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## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on New Pictures from Abu Ghraib**

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
February 16, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Yesterday, Australian public television aired previously unpublished photographs and video clips of prisoner abuse by United States soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison. These are not from a new incident, but are more photographic evidence of the abuse that came to light in January 2004.

The acts depicted in these photos are crimes and violations of the policies of the United States. Individuals who participate in such behavior have been and will be held accountable. These kinds of acts are as sickening to Americans as they are to people around the world.

The President of the United States has made clear that United States policies forbid, and we will not tolerate torture or inhumane treatment of detainees in its custody.

United States service members receive clear instructions and training to treat detainees humanely.

The United States treats allegations of abuse seriously, and the Department of Defense has taken appropriate action against those found to have committed abuse against a detainee.

More than 466 criminal investigations have been conducted and more than 100 individuals have been held accountable for alleged detainee abuse (i.e., court-martials, confinement for a term of years, non-judicial punishments, reprimands and/or separation from the service).

At Abu Ghraib specifically, more than 25 individuals -- officers and enlisted -- have been held accountable for criminal acts and other unauthorized conduct. One individual was sentenced to 10 years in prison, another to 8 years and another to 3 years. The Colonel in charge of the Military Intelligence Brigade operating at Abu Ghraib was relieved of command, reprimanded, and fined.

The Department of Defense has conducted a dozen major reviews, assessments, or investigations related to detention operations, including several high-level reviews of the events specifically at Abu Ghraib:

- More than 2,800 interviews have been conducted.
- More than 16,000 pages of information have been produced.
- More than 31 Congressional hearings and 45 staff briefings have been held.

A relatively small number of people have engaged in acts such as those depicted in these photos. They do not reflect the dedicated service of more than 830,000 service members deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

It is important to remember that it was a United States soldier who disclosed the photographs in January 2004 because of his concern that these acts were wrong. The military chain of command immediately launched an investigation before this matter ever became public.

We're not perfect, but we believe in the rule of law. When soldiers or civilians break the law, they will be held accountable for their actions and judged appropriately according to our laws.

We will not rest until each and every individual responsible for these acts is brought to justice.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.