



Integrated Country Strategy

Austria

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Table of Contents

1. Chief of Mission Priorities 2

2. Mission Strategic Framework 5

3. Mission Goals and Objectives 7

4. Management Objectives..... 16

1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Positioned at the center of Europe, with extensive frontier, economic/financial, political/ideological, and infrastructure/transport links to Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, Austria serves as a platform for our efforts to advance bilateral, regional, and multilateral goals. As a key transit route, Austria has been very tolerant and supportive of U.S. military overflights, rail movements, and convoys. Austria also is a key participant in peacekeeping missions, especially in Kosovo. At the same time, growing Russian and Chinese influence in Austria and the region heighten the urgency of our efforts to counter that influence. Additionally, Austria's ongoing diplomatic spat with Turkey could continue to impact the country's military participation in NATO Partnership for Peace activities. Finally, Austria's self-image as a diplomatic "bridge" facilitating dialogue between competing powers, while ostensibly remaining politically equidistant in that facilitation role, requires strong engagement from U.S. mission and senior Washington policy leaders to make it clear we consider Austria firmly entrenched in the West. Mission Vienna will use the Integrated Country Strategy to address those challenges and to pinpoint specific areas where Austria can add value in working with us to advance shared objectives that support our mission goals.

During my tenure as Ambassador, I will work with my country team to convince Austrians of the value of U.S. friendship, and to persuade Austria of the direct benefits of an even stronger partnership with America across an array of issues. That is especially true in terms of law enforcement and security cooperation, and trade and investment ties that have experienced positive growth over the past two years. We will press Austria to exercise leadership in EU institutions, especially in advancing the EU integration aspirations of Western Balkan countries. We will also work with our USOSCE and UNVIE colleagues to collaborate on shared or overlapping policy goals (e.g., Ukraine-related Russia sanctions, DPRK denuclearization), and to achieve management and cost efficiencies through our shared Joint Management Office (JMO) platform. Finally, we will highlight the Embassy's enhanced profile that comes from the JMO's regional support to U.S. missions in neighboring countries, and the broad regional coverage provided by the law enforcement agencies (FBI, DEA, DHS) hosted here.

Mission goal #1 offers a unique opportunity to **leverage Austria's positive economic growth indicators to contribute to prosperity in the United States**, though we face strong government and public skepticism regarding the direction of U.S. trade policy and the future of U.S.-EU economic ties. We will continue aggressively to pursue export markets in Austria for U.S. companies, including by taking advantage of Austrian economic reforms (e.g., deregulation, tax reforms) that will lead to more market opportunities for American exporters. Where possible, we will press for reduced regulatory barriers in Austria that hinder exports of U.S. goods or services. Through active Embassy and senior-level USG engagement with Austrian counterparts, we will also seek to counter negative narratives about U.S. trade policy, and bolster Austrian support for strong transatlantic trade ties. We will highlight the deregulation and strong economic growth that makes America an attractive investment location for

Austrians, and aggressively recruit for our annual SelectUSA missions promoting Austrian investment in the United States.

Using the range of Embassy activities promoting entrepreneurship as a premier “American brand,” we will leverage America’s undisputed leadership in that field to encourage greater Austrian government support for bilateral trade and investment cooperation. Our entrepreneurship programs, including those led and magnified by our public diplomacy efforts, will seek to attract a younger Austrian demographic that will be open to seeing enhanced economic partnership with the U.S. as a positive element in our bilateral ties. We will continue to seek and support investment opportunities in the U.S. for Austrian entrepreneurs, and will encourage those entrepreneurs to share their “best practices” learned in the region. Our consular section will facilitate legitimate investment and business travel to the U.S. through vigorous outreach and superior customer service.

Our **mission goal #2** seeks to **increase Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies** to help foster closer, more effective bilateral governmental cooperation. That goal will require major efforts given consistently negative media coverage of U.S. policies and political and economic developments, and a government and private sector that is often unaware of, or skeptical toward, the benefits of an improved bilateral relationship. Increased high-level USG engagement with political, business, academic, and other opinion leaders should lead to an uptick in Austrian government statements of support for U.S. policies and a corresponding decrease in the frequency of public comments criticizing U.S. policies or leaders. A focus on our shared cultural, economic, and political values should ease the path toward cooperation on security and trade issues.

