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PC.DEL/649/09

30 July 2009

ENGLISH only

Swedish Presidency of the European Union

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 771
Vienna 30 July 2009**

EU Statement on Georgia

The position of the European Union on Georgia is well known and has not changed. The EU remains firmly committed to playing a full role in the resolution of this crisis, including in the Geneva talks and on the ground. A peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict must be based on full respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.

We recall the Conclusions of the Presidency of the Extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008, in which the European Council strongly condemned Russia's unilateral decision to recognise the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

A year after the August 2008 conflict the situation on the ground remains fragile, violent incidents continue to occur and thousands of refugees and IDPs are still being deprived of the right of dignified return. In this respect, we reiterate our call for the full implementation of the 12 August and 8 September 2008 agreements.

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We also recall the stabilizing role of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM). As you know, on 27 July 2009 the General Affairs and External Relations Council of the European Union adopted conclusions on EUMM Georgia, including a decision to extend the mandate of the EUMM for another 12 months until 14 September 2010.

Given the situation on the ground, the EU remains convinced of the urgent need for a continued cross-dimensional OSCE presence throughout Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population. This presence must include a meaningful monitoring capacity able to operate unhindered across the administrative boundary line. We call again on the Russian Federation to join others in order to reach consensus on the Greek Chairmanship's Draft Decision of 8 May 2009 on an OSCE Office in Tbilisi and the deployment of the OSCE monitors in the framework of the implementation of the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008, for the sake of security and stability in the region. Meanwhile, we welcome the Greek Chairmanship's efforts regarding continued OSCE activities in Georgia, following the closure of the mission.

Madame Chair, the EU reserves the right to return to specific issues raised by the Russian Federation today, at a later stage.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and

MONTENEGRO, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.