



United States Mission to the OSCE

Concerns Regarding the Russian Federation's Seizing and Continued Detention of Estonian Police Officer Eston Kohver

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Kate Byrnes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 13, 2014

The United States is deeply concerned by the ongoing detention of Estonian police officer Eston Kohver by Russian authorities. On September 5 –more than two months ago-- Mr. Kohver was seized on Estonian territory near the Estonian-Russian border while carrying out official duties to prevent transnational crime. The Russian Federation's incursion onto Estonian soil to seize Mr. Kohver and its continuing detention of Mr. Kohver raise serious issues regarding Russia's compliance with its international legal obligations.

We raised the issue of Mr. Kohver's detention in the Permanent Council on September 18. In that statement, we noted that developments since the incident were troubling, and highlighted a lack of appropriate Estonian consular access to Mr. Kohver. Indeed, we continue to be gravely concerned about developments in the case, including the extension of his detention and the appointment of "psychiatric experts" to his case.

We remain concerned that Russian authorities have failed to resolve this case in a timely fashion and provide for Mr. Kohver's immediate release and return to Estonia. We call once again on Russia to immediately return Mr. Kohver unharmed to Estonia.

Thank you, Madam Chair.