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United States Mission to the OSCE

Right of Reply: Response to the Russian Federation Regarding Statement in Response to the Representative on Freedom of the Media

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 19, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States wishes to exercise its right of reply to the statement made on June 21 by the esteemed Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation in response to the presentation of the Representative on Freedom of the Media on the conduct of law enforcement authorities during the NATO Summit in Chicago, May 20-21, 2012.

As we reported to the Permanent Council May 24, the protests in Chicago were monitored by a team from ODIHR and locally recruited volunteers. We look forward to the report expected to be issued during the November Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association.

Many commentators noted that police exercised extraordinary restraint when interacting with protestors at the Summit.

According to official reports, 90 people were detained during the demonstrations surrounding the NATO summit, and most were released without charges. One of those detained was a photo journalist, who was originally charged with mob action. That charge was reduced to reckless conduct, a misdemeanor, and the photo journalist was released.

We also note that a local law enforcement agency did indeed ask Google to remove YouTube videos of purported police brutality. Google did not comply with the request.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.