



## **Ambassador Ian Kelly's Remarks at his Swearing-in Ceremony, June 1, 2010 at the Department of State, as Prepared for Delivery.**

First of all, thank you, Madam Secretary, for your confidence in me. It was an honor and a privilege to serve as your spokesman. The honor was being selected as State Department spokesman, but the privilege came from working with you on a daily basis. I must say that the American people are well served with your steady hand on the helm of our foreign policy. On behalf of my colleagues here, I want to humbly thank you for your hard work -- you have fought hard and well to reprioritize our foreign policy, and get us the resources we need to promote U.S. values and interests.

While I miss being your spokesman, I am thrilled to be representing you and President Obama at the OSCE. This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the agreement that founded the organization that became the OSCE -- the Helsinki Final Act. At the height of the cold war, and all the east-west tension and mistrust it engendered, the 34 countries of the trans-Atlantic region, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, signed an agreement recognizing that we share a common history, with common traditions and values.

They pledged to take steps to promote confidence and transparency, and diminish mistrust. Some of the mechanisms set up in that regard operate today -- for example, the Open Skies Treaty and other transparency measures, which commit the parties to share essential data and information about their militaries.

Perhaps most importantly, in the final act, for the first time, a security agreement recognized the universal significance of human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential factors for peace and cooperation. The OSCE has enshrined the idea that peace among states is dependent on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms within states. Note too, the use of the word "universal:" these freedoms are not an American or a Western value, they are universal. As the first secretary of state once said, "the God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time."

Today, the OSCE counts 56 participating states. Many of the countries who signed the final act in 1975 no longer exist, including the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. The tension that came from mechanized divisions facing each other across the Fulda Gap, is gone. Unfortunately, however, much mistrust between the eastern and western halves of the organization remains, and there is less consensus on the importance of human rights to our mutual security. In fact, it can't be overlooked that a number of states are moving in a negative direction. This makes the confidence building and conflict prevention mechanisms of the OSCE that much more important, and I pledge to work to enhance them and make them more effective. With three states sharing a border with Afghanistan, the OSCE can also help stabilize south Asia. We are also actively seeking ways to end the CFE impasse. With the kind of global challenges we face, we need all countries in the OSCE space to work together in trust and partnership.