



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Address by the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Discussions

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 22, 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States warmly welcomes the Geneva Discussions Co-Chairs, Ambassadors Morel, Turunen, and Cekuolis to the Permanent Council. I want to join the E.U. in thanking Ambassador Morel for all of his tireless efforts as he completes his very productive mandate. The United States greatly appreciates the leadership of the Co-Chairs in coordinating the Geneva Discussions and commends their efforts to ensure productive talks. We continue to believe that the Geneva Discussions serve as an important forum for improving the security and humanitarian situation in Georgia. We continue to encourage the sides, with the help of the international community, to work toward agreement on international security arrangements, increased confidence-building measures, and strengthened humanitarian initiatives, and a sustainable and peaceful solution to the conflict.

The United States welcomes the agreement reached by Georgia and Russia on permanent funding for UN Representative Turunen's team. As Secretary Clinton said in Astana, we support efforts to restore a meaningful OSCE presence in Georgia, and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Tina Kaidanow noted in Geneva, we support Ambassador Morel's proposed intermediate steps, to include full implementation of IPRM potential and Confidence Building Measures, a statement by Russia on Non-Use of Force, and increased freedom of movement for local residents. With regard to the security situation, the United States remains concerned about the recent spate of bombing plots in Georgia. We have urged the participants in the Geneva talks to treat these incidents seriously. The United States also observes that progress on a partial return of Internally Displaced Persons and a full multilateral presence, including policing and peacekeeping, would also contribute to greater stability and security in the region.

We support the Co-Chairs' invitation to all interested parties before the next round to submit factual information on, and enumeration of, humanitarian needs in their regions for a greater understanding and assessment of the humanitarian situation in all regions. We also endorse their initiative with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to send a monitoring delegation to the region to collect information on the human rights situation in all regions covered by the Geneva Discussions.

We continue to urge the Russian Federation to fully implement the August 2008 cease-fire agreement and its September 2008 implementing measures, signed by Presidents Medvedev and Saakashvili and mediated by President Sarkozy. These measures included commitments by the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops to positions held prior to the start of hostilities and allow humanitarian access to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia. The Russian Federation's deployment of troops and weapons in the regions is

inconsistent with those cease-fire commitments, and demonstrates the need for additional transparency measures.

For the next rounds of talks on October 3-4 and December 13-14, we encourage the sides to develop a substantive agenda encompassing all major issues, including ways to reduce tensions, facilitate humanitarian assistance, and monitor and improve human rights and humanitarian conditions on the ground.

The United States remains committed to finding a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in Georgia, and continues to support Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.