

PC.DEL/357/08
8 May 2008

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

Delegation of Switzerland

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

8 May 2008

Regarding the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia

Switzerland notes with concern that in various crisis-torn regions in the territory of OSCE participating States, a dynamic has arisen which threatens to jeopardize the efforts to bring about a successful settlement of existing conflicts. Switzerland therefore calls upon the States involved in the conflicts to refrain from all actions that may contribute to increasing tensions and hinder a resolution of the conflict.

A peaceful and lasting resolution of conflict can be arrived at only through negotiations. Successful negotiations require, on the one hand, that all participants be willing to reach a compromise and, on the other hand, that a climate of mutual confidence be sought and maintained. Unilateral measures designed to impair mutual confidence undermine every peace process.

One of the first and most important functions of the OSCE since its inception has been to strengthen confidence between the parties to a conflict. This can be achieved, *inter alia*, by creating the greatest possible transparency through appropriate measures, such as inspections, monitoring or expert analyses. Switzerland accordingly considers it a central task of the OSCE always to address security-related questions and, in the case of conflicts within the OSCE area, to support a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

With regard to the conflict in Abkhazia, Switzerland is committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia. If the OSCE can help the political leaders and their representatives to better assess the situation and then decide upon constructive and appropriate measures, Switzerland would welcome such a development. The point is that the OSCE is concerned with the peaceful resolution of conflicts in its region, for which it should use all the instruments that it has developed and that are at its disposal.

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for your attention.