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**From:** Verveer, Melanne S <VerveerMS@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 18, 2010 4:55 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** From the road

I wanted to give you some brief observations from my trip to Lithuania. First of all, their friendship with the US and respect for you was much in evidence on all levels. Most of the cabinet turned out for the reception that the amb hosted for me. The FM went out his way to tell me what it meant to get a call from you when he assumed his position (he's hoping to have a few mins with you in Tallin). As far as Lith has to go, it has achieved some remarkable achievements for Eastern Eur. They have a female president, Speaker, Finance minister and def. minister. I had a good meeting with the President and thanked her for Lith commitment to our collective efforts in afghanistan. They run the smallest PRT and, despite a tough economy, have done everything we've asked in terms of additional support since the surge. The meeting with the Speaker and top women members of the parl'nt was yet another reminder of your inspiration over many years. One of the women was at the Vienna VV conf and said she's in politics today because of you. Another read about safe birthing kits in your book and was inspired to send several thousand to Afghanistan. They are eager for more opportunities to work together.

I came primarily to launch the new working group on gender that we and Lith are co-chairing. There was much gratitude for our leadership with them in the Community of Democracies.

The meaning of democracy is so strong for people who had to struggle for it more recently. They really feel this is an important time to renew the understanding of democ, particularly after the bruising it underwent over the last several years.

We had terrific turnout from other countries, many comments about you and references to Beijing and Iceland VV conf. (So many people told me the impact Vienna and Iceland had on them). We left our meeting with many commitments for future concrete projects that will be undertaken. There is great hope that you will be in Krakow in July for the CD ministerial. The Lith CD coordinator headed to Belgium the next day for an EU meeting. He told me he got a very positive response for our gender initiative and that Ashton was particularly excited about it. The EU is locating their new gender institute in Lithuania and they are eager for our help.

The Dutch minister who came

said the outcome of their election in June will say much about the nature of their ongoing commitment in Afg.

Lastly, I arrived shortly after the Polish tragedy. There is a very close relationship between the 2 countries and their grief was palpable. Jolenta Kwasniewska and several other Poles came to the CD meeting. She told me that they lost so many of their top leaders across all sectors of society, incl several top women leaders. Jolenta's foundation has been very active in advancing women's progress in Poland as well as working in other countries.