



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TUKEY  
IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE  
CO-CHAIRS OF GENEVA INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS  
971<sup>ST</sup> PERMANENT COUNCIL  
(November 14, 2013)**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to join the previous speakers in welcoming the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions to the Permanent Council and in thanking them for their comprehensive report.

Turkey recognizes the Geneva International Discussions as the key format for the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and gives its strong support. The work of Geneva discussions is entering in its 5<sup>th</sup> year and it is our sincere belief that parties should sustain their efforts in order to preserve progress achieved during this time. As to recent developments, we welcome the resumption of dialogue between the Georgian and the Russian authorities and view this as a contributor to good neighborly relations. This is equally important for the peaceful prospects of the overall region.

In her speech to the Permanent Council more than one month ago the Foreign Minister of Georgia referred to the positive dynamic recently established in the economic and cultural relations between Georgia and Russia and highlighted the constructive steps undertaken with the aim to de-escalate and normalize relations. We are encouraged by her statement and call on all sides to remain committed to the peaceful and pragmatic approach adopted within the process.

We take this opportunity to reiterate once again our firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Chairperson,

The statement issued following the 25<sup>th</sup> round of the Geneva International Discussions that took place on November 6, 2013, focusing on freedom of movement is also a positive development as it reflects the importance of

continuing constructive work in the framework of the Ergneti Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM).

We call on all parties to facilitate the progress achieved in the working groups and believe in the merits of allowing the international community to operate more widely in the region.

We would also like to state that it is important to further reinforce OSCE's active engagement in the implementation of concrete initiatives for the benefit of all persons affected from the conflict.

Before closing once again we would like to reiterate the importance we attach for a full normalization of the region.

In conclusion, we wish success to the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions every success in their future endeavors.

Thank you.