Our **#3 mission goal** is to **ensure and support Austria’s active engagement on regional and global challenges** to security and stability in Europe and beyond. We will work closely with Austria during its EU presidency in 2018 and beyond to urge more vigorous action to support the EU accession aspirations of Western Balkan countries. We will also support through our law enforcement and security cooperation Austria’s leading efforts to strengthen EU/Schengen border security to curb illegal migration, enhancing U.S. secure borders in the process. A significant challenge remains Russian dominance of the Austrian and regional natural gas market, which has increased over the past several years. As a result, we will pursue longer-term efforts to promote alternate gas supply sources for Austria’s regional gas distribution hub.

Austria already punches above its weight in contributing to regional (Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina) and global (D-ISIS in Afghanistan and Mali) peacekeeping efforts, but it can do more. So we will continue to press for increased financial and personnel contributions to the NATO RSM mission in Afghanistan, and to maintain or increase Austria’s troop contributions in the KFOR mission. Turkey’s embargo on Austrian participation in NATO Partnership for Peace activities offers opportunities to do more joint training between U.S. and Austrian forces, which we will continue to make available to the Austrian Bundesheer to improve NATO-standard interoperability and allow Austrian troops to remain qualified for peacekeeping duties in NATO

missions. Given already-heavy U.S. military transit traffic through Austria, we will also work to strengthen and improve our coordination with Austrian military and civilian authorities to facilitate military mobility requirements over and through the country.

Our **#4 mission goal** is to **enhance Austria's role as an active and reliable partner in counterterrorism and law enforcement cooperation**. The right-populist Freedom Party leadership of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) offers us both opportunities and challenges in that regard. The MOI recognizes the quality and impact of our ability to assist Austria's efforts to combat terrorism, and counter cyber-crime and transnational crime. At the same time, the Freedom Party's pro-Russian stance should, and does, give us pause when it comes to sharing certain types of sensitive information. We will continue to increase bilateral information-sharing, while monitoring Austria's information-sharing protocols. A measure of our success on this front will be the number of instances in which Austrian authorities, with USG assistance, thwart terrorist attacks or cyber-attacks against private or public infrastructure. We will look to expand/enhance current agreements as they pertain to screening of criminals and cross-border travelers. We will also press Austria to maintain or expand its commitment to enforcing sanctions against proliferators and others who threaten regional or global stability.

Our **management objectives** include enhanced HR practices that lead to better employee morale and improved productivity, ensuring our security posture remains commensurate with the evolving threat environment, and optimizing USG funding for travel, representation, and training to allow our staff to achieve mission goals. Through a strong focus on internal procedures that foster greater collaboration and communication, and internal management and leadership improvements, we will showcase the economies of scale that we gain by providing a single Joint Management Office platform for all three missions of the Tri-missions community. Significant management challenges will include renovation of our functional space and multi-unit apartment complex (Amerika Haus and Rathaus Apartments) in the city center, and a major chancery upgrade in the next five years. We will also foster joint Tri-mission collaboration on issues where our goals align or overlap to use our staff resources more efficiently to advance mission goals.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Austria supports economic growth, stability, and prosperity in the United States and regionally.

Mission Objective 1.1: Capitalize on the increased trade and economic opportunities in Austria for U.S. companies by reducing regulatory barriers and increasing U.S. exports.

Mission Objective 1.2: Growth of Austrian investment in the United States increases the number of U.S. jobs and furthers U.S. economic development.

Mission Objective 1.3: Austrian recognition of the U.S. innovation “brand” as a positive American value encourages greater support for bilateral government and business cooperation in Austria and the broader region.

Mission Objective 1.4: Our consular section will facilitate the resultant legitimate investment and business travel through outreach and customer service.

Mission Goal 2: Increased Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies undergirds Austrian governmental cooperation with the United States.

Mission Objective 2.1: Leverage prominent visitors and experts in a variety of fields to better inform the Austrian public about U.S. policies through engagement, outreach, and programs in support of those policies.

