



United States Mission to the OSCE

National Statement in Support of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 3, 2021

Thank you, Madam Chair.

As a Co-Chairing country of the *Minsk Group*, the United States remains concerned by recent developments along the international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the detention of several Armenian soldiers by Azerbaijani forces. We call on both sides to urgently and peacefully resolve this incident. We also continue to call on Azerbaijan to immediately release all *Prisoners of War* and other detainees, and we remind Azerbaijan of its obligations under international humanitarian law to treat all detainees humanely.

The United States considers any movements along the non-demarcated areas of the international border between Armenia and Azerbaijan to be provocative and unnecessary. We reject the use of force to demarcate the border and call on both sides to return to their previous positions and to cease military fortification of the non-demarcated border and the emplacement of landmines. Specifically, we call on Azerbaijan to relocate its forces to the positions they held on May 11. We also call on Armenia to relocate its forces to the positions they held on May 11.

These actions will de-escalate tensions and create space for a peaceful negotiation process to demarcate the border on an urgent basis.

The United States is prepared to assist these efforts.

The United States urges the sides to return as soon as possible to substantive negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE *Minsk Group Co-Chairs* to achieve a long-term political settlement to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, based on the principles of the *Helsinki Final Act*.

We urge the sides to support the work and budget of the *CiO's Personal Representative*, who brings valuable transparency to this process.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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