



Press Statement

Sean McCormack, Spokesman

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Recent Russian Actions in Georgia

We are extremely concerned about recent statements from the Russian government indicating that Russian forces will remain permanently in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The ceasefire agreement signed by Presidents Medvedev and Saakashvili obliges Russian troops to withdraw to the positions they held on August 6. Any additional deployments of Russian armed forces beyond their pre-August 7 positions would constitute a violation of the ceasefire. President Medvedev's comments that around 7600 Russian troops will be permanently deployed to Abkhazia and South Ossetia is in clear contravention to the ceasefire agreement. We insist that Russia uphold its commitment.

We are also very concerned by Russian restrictions on the flow of humanitarian aid, which also contravenes the ceasefire agreement. Although humanitarian aid has been able to move through the port of Poti, and the main east-west transportation routes are open, the Russian checkpoint at Karaleti continues to turn back shipments of humanitarian assistance that is trying to reach the villages south of Tskhinvali. We strongly urge Russia to allow the free flow of humanitarian assistance to all areas of Georgia.

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