Mission Goal 3: Austria actively engages on regional and global challenges to enhance security and stability in Europe and beyond.

Mission Objective 3.1: Austria increases its participation in organizations and efforts that contribute to regional integration and stability.

Mission Objective 3.2: Austria increases its commitment to regional and global peacekeeping efforts and improves interoperability with the U.S. military and those of NATO partners.

Mission Goal 4: Austria is an active and reliable partner in counterterrorism and law enforcement cooperation.

Mission Objective 4.1: The United States and Austria expand their ability to combat terrorism, nuclear proliferation, cyber-crime, and transnational crime.

Management Objective 1: Bolster human capital opportunities to support expanding Mission goals

Management Objective 2: Sustains satisfactory security posture commensurate with evolving threat environment

Management Objective 3: Optimizes travel, representation, and training funds to achieve U.S. objectives

Management Objective 4: Seek opportunities for cooperation and productive interactions between our three missions and JMO in order to foster collaboration and communication.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: Austria supports economic growth, stability, and prosperity in the United States and regionally.

Description and Linkages: The U.S.-Austria economic relationship is an engine for increasing bilateral and regional trade and investment. The result is an increase in economic opportunity for the U.S. and the creation of jobs. The Mission is focused on creating new opportunities while removing regulatory burdens that negatively impact fair trade. This goal directly supports the prosperity goals laid out in the U.S. National Security Strategy.

Mission Objective 1.1: Increased opportunities in Austria for U.S. companies and reduced regulatory barriers lead to greater U.S. exports.

Justification: In line with the President's goal for fair and balanced trade, the Embassy is committed to growing U.S. exports and Austrian investment in the United States. The United States is Austria's third largest trading partner. With Austria's strong economic growth above the EU average, Austria presents an opportunity to increase U.S. exports to a market which appreciates the quality and diversity of U.S. products and services. The 2017 election of a business-oriented government offers an opportunity for closer cooperation on expanding markets and reducing regulatory burdens. It also offers an opening for economic statecraft to assist U.S. firms in finding buyers for U.S. technology and services, as well as to identify opportunities for U.S. industry sectors with strong export and employment potential.

Our work in agriculture focuses on promoting U.S. agricultural products and addressing regulatory barriers and public misconceptions in this area, due to Austria's strict rejection of all genetically modified material in the food chain. FAS and other Mission elements address the particular needs of U.S. agriculture: marketing U.S. products, promoting food safety, combating non-science-based restrictions including sanitary/phytosanitary rules, and pushing for compliance with WTO disciplines. This effort has broader multilateral implications, in light of Austria's active international efforts to limit trade in genetically modified organisms. It will also affect discussions on trade and investment between the European Union and the United States. Agricultural exports to Austria have more than doubled over the last five years due to the importation of planting seeds to a U.S. owned facility. However, Austria exports ten times that amount to the United States, most of which are consumer oriented products such as energy drinks.

Embassy Vienna works with U.S. companies, Austrian authorities, and Austrian representatives to the European Union to promote market access for U.S. products and

services and to encourage Austrian support for freer trade policies in the European Union. Embassy elements facilitate communication between U.S. producers and Austrian regulators to address market access issues before they become formal disputes.

Mission elements assist U.S. exporters seeking to expand sales, not just in Europe, but throughout Europe. In addition to the Austrian market, the Commercial Service (CS) office in Vienna is responsible for commercial relations with Kosovo.. CS makes extensive use of both Single Company Promotions and the preparation of International Company Profiles for American clients. Uniquely in the world, Mission Vienna, in close cooperation with UNVIE, has the opportunity to promote the U.S. civil nuclear industry in a multilateral forum at the annual International Atomic Energy Agency Annual Conference. For the past eight years, CS Vienna recruited large U.S. nuclear business delegations who have the opportunity to meet 17 national delegations from globally and engage with CS officers from 16 markets and interact with IAEA staff. The Embassy also seeks fair consideration for U.S. defense suppliers via the Office of Defense Cooperation, which helps enhance Austria's capabilities in stability operations outside its borders.

This Mission objective supports Mission goal three, "Austria supports economic growth, stability, and prosperity in the United States and regionally," and Mission goal four, "Increased Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies undergirds Austrian governmental cooperation with the United States."

