



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group

As delivered by Ambassador James S. Gilmore III
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 19, 2020

My thanks also to Ambassador Kasprzyk, Ambassador Popov, Ambassador Visconti, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State Andrew Schofer, and Lieutenant Colonel Mustafaraj.

The United States welcomes the three *Co-Chairs* of the OSCE *Minsk Group* and the *Personal Representative of the Chair-in-Office* to the Permanent Council. We thank you and the Head of the *High-Level Planning Group* for your timely and objective update on the situation on the ground, recent developments, and thoughts on the way forward.

The United States sincerely welcomed the cessation of violence in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict area. We have taken note of the Russian-brokered arrangement to stop the fighting and appreciate the additional information provided today regarding the implementation of this arrangement as it goes on to take shape.

We encourage the sides to work with the *Minsk Group Co-Chairs* to resolve outstanding issues and reach a lasting peaceful resolution of this conflict. No military solution is going to resolve this conflict over the longer-term—any final resolution must be based on the principles enshrined in the *Helsinki Final Act*: non-use of force, territorial integrity, and self-determination. These are the principles that must be applied for a long-term solution to this conflict.

While the fighting has largely stopped, the humanitarian situation on the ground does remain dire. The United States takes note of this humanitarian crisis that is on the way. Conditions in the conflict zone are exacerbated by the global coronavirus pandemic and will certainly become more acute as the winter comes nearer and nearer. We urge the sides to work closely with the *International Committee of the Red Cross* and the OSCE's *Personal Representative* to facilitate the exchange of detainees and the return of remains, as well as other steps agreed upon in Geneva on October 29. We take note of the United States' contribution of substantial funds in the amount of about \$5 million, which will be donated to assist the *International Committee of the Red Cross* and other non-governmental organizations and I'm confident that American volunteers and personnel will play a role in the resolution of this humanitarian crisis situation.

Mr. Chairman, the impact of this conflict on regional stability and prosperity is both immense and devastating. We are watching developments closely in the United States. We encourage both participating States to take advantage of OSCE resources to assist them in upholding OSCE principles and fulfilling their OSCE commitments, since all parties to this are members of the OSCE and are committed to the principles of the *Final Act*.

This protracted conflict has taken a terrible toll on local communities and we recognize that. The time for reaching a lasting peace is now. We are confident the *Minsk Group Co-Chairs* can help the sides reach a lasting and permanent peace in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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