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

The Statement of the Delegation of Georgia

(Delivered by the Ambassador Victor Dolidze at the Permanent Council Meeting on January 12, 2006)

Mr. Chairman,

First of all I would like to seize this opportunity to join other Delegations and warmly welcome H.E. Minister Karel De Gucht to the first Permanent Council Meeting of 2006 and wish the Belgian Chairmanship the best success in dealing with its complex in the OSCE. On the most important issues outlined by the distinguished Minister, the Georgian Delegation joined the GUAM Statement, which duly reflects the positions of its every Member State.

However, in a national capacity, I would like to use this opportunity and inform CIO and the distinguished Delegations with the latest update of information regarding the recent developments in the conflict resolution process in Tskhinvali region, Georgia.

On December 27-28, 2005 the 47th meeting of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) took place in Moscow under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation. One of the main issues on the agenda of this meeting was the consideration of the Peace Plan (PP) for resolution of the conflict in Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia endorsed by the OSCE December 2006 Ministerial and the ways of identification of follow up joint undertaking.

According to the Georgian side position the Working Group was to be set up within JCC which would elaborate project of joint actions for implantation of existing and internationally recognized Peace Plan. The Georgian side suggested to task aforementioned Working Group to prepare the initial draft for the joint actions by February 1, 2006.

It should be noted that this Peace Plan which builds upon key elements of the previous JCC resolutions agreed between sides in the areas of social economic rehabilitation, demilitarization, confidence building and political

status settlement over last four years constitutes a sufficient basis to start joint actions for achieving concrete results in peaceful settlement of the conflict in Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia.

Sadly, the JCC was again unable to achieve expected results. These proposals have not been supported by other Parties of the JCC yet. Moreover, in the context of the Georgian efforts to find the common ground with Ossetian side for starting joint implementation of the Peace Plan we find ourselves deeply concerned about the misleading position of the Russian delegation at the recent JCC meeting which was subsequently reflected in the January 9, 2006 statement of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the OSCE.

Regrettably the Russian side describes the internationally recognized Peace Plan as something “not existing” (quote: - «Предложенная грузинской стороной рабочая группа должна заняться рассмотрением «проекта совместных действий» по реализации некоего уже будто бы существующего плана мирного урегулирования конфликта...» - end of quote). This unprecedented diplomatic inconsistency when the Russian side does not recognize the Peace Plan endorsed and signed by its own Foreign Minister just a month ago, gives us additional ground to suspect capacity of the Russian side today to play the role of an objective and impartial facilitator in the conflict resolution. This once again demonstrates that the thesis of the Peace Plan regarding the necessity of change of the JCC format remains increasingly significant.

We would like to use this opportunity and remind the distinguished Russian side of the fact that the Russian Federation among other 54 OSCE member states adopted the Statement on Georgia, by which all parties including Russian Federation agreed that the Peace Plan „will serve as basis for the peaceful settlement of the conflict.“

It is quite hard for us to adjust and agree the Peace Plan with the Ossetian partners if the Russian Federation does not stop oscillating while performing its role of a broker between the sides. We would like to urge the Russian side to abstain in future from such irresponsible statements and rather advise the South Ossetian side in conflict to be cooperative and to actively contribute to the peace process.

This will allow us to avoid in future occurrence of such absurd actions as took place immediately after conclusion of the JCC Meeting when the self proclaimed South Ossetian authorities produced so called „black list“

according to which several high level Georgian officials were sentenced to capital punishment.

We believe that because of the unclear position of the Russian party the South Ossetian side is reluctant to cooperate on the implementation of the Peace Plan and tries to impose responsibility for its potential failure on the Georgian side. Any attempt by the South Ossetian, North Ossetian and Russian sides to present the Georgian position to the international community as the refusal by the Georgian side to work on the Peace Plan, or on its commitment to the non-use of force, is an overt attempt to put the whole blame on Georgian side and to further delay the peaceful resolution of the conflict. As our Minister declared many times at the OSCE Ministerial Council in December 2005, we are not for the “Process for Process” approach, we can only apply “Process for Results” policy.

Therefore, we think that demilitarization is one of the most urgent of all elements of the Peace Plan and it should start without delay. The JPKF Commander had the obligation to proceed without delay with demilitarization, and ensure that no armed formations other than the JPKF and the law enforcement bodies of the sides were present in the zone of conflict. We underline that series of existing respective documents gave the JPKF Commander a clear basis for action. The Georgian side believes that the Statement on Georgia made by the OSCE Ministerial Council is a sufficient commitment on everybody’s part to the non-resumption of hostilities.

The Georgian side remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the conflict and calls upon the sides to work extensively for realisation of the Peace Plan. In his letter of January 3, 2006, addressed to all members of the JCC, the Georgian side proposed to hold the next JCC Meeting as soon as possible, preferably in the second half of the January in Tbilisi, Georgia, with an aim to finally reach consensus on the outstanding issues I have just outlined to you. So far the Ossetian side refuses to come to Tbilisi , but we do not lose hope that they will change their mind and the next meeting of the JCC takes place in the Capital of Georgia.

In conclusion, we also call upon the OSCE community to grab this proper moment and enhance its involvement for the swift and timely resolution of the conflict.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.