

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe **ENGLISH only**

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR FREDERICKA GREGORY
ON THE ILLEGAL DETENTION OF THE OSCE MILITARY OBSERVERS
750TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
12 FEBRUARY 2009**

Madame Chair,

Canada is gravely concerned by reports indicating that on February 10th, 2009, South Ossetian militia illegally detained two OSCE Military Observers who were on a routine OSCE patrol on the Georgian side of the so-called administrative boundary. This is unacceptable. We call upon the Russian Federation, and the South Ossetian authorities, to ensure that this type of incident does not occur again.

This incident makes a strong case for having a greater - not diminished - international presence in Georgia, with unhindered access to both sides of the so-called administrative boundary zone. This will ensure that our OSCE Monitors can do their job throughout Georgia.

In this connection, we are pleased that today the Permanent Council was able to adopt the consensus decision (PC DD/5/09 of 12 Feb.2009) extending the mandate of our OSCE Military Observers. We now look forward to working with other participating States in building on this outcome and in ensuring a meaningful OSCE presence and role in all war-affected regions of Georgia.

Thank you - Merci