



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN GEORGIA**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
11 September 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Let me first welcome the results of the recent negotiations in Moscow between the European Union and the Russian Federation, which have just been presented by France on behalf of the EU.

We are pleased to note the renewed commitment by the President of the Russian Federation to completely withdraw all Russian forces from the zones adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia to their positions prior to 7 August. We warmly welcome the European Union's intention of deploying at least 200 observers in those zones.

We also reiterate our strong support to the Finnish Chair in its determined efforts to achieve a consensus which by now is already overdue on a mandate for the additional OSCE military observers. It is necessary to have the possibility of deploying all 100 additional observers throughout Georgia, including to South Ossetia and adjacent areas, without any restrictions, as foreseen in the PC decision of 19 August.

We need international observers on the ground, inter alia to provide us with reliable information on the situation for the civilian populations, including those ethnic Georgians who still reside in South Ossetia, and to follow up the implementation of the ceasefire agreement.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway looks forward to the opening of international talks in Geneva on the modalities for security and stability in the region and the issue of refugees and displaced persons. Norway believes that the OSCE has an important role to play in finding lasting solutions that can stabilise the situation. Finally, let me reiterate once more that a long-term peaceful solution must be found which fully respects Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, within her internationally recognised borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman