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## THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

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### Statement by the Press Secretary

The United States has never recognized the forcible incorporation of the independent states of Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania into the USSR. We have consistently supported the Baltic peoples' inalienable right to peaceful self-determination.

The new Parliament has declared its intention to restore Lithuanian independence. The United States would urge the Soviet government to respect the will of the citizens of Lithuania as expressed through their freely elected representatives and expects the government of Lithuania to consider the rights of its minority population.

The United States believes it is in the mutual interest of Lithuania, the Soviet Union, and all CSCE countries to resolve this issue peacefully.

We call upon the Soviet government to address its concerns and interests through immediate constructive negotiations with the government of Lithuania.

We hope that all parties will continue to avoid any initiation or encouragement of violence.



*At the Lithuanian-Latvian border on August 23, 1989: Baltics linked arms in a human chain to commemorate the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.  
Photo K. Sverys*



*The anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact: demonstration in Vilnius, August 22, 1989.  
Photo K. Sverys*