



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Russian Draft Decision Concerning Georgian-Ossetian Conflict

As Delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 10, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States takes note of the Russian Federation's own overview of current events in its statement and its draft decision regarding the conflict in the Tskhinvali region of Georgia. We are very concerned by the speed with which this draft is being discussed both in the Preparatory Committee and the Permanent Council. The regrettable recent incidents of violence in the Tskhinvali region, including the assassination attempt on Dmitri Sanakoyev, the head of the Temporary Administrative Unit of South Ossetia, deserve to be addressed in a balanced and objective manner.

The Russian delegation's text will require substantial amendment. The United States has distributed its proposed amendments and is willing to discuss them further in the Preparatory Committee in a responsible and timely fashion.

We reiterate our strong support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized boundaries. We also call for an immediate halt to recent bombings and other violence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia that have brought about injury and death.

We call for an end to violence and encourage greater dialogue and cooperation as well as immediate approval for an increase in the number of OSCE Mission Monitoring Officers in South Ossetia. We also reiterate our call for joint monitoring of the Roki Tunnel and the establishment of a checkpoint at the village of Didi Gupta in order to increase transparency. The recent episodes of violence only underscore the need for a more robust OSCE presence in the region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.