



United States Mission to the OSCE

U.S. National Statement in Support of Minsk Group Co-Chairs

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 16, 2021

Thank you, Madam Chair.

As a *Minsk Group* Co-Chair, the United States puts its full weight behind the April 13 statement. We note the ceasefire agreed to by the sides on November 9, 2020 is being largely respected. The United States is encouraged by progress in the return of remains, voluntary resettlement of the displaced, and the provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as on talks to improve regional transport and communication lines.

We urge the sides to make further progress on these issues, and to expedite the return of any prisoners of war and other detainees on an all-for-all basis. We further urge the sides to support regional humanitarian demining activities, and to facilitate unimpeded access to Nagorno Karabakh.

We call on Armenia and Azerbaijan to hold direct bilateral consultations under the auspices of the *Co-Chairs*, and to negotiate a final, comprehensive, and sustainable political settlement to the conflict on the basis of the elements and principles well-known to the sides. The work of the *Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office* to monitor the situation adds valuable transparency to this process. We call on Azerbaijan and Armenia to support his work, including through the OSCE's *Unified Budget*.

Thank you, Madam Chair.