



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Geneva International Discussions on the Conflict in Georgia

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative Kate Byrnes to the
Permanent Council, Vienna
October 13, 2016

At the thirty-seventh round of the Geneva International Discussions on the conflict in Georgia, which occurred October 4-5, the United States welcomed the regular meetings of the Gali Incident Prevention Response Mechanism following its resumption in May. This is an important mechanism to defuse tensions on the ground.

The United States called on the de facto authorities in Abkhazia to detain and bring to justice the perpetrator of the fatal shooting of a Georgian civilian along the Abkhazia Administrative Boundary Line on May 19. We encourage participants to use the next meeting of the Gali Incident Prevention Response Mechanism to exchange information on the status of the investigation.

Although participants held useful discussions for most of the round, the United States regrets that the two working groups were not able to complete discussion of their agendas, including a discussion of internally displaced persons. The United States urges participants to engage on all issues related to the conflict and to use the next round to take steps forward on security and humanitarian issues.

The United States fully supports Georgia's territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. Russia's holding of elections to the Russian Duma in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia without the consent of the government of Georgia is inconsistent with Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and contrary to the commitments made by the Russian Federation in the August 12, 2008, six-point ceasefire agreement.

Thank you, Madam Chair.