



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **On the 55th Round of the Geneva International Discussions on the Conflict in Georgia**

As delivered by Political Counselor Elisabeth Rosenstock-Siller  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
December 16, 2021

During the 55th round of the Geneva International Discussions, or “GID,” on December 7 and 8, the United States welcomed the continued commitment of the participants to seek peaceful conflict resolution and improve the lives of people in conflict-affected areas through participation in the Geneva process. U.S. participants thanked the Co-Chairs, including the Special Representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office, for their ongoing efforts to maintain dialogue in the face of the global pandemic, and to seek new approaches to deepen cooperation.

The United States welcomed participants’ active discussion in side meetings on freedom of movement and medical cooperation, and expressed support for life-saving cooperation between many GID participants to combat the effects of COVID-19. We urged all GID participants to work together to provide all residents of conflict-affected areas with access to COVID-19 vaccines and other important medical treatments. U.S. participants also urged all GID participants to ensure residents of conflict-affected areas are able to visit relatives, engage in peaceful economic activities, and otherwise move freely without fear of detention or arbitrary punishment, and with access to documentation that will allow them to return to their homes.

The United States welcomed ongoing meetings of the Ergneti Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism, or “IPRM,” and also welcomed signs that the Gali IPRM may resume in the near future. We urged participants to make full use of both IPRMs to ensure participants have a standing forum to resolve ground-level issues in a timely manner and prevent escalation of disagreements. U.S. participants welcomed signs of progress on resolving missing persons cases and urged GID participants to redouble their work in this area. The United States urged further dialogue on human and comprehensive security as a critical step in effective conflict resolution.

Looking beyond the most recent GID round, the United States must note our regret, once again, about the lack of implementation of the 2008 ceasefire agreement, which remains unfulfilled. In particular, we note the obligation Russia made to withdraw its troops to pre-conflict positions. Facilitating unfettered access for humanitarian organizations as stipulated in the ceasefire would also be a critical step to improve the lives of people on the ground and demonstrate, together with the withdrawal of troops, a good faith interest in long-term resolution of this conflict.

The United States regrets it was not possible to discuss all items on the GID agenda due to a walk-out by participants from Russia and the de facto authorities.

Madam Chairperson, the 55<sup>th</sup> round of the GID came on the heels of the OSCE Ministerial Council, where we were unable to negotiate a regional statement in support of the Geneva International Discussions because of Russia's refusal to acknowledge its ongoing role in the conflict, or to recognize Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As a Friend of Georgia, U.S. support for Georgia is unwavering, as are our efforts to hold Russia to account for its actions and its unfulfilled commitments in this conflict.

The United States reiterates its strong support for Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally-recognized borders.

Thank you, Madam Chair.