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U.S. Department of State Diplomacy in Action

Joint Statement by the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia Resolution

Media Note

Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Spokesman

Washington, DC

June 16, 2009

Following is the text of a Joint Statement by the Spokespersons of the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, and France as members of the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary General.

Begin Text:

We deeply regret Russia's decision to veto a resolution on the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), which has resulted in the termination of the Security Council mandate for the Mission after 15 years of valuable service providing military transparency on the ground, promoting the human rights of the local population, and seeking to create conditions for the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees. We note that Russia had twice accepted a reference to UNSCR 1808 since the August conflict, in resolutions 1839 and 1866. The closure of the UN mission, like that of the OSCE mission, is a setback to international efforts to resolve this conflict.

We call on all parties with forces on the ground to exercise the utmost restraint and to abide by the August 12 and September 8 ceasefire agreements. We call on all participants in the Geneva talks to commit themselves to continuing efforts to find a peaceful and political resolution to the conflict and to alleviate the plight of refugees and IDPs. We reaffirm our firm support for the European Union Monitoring Mission.

We also reiterate our strong support for Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

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