



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Statement on Serbian Elections and President Marovic's Apology to BiH**

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative Douglas Davidson  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
November 20, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The United States would like to join the presidency of the European Union in commending the apology by President Marovic to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina on November 13, 2003. The United States sees President Marovic's statement, as well as other recent actions taken by governments of the region, as signs of positive progress towards lasting peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Chairman, we were also pleased to hear reports that the Serbian Presidential elections on November 16 were generally conducted within accepted norms of democratic practice. The United States was disappointed, however, that this election failed because voter participation fell below the required fifty percent threshold.

As we have done several times previously in the Permanent Council, we would like to take this opportunity to urge the government of Serbia to reform its electoral legislation, in line with ODIHR recommendations, including the elimination of the fifty percent voter turnout requirement in presidential elections. Electoral reform is essential in our view to stop this unfortunate cycle of failed elections. Thank you.