



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Armenian Political Impasse

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 22, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States is concerned about the current political impasse in Armenia, which appears to be exacerbated by the government's decision to forcibly break up a peaceful demonstration, and the opposition's current unwillingness to meet with the government.

We view the government's release of almost all opposition activists in custody as a positive sign. However, detentions and physical assaults of opposition activists and journalists, and raids on political party offices, are excessive and contrary to international standards. We strongly urge the Government to release all remaining detainees.

We call on the Armenian government to engage wholeheartedly with opposition parties and activists to resolve the tough issues that separate them, including the issue of accountability for flawed elections in 2003.

We also strongly encourage the opposition to engage in a dialogue with the government, and to reexamine the effectiveness of its boycott of the National Assembly.

Thank you.