



## HELSINKI COMMISSION HEARING

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UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

# Testimony :: Hon. Ben Nighthorse Campbell

Co-Chairman - Helsinki Commission

Mr. Chairman, it is appropriate that the Commission's first hearing of 2004 should feature Bulgarian Foreign Minister Passy in his capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It is important that the Commission maintain good lines of communications with the political leadership of the organization, as we seek to encourage participating States to abide by their OSCE commitments. Minister, I am pleased to welcome you to the Commission and appreciate the emphasis you intend to place on implementation during your chairmanship.

As President Gerald Ford observed in signing the Helsinki Final Act, A history will judge this Conference not by what we say here today, but by what we do tomorrow B not only the promises we make, but by the promises we keep. @

Your presence here today is an illustration of the impact that the Helsinki Process has had for millions of individuals who lived under the yoke of brutal regimes. Bulgaria's national experience makes it uniquely positioned to aid those in the OSCE region who have yet to be freed from repression. In the extreme are cases such as Turkmenistan and Belarus, where unchecked dictators use the full force of the state to repress expressions of opposition. The same can be said for others in Central Asia who blatantly disregard their OSCE commitments.

Russia presents a very mixed picture. This Commission has attempted to keep a focus on the deplorable human dimension of the war in Chechnya now stretching into its fifth year. Chairman Smith and I recently co-authored an op-ed published in Moscow on Russia and the OSCE. Frankly, it is confounding why the Russians are not playing a productive role in the organization. The OSCE provides an ideal framework for advancing democracy, human rights and the rule of law B one that the Russians should embrace.

Ukraine also is a tough nut, especially with respect to democratization and rule of law. With critical elections slated for this Fall, there are already enough disturbing developments to warrant our concern and attention. This Commission will continue to press Kiev to implement its OSCE commitments, throughout the election period and beyond.

Mr. Minister, as you lead the OSCE, please don't discount the positive role Bulgaria can and should play in advancing the principles that ultimately freed you countrymen from repression.

As the Senate sponsor of a resolution passed earlier this Congress condemning anti-Semitism and advocating a special OSCE focus on this phenomenon, I appreciate your leadership in preparing for the follow-up conference to be convened in Berlin in April. Anti-Semitism and related violence cannot and must not be ignored.

Mr. Minister, as the OSCE approaches its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary we would do well to heed President Ford's admonishment. Bulgaria has a unique opportunity to lead by example. Bulgaria has come a long way and we look forward to continued efforts to overcome the legacy of the past, including protecting the rights of minorities, including the Roma, and instituting appropriate safeguards to prevent arms transfers to rogue regimes, including Syria.

Mr. Minister, I wish you success in the challenging months ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.