



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

Statement on the situation in Georgia

As for delivery by Mr. Oleh Herasymenko at the 725th meeting of the Permanent Council
8 August 2008

Mr. Chairman,

In the past several days – and even hours – we received a steady flow of information, including from the OSCE Mission in Georgia, about the rapid aggravation of the situation and the continuation of heavy fighting in South Ossetia, Georgia. It is particularly disturbing that the escalation of military actions in the zone of conflict has led to deaths among civilians. This is a serious development which should become a matter of our concern and attention. We therefore welcome the convening of this meeting.

We regret the failure of the recent mediation efforts and of the attempts to organize a meeting between the representatives of Tbilisi and Tskhinvali, as well as the rejection by the South Ossetian side “of any possibility for a bilateral meeting” with its Georgian counterparts, as reported by the OSCE Mission in Georgia. We urge again both sides to resume direct negotiations aimed at peaceful resolution of the conflict and note the readiness of the Georgian side to undertake such an effort.

A prompt launching and development of a constructive dialogue, as well as willingness of both sides to compromise for the benefit of all the people living in South Ossetia, Georgia, should become key to improving the situation, ensuring stability, restoring public order in the conflict zone and resolving this long-running conflict altogether. It is indeed negotiations, and not military actions or intervention, that should lead to ultimate success of this endeavour.

We also call upon all those concerned to genuinely contribute to such direct negotiations and to agreed security arrangements in the region, and to refrain from any steps that may provoke escalation of tensions. And, of course, we are convinced that under no circumstances the Russian Federation should become a party to this conflict. Ukraine welcomes the measures announced by the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship and the forthcoming visits of Ambassador Talvitie and, later in the month, of Minister Alexander Stubb to Tbilisi. I wish to stress in this regard an indispensable role of the OSCE in addressing the crises of this kind and its valuable experience as an impartial and reputable actor, which assistance should be seized upon.

I would also like to inform you, Mr. Chairman, that the President of Ukraine has urgently dispatched to the region his Special Envoy, Deputy Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Yeliseyev. Ukraine confirms its readiness to provide every assistance in the efforts aimed at preserving peace and stability in this volatile region. The relevant statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was made public earlier today.

Finally, the delegation of Ukraine wishes to reconfirm its support for Georgia’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders – the principles, which should constitute the basis for resolution of this and other conflicts in the OSCE area.

I thank you.