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal three: Promote American prosperity by advancing bilateral relationships and leveraging international institutions and agreements to open markets, secure commercial opportunities, and foster investment and innovation to contribute to U.S. job creation

Mission Objective 1.2: Growth of Austrian investment in the United States creates U.S. jobs and expands U.S. economic development.

Justification: U.S. energy, labor, tax, and environmental policies have created competitive advantages for American-based producers compared to sites in Austria. Many Austrian business leaders have been vocal about their support for outward investment, particularly in states that border Mexico and Canada.

Embassy Vienna has had unique success in attracting Austrian investment to the United States. The Commercial Section has taken the lead on promoting FDI, with its ongoing SelectUSA program, investment roadshows, and cooperation with U.S. EDOs. Together, the Commercial and Economic sections work closely with the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKO) and U.S. regional development offices to maximize opportunities for Austrian investors. The Consular Section has seen an explosion in the number of "E-2"

investor visas, and has developed a new online processing system internally that will soon be piloted at other posts. Consular specialists regularly interact directly with the investment community to advise companies on visa issues. The Public Affairs Section continues to publish success stories on social media, and investment promotion has become a key element of all messaging to the Austrian business community. Post expects to build on this success as sections improve their cooperation on investment promotion efforts and the Ambassador's leverages of his experience in the private sector for attracting new investors to the United States.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number two, "renew America's competitive advantage for sustained economic growth and job creation."

Mission Objective 1.3: Austrian recognition of the U.S. innovation "brand" as a positive American value encourages greater support for bilateral government and business cooperation in Austria and the broader region.

Justification: One of the most positive exports that we can share with Austrians is the U.S. innovation brand reflected through the success of U.S. entrepreneurship. Austria, a relatively new player in the field of entrepreneurship and startups, is taking substantial steps to become an attractive country for innovative businesses. The Austrian government has passed laws and launched initiatives to promote startups, incubators, and jobs in innovative sectors and cutting-edge fields. Notwithstanding these measures, major bureaucratic hurdles for business creation remain.

The Embassy is seizing opportunities to participate in entrepreneurship-related events all across Austria, placing an encouraging American voice in the discussion and expand the Embassy's connections to networks of young and influential Austrians startup leaders in all provinces. In line with the U.S. State Department-led effort to promote and spur entrepreneurship around the world under the Global Entrepreneurship Program, the Ambassador will continue to convene members of the startup community in order to afford participants the opportunity to interact with likeminded entrepreneurs who may otherwise not interact. The Mission is actively seeking out ways for the Ambassador to both act as a force-multiplier on existing entrepreneurship programs as well as develop new programs of his own. We anticipate that continued promotion of entrepreneurship will create positive stories in the press, aid in developing a positive business environment for U.S. companies in Austria, and cement entrepreneurship as an ambition valued on both sides of the Atlantic.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number two, "Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation" and goal number three "Promote American Leadership Through Balanced Engagement

Mission Objective 1.4: Our consular section will facilitate the legitimate investment and business travel through outreach and customer service.

Justification: Increased innovation, entrepreneurship, and business opportunities require facility of movement between Austria and the United States. The U.S. director of Voestalpine (Austria's largest investor in the U.S.) has stated that visa policy and the availability to travel with convenience impact decisions on where to invest. As Objective 3 is implemented, the consular section will ensure that our target audience is informed of visa policy, their visa applications facilitated, and that our customer service positively affects the other sub objectives of Objective 3.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number two, "Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation," goal number four "Ensure Effectiveness and Accountability to the American Taxpayer," and JSP Objective 1.5, "Strengthen U.S. border security and protect U.S. citizens abroad"

Mission Goal 2: Increased Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies undergirds Austrian governmental cooperation with the United States.

