



EMBASSY OF GEORGIA TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA
PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO THE OSCE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

STATEMENT

of the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the OSCE
Mr. Paata Gaprindashvili

*Delivered at the 825th Meeting of the Permanent Council
Vienna, 29 July 2010*

Mr. Chairman,

Twelfth round of the Geneva talks was held on July 26-27, 2010 where the issues of security and stability in Georgia's occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions and the safe and dignified return of the IDPs and refugees to the places of their habitual residence were discussed.

During the meeting the Georgian side once again urged the Russian side to fully implement the August 12 cease-fire agreement and start the withdrawal of the troops from the occupied Georgian regions. It was stressed that the establishment of a sustainable international security regime in the occupied Georgian regions is necessary and that such regime should be based on robust international peacekeeping and police presence and a full withdrawal of Russian military forces in accordance with the August 12 cease-fire agreement.

In the Working Group 1, the participants reviewed the security situation on the ground. They reiterated that the full operation of both Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRM) is important. Co-Chairs expressed their hopes that the Tskhinvali IPRM will resume its normal functioning in the nearest future, after almost a year of break-down due to the boycott by Moscow and Tskhinvali. Participants paid particular attention to the recent communication failure over a Tskhinvali "hot line" and expressed hope that the technical barriers would not be used as a pretext to create undue obstacles for the functioning of the "hot line". The Georgian side brought to the attention of the Co-Chairs recent security-related incidents - targeted explosion of the water reservoir in the Akhagori region and illegal intrusion of the Russian military helicopter into the Zugdidi region. The Georgian side called upon Moscow and its proxy regimes to refrain from the provocative acts, which could further destabilize the already fragile security situation in the vicinity of the occupied territories.

In the Working Group 1 participants continued discussing issues related to the "non-use of force and international security arrangements". During this round co-Chairs proposed a further elaborated document on the non-use of force and international security arrangements. The Georgian participants welcomed this document and expressed willingness to continue work on a sequential approach proposed by the co-Chairs. In contrast, participants from Moscow rejected the

document, moreover Moscow representative even questioned the legitimacy of the document as well legitimacy of the letter by the Geneva co-Chairs to the respective heads of the International Organizations, once again demonstrating their neglectful attitude to the Geneva Discussions and the work undertaken by the participants.

In both working groups the Georgian side expressed concern that the proxy regimes continue to hamper the freedom of movement of the local residents. Concrete attention was paid to the facts of illegally detaining the local residents, who accidentally cross the occupation line. Participants from Tbilisi called upon Moscow and its proxy regime in Tskhinvali to release 8 detained persons, who are currently held hostage in Tskhinvali without any legitimate ground. The Georgian side believes that the lives of these detained persons, some of whom require urgent medical assistance are in danger as a result of inhuman and degrading treatment that they are regularly subjected to. The Georgian side calls upon the international community to undertake a concerted action and to persuade the Russian Federation and its proxy regimes to abandon the practice of taking hostages and release these persons immediately. Meanwhile it is essential that the international humanitarian agencies receive full access to these detained persons, as well as other persons in need of humanitarian assistance inside the occupied regions of Georgia.

In the second working group participants continued discussing the document on the safe and dignified return of the IDPs and other humanitarian issues, proposed by the co-chairs and discussed at length during the previous rounds. Despite the numerous attempts to reach a consensus over the document, the participants from Moscow and their proxy regimes continued to question the right of the IDPs to return, what makes a progress over this document out of reach at this stage.

Participants agreed to hold the 13th round of Geneva talks on 14 October 2010.

Mr. Chairman, Dear Colleagues,

Preparations for the OSCE Summit this year is under way. As it has been said for numerous times, overarching goal for all of us is to rebuild trust and confidence and to achieve this we need to mobilize sufficient political will. Indeed, where there is a will there is a way. It is so regretful that I need to underline – Russia’s cooperation in the Geneva process is not increasing, it is declining. You would agree that it is not a way one should pursue especially in the context of forthcoming OSCE Summit in Astana. Georgia has no interest in being in conflict and in having confrontation with Russia. Our call and offer is there: Georgia is fully ready for comprehensive talks with Russia without any precondition on normalization of relations at any time at any place.

Thank You Mr. Chairman.