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***The Permanent Mission of Georgia
to the Organisation for Security and
Cooperation in Europe***

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NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the OSCE presents its compliments to the Delegations of the Member States to the OSCE and to the Secretariat and has the honour to distribute the enclosed Statement of the Georgian Delegation Welcoming the OSCE Chairman-in-Office H.E. Mr. Dimitij Rupel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia at the Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Council of the OSCE.

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the OSCE avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Delegations of the Member States to the OSCE and to the Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.

Vienna, 13 January 2005



To:
All Delegations to the OSCE
The Secretariat
VIENNA



PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO OSCE AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA

**Statement of the Georgian Delegation
Welcoming the OSCE Chairman-in-Office
H.E. Mr. Dimitij Rupel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia**

Permanent Council, 13 January, 2005

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation fully aligns itself with the Statement made by the Delegation of Ukraine on behalf of the GUUAM Group, however, let me add to what has been laid out by the Distinguished Representative of Ukraine, a couple of words in my national capacity.

Georgia faces a number of serious problems, the possible consequences of which, can pose threat to international peace and security.

These problems have been discussed in the Permanent Council and we are grateful to the Bulgarian Chairmanship and personally to Minister Passy for their efforts to keep them permanently under the OSCE spotlight.

We express the hope that the Slovenian Chair will continue dealing with our problems in the same spirit and alacrity. We also hope that Minister Rupel will pay a visit to Georgia in the beginning of 2005, in order for us to work out the blueprint for action in different directions, be it unresolved frozen conflicts or ensuring Georgia's border security.

Mr. Chairman,

Today our top priority remains to be the extension of the Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia, therefore let me address this question first.

My Government has been seriously concerned at the lack of consensus on the question of the BMO, though we still have hopes for the positive outcome of the ongoing negotiations between the interested parties.

We urge the Slovenian Chair to engage actively in this process. Invoking the words of the Distinguished Representative of the United States, made at the previous PrepCom, “It is indeed a shame that this neutral monitoring and reporting entity, which for five years has so successfully decreased tension on Georgia's sensitive border along the Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia sectors of the Russian Federation, has not been renewed, despite efforts to make it more efficient, the host country's request that it continue its operation, and the agreement of 54 participating states to extend its mandate.”

Should we fail to achieve consensus on the extension of the BMO, besides all other negative consequences, we will find ourselves in a legal vacuum, which is another factor of confusion and instability.

Mr. Chairman,

We are also strongly committed to holding the HDIM in 2005 in Tbilisi. My country has already provided ample technical data indicating to Georgia's full capacity to organize a high-level international meeting.

We believe that holding of the HDIM in my country, among other advantages, carries the serious political overtone. Therefore, we look forward to the understanding of the OSCE community in this matter.

Mr. Chairman,

Georgia's statehood is seriously threatened by unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali/South Ossetian region.

We call on the Slovenian Chair to redouble their efforts in order to reinvigorate the peace process in the Tskhivnali Region/South Ossetia. Regretfully last year, we failed to organize the high-level meeting of the parties, under the OSCE chairmanship and with the participation of the international community. We are set out to closely cooperate with the Chair with a view to organizing such a meeting in near future.

Since it came to Georgia's problems, I can not but address the issue of Russia's overdue international commitments with regard to my country and Moldova. The fulfilment of the Istanbul obligations is the necessary

pre-requisite to the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. Therefore, let me express hope that for the sake of the peace and stability in Europe, we will find an appropriate solution to this problem.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me once again thank H.E. Minister Ruppel for his address and wish him every success in living up to the challenges he will have to face during his difficult and responsible tenure.

Thank you.