



**GUAM Statement  
at the 746<sup>th</sup> (Special) meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
15 January 2009**

Madam Chairperson,

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 Minister Dora Bakoyannis, in her capacity as the new OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, to the Permanent Council meeting and thank her for the address reflecting the priorities of the Greek Chairmanship for this year.

The GUAM states firmly believe that the OSCE has a unique role in the European security architecture. Early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crises management and post-conflict rehabilitation shall remain the core tasks of the OSCE. There is an urgent necessity to further strengthen the OSCE's role as instrument of peace, security, stability and cooperation in Europe.

We wish the Greek Chairmanship to exercise the strong leadership of the Organization which should increase the motivation of all its participating States to be adherent to the agreed commitments and principles of the OSCE and to exploit the Organization as an effective tool which is able to timely and adequately respond the most problematic issues on its agenda. The GUAM is ready to cooperate and interact with the Chairmanship in this regard.

Madam Minister,

In the light of the today's trends, risks and challenges we all shall reaffirm our full commitment to respect the principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act. The latest developments testify that the principle of territorial integrity and sovereignty begins to play the most essential role, first of all from the security point of view. In this regard, we fully support the position explicitly stressed in your statement at the Helsinki Ministerial that "sustainable and lasting solutions can only be based on a negotiated settlement in accordance with OSCE principles and in particular the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states within the internationally recognized borders."

The issue on unresolved protracted conflicts in the OSCE area, namely in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions of Georgia, and the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, still remains among the most salient and urgent ones. It is obvious that continued lack of a required resolve, inconsistency and double standards in upholding the principles of the OSCE often portrayed as “its flexibility”, selective approach to the implementation of commitments are the main reasons for the protraction of these conflicts.

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, protection of human rights, including freedom of movement, 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 political solutions can be found 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.

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 OSCE plays a vital role in Georgia and should continue to do so. In this regard GUAM supports a continued role for the OSCE Mission on the ground that provides a useful platform for dealing with questions of security, stability, refugees and displaced persons. Hence, GUAM calls the OSCE participating States to find a proper arrangement that would allow the Organization to continue its activities throughout Georgia, in order to assist all efforts for the peaceful resolution of the crisis.

We believe that these issues will be at the top of agenda during the Greek Chairmanship and express our hope that the year 2009 will bring substantive breakthrough to the conflict settlement processes.

The GUAM also supports your intention to maintain activities aimed at combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and the implementation of the existing OSCE counter-terrorism commitments.

Madam Chairperson,

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 migration. We share the view that uncontrolled migration flows could threaten security and stability of the participating States. Taking into account that the migration phenomenon is directly affected by various economic and social factors, we believe this to be a logical continuation of the topics taken up by the previous OSCE chairmanships and stand ready to contribute to the efforts of the Greek Chairmanship on this issue.

GUAM countries encourage energy dialogue and efforts to diversify energy supply, ensure the safety of energy routes and make use of energy resources more efficient. We strongly support further development and use of new and renewable sources of energy.

The GUAM acknowledges the utmost importance given by Greece to the prevalence of the rule of law, the protection and promotion of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive security. In this respect, we are looking forward to the goal-oriented activities and effective implementation of relevant human dimension decisions.

We welcome the readiness by the Greek Chairmanship to continue to work on combating intolerance and all forms of discrimination. It is our firm belief that these negative phenomena fuel the development of tensions between various groups, contribute to terrorism and extremism of all kinds, and cause violent conflicts, undermining international security, peace and stability. Their full eradication is only possible through joining our efforts and mobilizing existing resources.

We share your vision regarding the valuable contribution of the OSCE Field Operations to host countries in the areas of institution building and requirement for constant coordination between the host governments and the Heads of Missions, in order to reflect the real needs of host countries. We also stress the necessity for the OSCE executive structures to focus on the priorities identified by the respective participating States, to keep a balanced approach related to all three dimensions and to avoid situation of going beyond their mandate or engaging in the activities duplicating the efforts of other international organizations

In conclusion, we would like to wish the distinguished Minister Bakoyannis every success in fulfilling the responsible and laborious chairmanship task and assure you of our readiness to constructively work with your team in Vienna led by our colleague and friend Ambassador Marinaki.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.