



United States Mission to the OSCE

Right of Reply to the Russian Federation on Freedom of Assembly in the OSCE Region

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 28, 2021

I appreciate my Russian colleague's concern about events in the United States. The January 6 assault on the Capitol and the tragic deaths and destruction that occurred underscored what we have long known: the rise of domestic violent extremism is a serious and growing national security threat.

The Biden Administration will confront this threat with the necessary resources and resolve. We are committed to developing policies and strategies based on facts, on objective and rigorous analysis, and — let me stress — on our respect for Constitutionally-protected free speech and political activities.

Investigations into the events at the U.S. Capitol and Tacoma, Washington are ongoing, but I assure my esteemed Russian colleague that the United States' commitment to the right to peaceful assembly is unwavering, jealously guarded and guaranteed by the First Amendment in our Constitution which dates back to the founding days of my country.

Thank you.

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