



**GUAM Statement
at the 695th (Special) meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
10 January 2008**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM. We welcome H.E. Minister Ilkka Kanerva, in his capacity as the new OSCE Chairman-in-Office, to the Permanent Council meeting and thank him for the address outlining the priorities of the Finnish Chairmanship for this year.

In the meantime, we express our appreciation to Spain for the activities carried out last year during her Chairmanship.

The GUAM states firmly believe that the OSCE remains a key pillar of the modern but still evolving security structure in Europe, which provides a pattern to follow by other regions of the world. Its role as a forum for political dialogue reflecting the cross-dimensional approach to security has contributed to peace and stability of the continent, universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, development of effective democratic societies based on rule of law. We remain firmly committed to the extensive *acquis* developed in the frames of the OSCE and we are looking forward to further increase of OSCE's role as instrument of peace, security, stability and cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Minister,

Under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the OSCE continues to play an important role as a regional arrangement and is widely regarded as a model in other regions of the world. The core function of the OSCE – early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation remain crucial and indispensable in promoting security in the OSCE area.

Indeed, start of Finland's Chairmanship is being accompanied by uncertainties around many most salient issues, one of which is the existence of the unresolved conflicts in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, Abkhazia and

Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions of Georgia, and the Transnistrian region of Moldova. Continuing lack of necessary political will, brazen disrespect of the norms and principles of international law, artificial obstacles and other factors prevent us from bringing long-awaited solutions to these conflicts.

The GUAM states are firmly convinced that such negative phenomena as armed separatism, extreme nationalism, occupation, ethnic cleansing and disintegration must not exist in modern world, including the OSCE area. The joint GUAM position on the conflict settlement issue is based on respect for territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova, return of the refugees and internally displaced population to their homes and granting the self-governance to the entire population of the conflict-affected territories, in full accordance with the relevant norms and principles of international law, UN Security Council resolutions and OSCE decisions. In this context, while considering that solutions can be identified only within the framework of constructive and result-oriented negotiations on all issues related to the settlement, we strongly call for the revival of the negotiations in those cases where this process is stagnating. We also continue to stress the necessity of complete withdrawal of the foreign military forces from the territories of certain GUAM states.

We believe that this position represents the best way to achieve the soonest peaceful resolution of the conflicts in question and has no viable alternatives. As we did in Madrid, we call upon the OSCE community to support this position of GUAM and, by doing so, to contribute to restoration of gravely violated principles and values of the OSCE.

Still we hope for some, if not significant, breakthrough in the conflict settlement processes this year under the Finnish Chairmanship of this organization – an instrument for peace, security, stability and cooperation in our region. The GUAM countries express their readiness to cooperate with the Chairmanship to contribute to this goal.

Mr. Chairman,

In the second dimension, the GUAM states supported the subject of this year's OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum that will focus on issues of maritime and inland waterways cooperation with due attention to aspects of enhancing security and environmental protection. We believe this to be a logical continuation of the topics taken up by the previous OSCE chairmanships and are ready to contribute to the efforts of the Finnish Chairmanship on these issues. We are also looking forward to the thematic enhancement of energy security dialogue within the OSCE and we call for further consideration of this issue in the framework of relevant OSCE events.

The GUAM states welcome the Chairmanship's intention to keep OSCE's high profile in the matters of human dimension. Democracy, rule of law and the respect for human rights are at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive security. In this respect, we are looking forward to the effective implementation of the tasks set forth by the Madrid Ministerial Council in its human dimension decisions.

We commend the work that is being done by the OSCE in the sphere of election assistance and monitoring as we believe it to be one of the key instruments of the Organization in promoting democracy and human rights across Europe.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we would like to wish the distinguished Minister Kanerva and his team both in Helsinki and here in Vienna every success in fulfilling the responsible and laborious chairmanship task.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.