Description and Linkages: Mission public diplomacy seeks to strengthen Austrian public support for U.S. policies. The Austrian people generally view Americans and much of American culture positively, and our economic prowess as world-class, but there is considerable skepticism toward the U.S. government and some aspects of our culture and values. Perceived uncertainties regarding U.S. foreign policy and global leadership have undermined the traditional appreciation of the United States as a stabilizing force in Europe and the world. Discussions of U.S. disengagement from multilateralism have shaped a narrative often difficult to counter. We continue to deploy 21st century statecraft through the use of social and visual media to reach audiences beyond our traditional target groups, focusing especially on young people with an immigrant background who are interested in integration and countering extremism. Bringing American speakers to Austria, often in collaboration with neighboring posts, expands our engagement to a broad cross-section of Austrian society. Another fruitful area of focus is entrepreneurship – among the most potent "good news" stories about America and an area where the Mission's outreach has reaped positive press and the genuine appreciation of government, business, and civil society. We continue to focus on youth engagement through outreach to schools and various exchanges. Having secured permission for the Fulbright Program to solicit tax-free donations, the Mission has thrown its support behind an effort by the Fulbright Commission to begin a fundraising drive in order to maintain the program's high number of awards.

Mission Objective 2.1: Leverage prominent visitors and experts in a variety of fields to better inform the Austrian public about U.S. policies through engagement, outreach, and programs in support of those policies.

Justification: Public opinion polling of Austrians continues to show low support for American leadership in Europe and around world. Inviting high level or prominent Americans to Austria to speak to organizations, institutions, and the media will help counter the dominant narrative while highlighting areas where the United States is a world leader – in entrepreneurial activity, culture, and scientific or scholarly expertise.

This Mission objective supports all other Vienna Mission goals. It also supports all of EUR's Joint Regional Strategy goals.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number 3.3: Increase partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations to mobilize support and resources and shape foreign public opinion.

Mission Goal 3: Austria actively engages on regional and global challenges to enhance security and stability in Europe and beyond.

Description and Linkages: Austrian engagement regionally and globally contributes to stability in Europe which is one of our goals in the EUR Joint Regional Strategy Framework (JRSF). This engagement includes increased participation in civilian and military organisations and includes Austria's role within the EU, OSCE, NATO PFP and other regional and global institutions and organizations.

Mission Objective 3.1: Austria increases its participation in organizations and efforts that contribute to regional integration and stability.

Justification: Austrian neutrality guides its foreign policy, but its own regional priorities coincide with U.S. strategic objectives, providing opportunities to ensure political stability, spur democratic reforms, and expand economic progress in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, and the Near East. Austrian financial institutions and firms are significant investors and Austria has long historical ties in the region. The financial capital and political influence they provide promotes economic and political integration. This offers growth opportunities and helps foster political and economic reform, also promoting progress towards EU membership. As a prosperous EU member state, Austria and its partners can leverage the EU membership aspirations of Balkan states in particular to push for greater democracy, rule of law, economic transparency, and peaceful coexistence. The Mission's efforts focus on encouraging Austria to use its influence to ensure political and economic stability in the region, support the EU accession aspirations of Western Balkans countries, and to complement U.S. strategic goals.

Following the height of the refugee and migrant flows into Europe from the Middle East and Africa in 2015/2016, Austria is at the forefront of calls within Europe for strong

external EU borders. Austria will use its EU Council Presidency from July 1 – December 31, 2018 to highlight the need for increased coordination among member states on EU border security. Austria's efforts will seek to reduce illegal migration and will ultimately make U.S. borders more secure. Austria can use its considerable influence in neighboring EU border countries to share its best practices in border security.

Another important aspect of EU integration is the Energy Union and the application of the Third Energy Package, which are designed to vary the sources of energy supplies, guarantee third-party access to natural gas pipelines within the EU, and prevent monopoly control of gas delivery. The Mission will underscore with Austrian government and energy-sector officials the necessity of EU and regional solidarity in approaching the region's largest gas supplier, Russia.

Austria is an active participant in international organizations, and host nation to both the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Austria was a member of the UN Human Rights Council (2011-2014), and participates in many UN-sanctioned and other peacekeeping missions.

This Mission objective supports Mission goal three, "Austria supports economic growth in the United States and regionally," and Mission goal four, "increased Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies undergirds Austrian governmental cooperation with the United States." It also supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy Goal #1 ("Advance Euro-Atlantic Integration, Peace, and Stability"); Goal #2 ("Reinforce European Security and Strengthen Partnerships to Address New Security Challenges"); Goal #3 ("Expand and Sustain Resilient and Democratic Societies in the Balkans, Europe's East, and Eurasia"); and Goal #5 ("Leverage our Diplomacy and Development Cooperation with Europe to advance Global and Regional Priorities").

