



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Georgia

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 27, 2003

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The U.S. reiterates its support for the stability and sovereignty of a democratic Georgia, and is committed to helping the Georgian people emerge from the political crisis that has gripped their country over the last few weeks.

The Georgian people are to be commended for achieving a solution to the crisis without resorting to violence. Protesters and authorities alike respected the need to resolve the political dilemma peacefully.

We look forward to working with Interim President Burjanadze in her effort to maintain the integrity of Georgia's democracy as she strives to ensure that the change in government is in accordance with the constitution.

As Georgia prepares for a new presidential election, the United States stands ready to provide financial and technical assistance to assist the government of Georgia in ensuring that the voting meets OSCE standards for democratic elections, and that the results reflect the will of the Georgian people. An interagency team will travel to Tbilisi the week of December 1 to consult with the interim government. We strongly support the continued presence of ODIHR and OSCE election observers in Georgia. As soon as their needs assessment has been concluded the U.S. will contribute resources, technical expertise and personnel to these efforts. We strongly urge other OSCE members to provide similar concrete support to this crucial effort.

In order for these elections to be conducted successfully, participation by all sectors of Georgian society and cooperation by the international community are absolutely essential.

We look forward to working closely with the Georgian authorities, and fellow OSCE participating states, as the Georgian people move forward on the path of democracy.

Thank you.