#) to the conference, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted the United States’ firm commitment to the treaty's continued success, and emphasized the U.S. intention “to ensure that this vital instrument for openness and

cooperation remains effective for years to come.”

The conference was co-chaired by U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Celeste Wallander and Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller. During her [opening remarks](#), DAS Wallander noted that “European security is not a zero-sum game. We all benefit from increased cooperation and transparency and this treaty is one of the key instruments by which we can move Euro-Atlantic security in a positive direction.”

A/S Gottemoeller ended the conference on a similar note. Having reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to the “continued robust implementation of the treaty,” [she stated](#) that the U.S. “believes that it is essential for the Open Skies Treaty to remain a vital instrument in our Euro-Atlantic conventional arms control toolbox.”

And in his [address](#) to the conference, Ambassador Kelly noted that “though it took ten years to enter into force, the Open Skies Treaty has become a model for cooperation and transparency.”

The United States strongly supports the Open Skies Treaty as part of an important web of transparency and confidence building measures, and is investing in its future. Russia, Sweden and the United States are planning to install new digital sensors in their aircraft in the next few years. Currently, the United States uses two OC-135B observation aircraft

operated by the U.S. Air Force, with mission teams provided by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency ([DTRA](#)), a support agency of the U.S. Department of Defense.

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*Border police trainees from Afghanistan, in a field exercise at Lahur, Southern Tajikistan, October 2011.
Photo: OSCE*

OSCE Trains Afghan Border Police in Tajikistan

Border management and security remain a key priority in Tajikistan which has appealed to the international community to undertake urgent efforts in strengthening its borders, especially with Afghanistan. In the summer of 2006, the Tajik government made a formal request for OSCE assistance in improving its border security and management. Three years later, [with U.S. support](#), the OSCE Office [in Tajikistan](#) established the Border Management Staff College ([BMSC](#)) in

Dushanbe. The goal of the BMSC is to train senior border security officials and improve the capacities of border management agencies in OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation.

Since U.S. recognition of Tajikistan's independence in 1991, relations between the two countries have developed considerably. The United States is currently cooperating with Tajikistan in areas including counter-narcotics, counterterrorism, non-proliferation of weapons, health, economic growth, and stability. In 2007, the U.S. government funded a \$36 million bridge connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan for commercial traffic. The United States sees Tajikistan as an important regional partner in Central Asia, a contributor to border security in the OSCE area, and an important link to implementing the 2007 [Madrid Ministerial Decision](#) on OSCE engagement with Afghanistan and the 2011 [Vilnius Ministerial Decision](#) on strengthening the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan. The trade resource centers established along the Tajik-Afghan border are an example of this engagement.

President Obama's 2009 review of U.S. strategy in Central Asia called for Afghanistan's neighbors, including Tajikistan, to take an active role in combating trafficking of narcotics and people. With Afghanistan assuming full responsibility for its own security, the Central Asian nations will play a key role in ensuring peace and stability in that country and in the region. The United States [strongly supports](#) the "[Declaration on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan](#)," adopted in Istanbul in November 2011. This declaration recognizes a pledge by the countries of the region to cooperate in integrating Afghanistan in a more stable, prosperous, and peaceful region. [Proposals by Secretary Clinton](#) at the New Silk Road meeting in New York in September 2011 have become regional commitments through the Istanbul Process, including cooperation on border security and measures against human and drug trafficking. At the Bonn conference on Afghanistan in December 2011, [Secretary Clinton reiterated](#) that, in the pursuit of the New

Silk Road vision, the United States looks to Afghanistan's neighbors to actively support an inclusive Afghan-led, Afghan-owned reconciliation process.

To enhance security along the Tajik-Afghan border and detect and counter illegal movements, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan invited Afghan Border Police officers to participate in an eight-week [Patrol Programming and Leadership Course](#) at the Border Guard Directorate's Training Center in southern Tajikistan in autumn 2011. The course was funded by the United States and led by two trainers from the United States and the Russian Federation. Participants were trained in map reading and navigation, as well as patrol and surveillance techniques, and were introduced to the history and practice of human rights protection and gender concerns within a comprehensive security framework.

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Kenneth Pickles (r), Politico-Military Officer at the OSCE Mission to Moldova, and Major Andrei Camerzan, Moldovan Army Chief of Arms and Ammunition Section, closely observe every stage of the disposal operations. [Photo: OSCE/Liubomir Turcanu]

OSCE assists in disposal of ex-Soviet ammunition and rocket fuels in Moldova and Ukraine

Through the medium of the Security Dialogue of the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation ([FSC](#)), the United States provided more than euro 9 million for weapons destruction projects in the OSCE space, including removal and destruction of Soviet-era ammunition and armaments in Moldova and the elimination in Ukraine of a toxic rocket fuel remnant called *mélange*.

The United States uses the FSC as a platform to better monitor the weapons trade. The FSC has adopted documents aimed at controlling stockpiles of [Small Arms and Light Weapons](#) (SALW) and conventional ammunition. The FSC has also agreed to provide assistance with the collection and destruction of weapons, as well as improving stockpile management and security.

Moldova: After the 1999 Summit of OSCE Heads of State in Istanbul, the [Mission to Moldova](#) was mandated to ensure transparency of the removal and destruction of ex-Soviet ammunition and armaments. Over the years, the Mission built up its cooperation with Moldova's Ministry of Defense, leading to the start of ammunition disposal projects in 2007. The most recent was the disposal of air bombs in July 2011.

In order to reduce the dangers to the population posed by excess, poorly stored or unexploded ammunition and weaponry, the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Philip Remler (U.S.), and Moldovan Defense Minister Vitalie Marinuta launched an [information campaign](#) in November 2011 to raise public awareness of the dangers of explosive remnants of war machines. The [disposal operations](#) are part of the Mission's

efforts on arms control and disarmament, which also aim to promote military transparency and increase trust between the parties to the conflict in Transnistria.



Ukrainian armed forces personnel remove the last mélangé from the Kalynivka storage site in the Vinnytsya region of Ukraine, 24 January 2010. [Photo: OSCE/Leonid Kalashnyk]

Ukraine: The oxidizer [mélangé](#) is a highly toxic and volatile rocket fuel component – used extensively during the Cold War – that poses a threat to human life and the environment. Over the past 15 years, OSCE participating States and the UN Development Program have taken measures to eliminate mélangé.

In Ukraine, the OSCE began a project in 2008 to eliminate 16,000 tons of mélangé. In 2009, the OSCE and the Ukrainian Defense Ministry signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the mélangé project, allowing for the safe disposal of the substance. The OSCE’s Project Coordinator in

Ukraine (PCU) is working in close cooperation with Ukrainian partners in support of the country’s efforts to fulfill OSCE commitments to clean up areas contaminated with explosive weapons remnants and the disposal of mélangé, among others. [Ambassador Ian Kelly, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the OSCE, suggested in 2010](#) that the productive relationship between the PCU and the Government of Ukraine could serve as a model for similar endeavors in the region.

The mélangé disposal project is the OSCE’s largest donor-financed project to date. Financial support has been provided by the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Spain, and Sweden and the United States. In the [U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership](#), signed in 2008, the United States also pledged to support Ukraine’s efforts in the area of non-proliferation.

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U.S. Mission to the OSCE

<http://osce.usmission.gov>