



United States Mission to the OSCE

**Statement on the 30th Round of the Geneva
International Discussions on the Conflict
in Georgia**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 18, 2014

The United States participated in the 30th round of the Geneva International Discussions on the conflict in Georgia. While differences remained on several of the agenda items and political developments in the region, participants generally engaged constructively in both working groups.

Participants must work with the Co-Chairs to identify areas for progress in upcoming rounds to improve security on the ground and address outstanding humanitarian concerns. Specifically, we urged the participants to find a solution that would facilitate the resumption of the Gali Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism, a valuable tool to build trust and increase transparency along the Administrative Boundary Line in the Georgian region of Abkhazia. We lament that one group of participants left the discussion on humanitarian issues before its conclusion, but we were encouraged by participants' proactive information sharing efforts related to shared cultural heritage and by discussions on missing persons, water, and gas issues.

In Geneva, the United States reiterated that it does not recognize the "agreement" on alliance and strategic partnership between Russia and the Georgian region of Abkhazia, and expressed concern about the agreement's potential negative impact on regional stability and the Geneva Discussions. We also raised the agreement's possible effects on borderization and freedom of movement, and called on participants to find solutions that protect the human rights of all people affected by the conflict.

The United States reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders, and we repeat our calls on Russia to fulfill all of its commitments under the 2008 ceasefire agreement.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.