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United States Mission to the OSCE



**Final Statement at the OSCE Ministerial
Council, Madrid**

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Julie Finley
November 30, 2007

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Government and people of Spain, for their hospitality in hosting this conference, and you in particular Minister Moratinos, for your tireless efforts throughout your year as Chairman in Office of this organization.

A final plenary allows participants to adopt decisions that will be important for the future of this organization. Here in Madrid we have reached a decision on future Chairmanships through 2011. This decision should place this organization on a solid, stable trajectory for the next four years and should be welcomed by all as a most positive development. We are particularly heartened to have heard all four prospective chairmen underscore their commitment to the expansion of boundaries of freedom at home, and as well their commitment in support of the OSCE's institutions, and particularly ODIHR.

During the course of our discussions, we have been encouraged to hear a solid majority of participating States also express support for a strong, autonomous ODIHR. We have heard strong support for the work of our field missions, and in particular for the importance of the continuation of the work of the Mission in Kosovo. Finally, it was additionally encouraging to hear so many expressions of continued support for the CFE Treaty as a cornerstone of stability throughout the OSCE area. In this regard, we support the statement we have just heard from Lithuania speaking on behalf of all NATO member states. It is particularly unfortunate, however, that we awakened this morning to the news that President Putin had signed a decree, effective December 12, suspending Russia's participation in this critical instrument for stability in the OSCE region. At a time when we and our Allies have been making serious efforts with our Russian colleagues to preserve the Treaty and make it possible to move ahead with ratification, such a unilateral step is not constructive. It is regrettable that, once again, we have been unable to agree on statements dealing with Georgia and Moldova, despite the clear willingness of the Georgian delegation and Spanish Chair to accommodate Russian demands in a fair and balanced statement. We also regret, and are disappointed that a demand that we agree to adopt a charter has prevented us from approving the legal Personality Convention, which meets a recognized need and whose text we all support.

We have also today adopted a series of discrete agreements that move this Organization's work forward in addressing key challenges to security in our region. With your help, Mr. Chairman, we have launched an important initiative in support of border security in Afghanistan. We thank you for your initiative and your efforts in this regard. We agreed to

create a fund to help support training and cooperation with our Mediterranean and Asian partners, which could prove vital in spreading the values and norms of our Organization beyond our borders. We have recommitted ourselves to combat terrorism through government action but also through partnership with the private sector and civil society, and also to share best practices on protection of critical energy infrastructure. These are important accomplishments, especially in the current time when we face strains and disagreements in many other areas. Through dialogue, cooperation, and mutual commitment to seek solutions, we are confident we can continue to achieve results in the future as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.