



Press Statement

Sean McCormack, Spokesman

Washington, DC

July 14, 2008

Georgia: Escalation of Violence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia

The United States is concerned by the recent escalation in violence in the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and calls upon all sides to return to direct negotiations and resolve their differences peacefully. We are deeply troubled by Russia's statement that its military aircraft deliberately violated Georgia's internationally recognized borders by flying over Georgia's region of South Ossetia. Such actions raise questions about Russia's role as peacekeeper and facilitator of the negotiations and threaten stability throughout the entire region.

We urge all members of the international community, including Russia, to support Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, as called for by numerous UN Security Council resolutions, including, most recently, UNSCR 1808 in April 2008. The United States fully supports and is actively engaged in the Friends of the Secretary General process and believes that the efforts of the Friends group will lead to a settlement of the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

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