

**STATEMENT OF JULIE FINLEY
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
May 24, 2005**

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

I am honored to be here before you today, seeking confirmation so that I might serve our country as the President's Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. If confirmed by the United States Senate, I look forward to working closely with Congress, including with the Helsinki Commission. I know how vital it will be, if confirmed, to have the confidence and the trust of Congress in the performance of my duties.

It is clear the OSCE's continued success would not be possible without congressional support. I want to express my thanks to the Congress for its support of the OSCE, most notably to two Members who are not with us today: Senator Brownback, who chairs the Helsinki Commission, and to Congressman Hastings, who is the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

I am touched by the confidence President Bush and Secretary Rice have placed in me and by the support of my family and friends, and I would like to thank Senator Warner for his generous introduction.

I have been working with the political leadership both in and out of office and members of the academic and policy communities in at least half of the OSCE member nations.

In addition, I have been working for a decade with officials of NATO, NATO member nations, NATO aspirant nations, EU aspirant nations, non-governmental organizations and members of the U. S. foreign policy establishment to ensure a strong and healthy Atlantic security community.

I support strongly the OSCE and the role it has played as a catalyst for change. Transformational diplomacy is the OSCE's mission. Since the end of the Cold War, the OSCE has made major contributions toward democracy, peace and stability across Europe. As signatories to OSCE agreements, all fifty-five OSCE states have committed to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms, prosperity through economic liberty and security for all. Sixteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, we can all be proud of the OSCE's achievements, but we should also be mindful of unfinished business. A true transatlantic community of shared values is still a work in progress. If confirmed, I will work with our friends through

the OSCE to advance the President's goal of a Europe whole, free and at peace.

U.S. engagement in the OSCE advances our national interests in promoting democracy, human rights, good governance, security, and arms control. Since September 11, we have also seen the increasing importance of the OSCE's role in helping win the global war on terror. The OSCE's added value is its signature capabilities. It can bring the weight of 55 nations to bear on problems that no one country can solve alone. Seventeen OSCE field missions from Albania to Uzbekistan are working to help governments and societies make the transition to stable free market democracies living together in peace. OSCE election observer missions have been the leaders in impartial election monitoring across Europe and North America.

The OSCE is adapting to a new agenda for the 21st century. Continued U.S. leadership is essential to shape that agenda, focusing on practical outcomes. Trafficking in persons, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, and terrorism are among the issues that the United States and its friends are tackling together at the OSCE. Thanks to the hard work of our talented Ambassador, Stephan Minikes, and his team at the U.S. Mission, progress is

being made. Decisions adopted by OSCE have helped to improve passport and shipping container security among our fifty-five nation community. Last September, OSCE reached out beyond Europe to send its first election support team to cover Afghanistan's historic presidential elections.

At the same time, the OSCE is working hard on its traditional mission of promoting democracy and human rights. OSCE's election observation missions in Georgia and Ukraine last year shined the spotlight on flawed presidential contests and helped empower ordinary citizens to elect new leaders in contests that came closer to meeting international standards. The OSCE's largest field mission is helping Kosovo to implement United Nations Security Council-endorsed Standards. The new government in Kyrgyzstan has asked for the OSCE's help with its transition, from police training to assistance in preparing for new elections.

The challenge for the United States is to keep the OSCE healthy, productive and focused on outcomes. To do this, we need to consult and cooperate even more closely with every country that is a member of the OSCE. The OSCE is the one transatlantic security organization where every state has a voice and a vote.

There are no dividing lines in today's Europe. The OSCE has a single set of democratic principles adopted by all. The only way to defeat the underlying causes of instability is to ensure that people have a chance to freely choose their leaders, to live well and to live in peace. The OSCE can help us all advance toward that dream of a transatlantic community of shared values that is a better, safer place to live. To that end, the United States should continue to be open to dialogue with other countries and should take the lead on making the OSCE more effective, but not at the expense of fundamental principles.

The OSCE's record of achievement is impressive. Its agenda for the coming years is ambitious. If confirmed, I look forward to working to make sure the OSCE remains a creative, flexible organization advancing U.S. interests and helping to meet the challenges of our time.