



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Closure of the Sputnik Camp for Chechen IDP's in Ingushetia, Russian Federation

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 1, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We understand that today Russian authorities are closing the Sputnik refugee camp, about which my delegation and others spoke last week in the Permanent Council. The Human Rights Commission of the President of the Russian Federation reported that, as of last week, 750 Chechen IDPs still resided in the camp.

Mr. Chairman, the United States urges Russian authorities to work with the UN and other humanitarian organizations to find alternative shelter for IDPs who do not want to return to Chechnya. We also urge the Russian authorities to leave public utilities, including water and electricity, operational in the camp until all IDPs have been given shelter elsewhere. Finally, Mr. Chairman, we reserve the right to return to this matter after the recess.

I Thank you.