United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Security Incident in the Abkhazia Region of Georgia

As delivered by Political Counselor Christopher Robinson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 8, 2012

The United States is concerned about the reports of several security incidents in Georgia along the Abkhazia Administrative Boundary Line (ABL). We are troubled by the increase in security-related events in this area in the last three months, the latest of which took place on March 4 in Ganmukhuri. We understand that the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) deployed several patrols to the area to gather information. Our information regarding what occurred is incomplete and we would appreciate further clarification.

We welcome the efforts of the EUMM to gather information on what had occurred during the March 4 incidents, as well as the EUMM's continued close monitoring of events on the ground and through the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings to maintain security and stability for the people living in the area close to the Administrative Boundary Line. The United States urges all stakeholders to show restraint and avoid provocations that could undermine security and stability in the region. These events further demonstrate the need for greater transparency in the occupied regions, including through the establishment of international monitoring there.

The United States calls on the Russian Federation to fulfill all of its obligations under the 2008 ceasefire and implementing measures agreements, including withdrawal of forces to pre-conflict positions and free access for humanitarian assistance to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The United States remains committed to helping Russia and Georgia find a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in Georgia, and we will continue to support Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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