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United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Transnistria Conflict Settlement Talks

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 22, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Like the European Union, the United States also participated as an observer in the latest round of Transnistria conflict settlement talks that took place in Moldova December 15th and 16th.

Unfortunately, the results of this round were disappointing. There was virtually no progress achieved, due mainly to the obstructive attitude adopted by the Transnistrian side.

The next round of talks, scheduled for January 26th and 27th in Moldova, will be an opportunity for the sides to reinvigorate their efforts and to demonstrate that they take the negotiations seriously. In particular, we call on the Transnistrian side to comply with both the spirit and words of the protocols from the two previous rounds in the 5 plus 2 format and provide complete military data to the OSCE as soon as possible.

We look forward to reviewing the OSCE Mission's plan for a mission to assess prospects for free and fair democratic elections in the Transnistrian region, and we hope that early 2006 will see real progress on proposals to monitor Transnistria's military-industrial enterprises and to transform and internationalize the peacekeeping forces.

Mr. Chairman, nothing would help the settlement process more tangibly than for the Russian Federation to resume the withdrawal of its forces from Moldovan territory in fulfillment of its 1999 Istanbul Summit commitment. The United States again reiterates its full support for a peaceful settlement to this conflict that fully respects Moldova's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

We would also like to thank the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Bill Hill, for his steady leadership and unwavering commitment to a settlement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.