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number one, "protect America's security at home and abroad." Goal number 3.1 "transition nations from assistance recipients to enduring diplomatic, economic, and security partners." Goal number four, "provide humanitarian assistance and support disaster mitigation."

Mission Objective 3.2: Austria increases its commitment to regional and global peacekeeping efforts and improves interoperability with the U.S. military and those of NATO partners.

Justification: As noted above, Austrian neutrality guides its foreign policy, but its own regional priorities coincide with U.S. strategic objectives, including security and political stability in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, Turkey, and the Near East. A NATO Partner (PfP), Austria provides the largest non-NATO contingent to KFOR, is the current lead of the EUFOR-Althea Mission in Bosnia, is a major contributor to UNIFIL in Lebanon, contributes to the security effort in Afghanistan, and is a member of the Counter ISIS Coalition. The Mission seeks to ensure Austria maintains its commitment to

participate in international peacekeeping operations in the face of domestic budget constraints and, that Austria upgrades its military equipment to ensure its operational effectiveness. In light of Turkey's embargo on Austrian participation in NATO PfP activities, the Mission seeks to expand joint training between U.S. and Austrian forces. We will seek to coordinate our efforts as appropriate with relevant multilateral U.S. Missions and such military commands as EUCOM and USAREUR.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal number one, "counter threats to the U.S. interests by strengthening citizen-responsive governance, security, democracy, human rights, and rule of law." Goal number four, "providing humanitarian relief."

Mission Goal 4: Austria is an active and reliable partner in counterterrorism and law enforcement cooperation.

Description and Linkages: Austria's geographic location as a key transport hub for air, land, and rail traffic inside Europe make it an important partner for countering terrorism and law enforcement in Europe. Encouraging Austria to be a reliable and active partner in information sharing helps achieve the EUR JRSF goals of strengthening the Western Alliance, and securing and stabilizing the Eastern and Southern frontiers of Europe.

Mission Objective 4.1: The United States and Austria expand their ability to combat terrorism, nuclear proliferation, cyber-crime, and transnational crime.

Justification: Embassy Vienna is a hub for regional law enforcement cooperation. The FBI, DHS, and DEA cover a mix of the following countries from post: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. In addition, Vienna's DHS/ICE office has oversight responsibilities for Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This makes Embassy Vienna a platform for achieving rule of law and security objectives throughout the region. With the increased scope and complexity of transnational criminal activity, resident law enforcement agencies face expanded challenges. One example is the rising number of extraditions and deportations of criminal suspects from the region to the United States, an increasing number of whom transit Vienna's airport.

Austria has fortunately not seen a terrorist attack in many years, but the conflict in Syria and Iraq has drawn a disproportionately high number of "foreign fighters" from among Austria's Islamic population. Of the estimated 300 foreign fighters who have traveled or attempted to travel to the region, about 100 have returned to Austria – many to face prosecution or at least police observation. The Mission is very active in sharing information with Austrian counterparts and has offered technical assistance. While this cooperation is strong, the Austrians are sometimes reluctant to use unclassified U.S.-

designed information-sharing channels. On the prevention side, the Mission confers closely with the Foreign Ministry's Department of Integration and other offices to compare best practices in countering violent extremism and integration.

The United States and Austria have excellent operational cooperation on law enforcement issues. At a political level, further expansion of bilateral law enforcement cooperation is limited by perceived differences in the stringency of data protection structures, as well as insufficient safeguards on sensitive information for use in the Austrian court system. Cooperation is also hindered by concurrent efforts to reach U.S.-EU agreements on data protection and counterterrorism issues, widespread suspicions of U.S. surveillance activities prompted by the NSA disclosures, and a general public perception in Austria that its neutrality protects it from international terrorism. In addition, cooperation on extradition matters have been affected due to the length of time that certain high-profile extradition matters have taken in Austrian courts, and Austria's inability to keep certain fugitives in custody pending extradition. In addition, while the United States and Austria signed a 2010 asset sharing agreement, cooperation on certain mutual legal assistance matters involving asset sharing have been hindered as Austrian authorities have not lived up to the spirit of that agreement.

