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United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement Regarding the Failure to Resume Transnistria Conflict Settlement Negotiations

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 25, 2006

Mr. Chairman.

The United States is disappointed that the consultations on the Transnistria conflict, held in Odessa, Ukraine, on October 17th and 18th, failed to result in the resumption of negotiations under the established Five-Plus-Two format.

The mediators and observers made a sincere and concerted effort to bring the parties together. We welcome the initiative by the Head of Mission to Moldova, Lou O'Neill, to arrange the consultations, and we thank the government of Ukraine for hosting them in Odessa. It is indeed a shame that the talks that were suspended six months ago remain suspended because of Transnistrian objections, with little prospect of resuming in the near term.

The United States reiterates that it is prepared and willing to continue in its role as observer in the Five-Plus-Two process and to contribute in any way possible toward a peaceful settlement of the Transnistria conflict that respects the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.

We once again repeat our view that the resumption of the withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldovan territory, in accordance with the Russian Federation's Istanbul commitments, is an important step towards achieving a lasting settlement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.