



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

**Statement as delivered by the Permanent Representative of Georgia,
Ambassador Konstantin Zaldastanishvili
in response to the address by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross
(ICRC), H.E Mr. Peter Maurer
at the 982nd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
Vienna, January 29, 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me join previous speakers in warmly welcoming Ambassador Maurer to the Permanent Council meeting and would like to thank him for the detailed report.

For over 150 years, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been at the forefront of efforts to provide assistance, either in armed conflicts, other situations of violence or natural disasters to all those in need across the globe. The work accomplished is exceptional and we congratulate the ICRC with this remarkable anniversary.

Georgia fully shares humanitarian objectives of ICRC and stands ready to join forces with the organization in order to resolve existing humanitarian challenges.

We would like to commend the ICRC for its comprehensive humanitarian assistance carried out since 1992 in Georgia.

In this context, we would like to highlight the ICRC's assistance in setting up the National Commission on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in Georgia which is an important mechanism for the IHL promotion and raising awareness.

Georgia highly appreciates ICRC's presence and activities in its occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, and has always been committed to the maximum flexibility in order to enable the ICRC to carry out its mission.

In addition, Georgia welcomes the neutral intermediary role of the ICRC in the work of the coordination mechanism between the Government of Georgia and the proxy regimes since the eruption of the conflict in the 1990s and as a result of Russia-Georgia war of 2008. This mechanism is aimed at facilitating the activities on the question of missing persons, as well as other humanitarian issues, i.e. conducting urgent or planned medical evacuations, visits to the imprisoned people and family reunification visits on the occupied territories.

In closing, let me assure you of our full commitment to continue close cooperation with the ICRC and express sincere hope that our joint efforts will lead us to fruitful outcomes.

We wish Ambassador Maurer and his abled team much success in their future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.