Austria complies with international sanctions on Iran and DPRK other proliferating countries, but it also has strong commercial interests in maintaining business ties with countries of concern. This factor applies as well to the disparate level of support within Austria for the current Russian sanctions, imposed following its annexation of Crimea and incursions into eastern Ukraine. The Mission will work closely with law enforcement agencies, the Austrian government, and the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna (UNVIE) to strengthen support for U.S. and international non-proliferation efforts.

The Embassy will continue to encourage the Austrian government to enhance its efforts to combat terrorism, cyber-crime, narcotics trafficking, arms proliferation, child exploitation, trafficking in persons, organized crime, and other transnational crime. Recognizing the government's desire to improve certain law enforcement capabilities, the Embassy will increase its focus on cyber-security issues and support Austria's efforts to harden its computer networks and fight cyber-crime. Post will continue to advocate strong measures to trace financial transactions related to terrorism and transnational crimes, to reduce opportunities for money laundering, and to prosecute human trafficking offenders more aggressively, building upon recent successes in these areas. Post, and other USG agencies, will also work with Austrian authorities to clarify aspects of the 2010 U.S.-Austrian asset sharing agreement and discuss possible legislative changes that could recognize a non-conviction basis for asset forfeiture orders in Austria.

Primary Link to Joint State/USAID Strategic Goal: Goal one, “protect America’s security at home and abroad.” This Mission objective supports Mission goal one, “Austria actively engages on regional and global challenges to enhance security and stability in Europe and beyond;” Mission goal three, “Austria supports economic growth, stability, and prosperity in the United States and regionally;” and Mission goal four, “Increased Austrian public understanding and support for U.S. policies undergirds Austrian governmental cooperation with the United States.” It also supports EUR Joint Regional Strategy goal one (“advance Euro-Atlantic integration, peace, and stability”); goal two (“reinforce European security and strengthen partnerships to address new security challenges); goal three (expand and sustain resilient and democratic societies in the Balkans, Europe’s East, and Eurasia); goal four (“strengthen the foundations of the transatlantic economy”), and goal five (“leverage our diplomacy and development cooperation with Europe to advance global and regional priorities”).

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Bolster human capital opportunities to support expanding Mission goals

Justification: Given the continuing growth in the numbers of agencies and non-ICASS USDH positions, workload has grown across the management platform. The ever-increasing volume and pace of work force staff and supervisors to prioritize operational objectives at the risk of maintaining appropriate management controls. In addition, Central *Europe* is seeing a wave of wage demands that reflect strong growth and *tight labor markets* which risks our competitiveness in hiring and keeping talent.

Management Objective 2: Sustains satisfactory security posture commensurate with evolving threat environment

Justification: The current security environment in Austria is very stable, but events throughout Europe underscore the importance of closely monitoring developments, assessing threats, and planning accordingly for a number of possible emergency scenarios.

Our first and foremost priority has been supporting the Department's position that the protection of our personnel and facilities is paramount. Tri-Mission Vienna's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) has proven itself fully capable of assessing fast moving and dynamic events, identifying potential threats, and developing courses of action and mitigation measures including the Post Emergency Action Plan (EAP). When there is a change in security posture or an emergency occurs, one of the top priorities of the Chief of Mission (COM) is disseminating appropriate threat information to Mission personnel, family members, and other individuals affiliated with the Mission. The sharing of information on changes in security developments will be key to meeting this objective.

Management Objective 3: Optimizes travel, representation, and training funds to achieve U.S. objectives

Justification: This initiative provides Post the opportunity to optimize expenditure in the face of an of ever-tightening budget environment. Additionally, it incentivizes the use of IT tools such as Tele-conferencing or Webinars to drive travel and training costs out of operating budgets.

Management Objective 4: Seek opportunities for cooperation and productive interactions between our three missions and JMO in order to foster collaboration and communication.

Justification: Ensure the effective and efficient use of resources by leveraging improved collaboration and communication.