



United States Mission to the OSCE

Victory Day for World War II

As delivered by Political Counselor Erin Webster-Main
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 8, 2025

Eighty years ago, America helped liberate Europe from Nazi fascism. We honor the bravery and sacrifice of all those who fought for freedom.

Peace did not come cheaply then, and it does not come cheaply now. During the 1930s, military weakness paved the way for authoritarian aggression. Many European nations hoped that war would disappear and neglected their own security. That is why the United States has urged NATO Allies to step up and meet the President's vision of peace through strength by dedicating five percent of GDP to national defense and increasing defense production.

President Trump has proclaimed May 8 as Victory Day for World War II, recognizing the end of the war in Europe. Today, America and our democratic Allies and partners celebrate the shared values that the great World War II generation fought and died to protect. That includes the fundamental freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, free association, free elections, and freedom of religion. A retreat from those values represents an existential threat to democracy across the OSCE region. We must redouble our commitment to protecting these democratic values that, as Secretary Rubio has said, "...bind us together."

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