



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the Georgia Parliamentary Elections

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 13, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like our EU colleagues, the United States is concerned by the interruption to the electoral process in Georgia.

With run-off elections for majoritarian seats in a number of precincts scheduled for November 23, the United States takes this opportunity to urge Georgian authorities to ensure that the voting this time is conducted in full accordance with the Unified Election Code and with international and OSCE standards of fairness and transparency. As we noted last week, timely, transparent, and accurate tabulation and reporting of the vote count - both the November 2 and the November 23 totals - is essential to enhancing the credibility of Georgia's election and to restoring voter confidence.

On a positive note, we are heartened by the news that the post-election demonstrations in Georgia have been peaceful, as has the authorities' response to those demonstrations. We once again call upon all parties and candidates to refrain from the threat or use of violence. We urge all sides to wait until majoritarian seat run-off elections have been held on November 23 and the Central Election Commission has completed its work before deciding whether to challenge the results of the election.

We appreciate the efforts of the OSCE Mission in Tbilisi as it continues to monitor the election process, and we will continue to follow developments closely. I thank you.