

**EU statement on Georgia**

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The European Union notes the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions issued by the ODIHR/Council of Europe International Election Observation Mission, which concluded that the 30 May municipal elections in Georgia marked evident progress towards meeting international standards. At the same time, it also concluded that significant shortcomings remain to be addressed and that the low level of public confidence in the election process persisted.

We are looking forward to ODIHR's recommendations in its final report, which we trust will help the Georgian authorities in their efforts towards consolidating the progress achieved, addressing the remaining shortcomings and enhancing public trust before the next national elections due in 2012 and 2013. In this regard, we call on Georgia to further cooperate with the ODIHR and other relevant bodies.

The European Union is pleased that during the latest round of the Geneva discussions on 8 June, participants resumed their exchange of views on security and humanitarian issues. However, we regret

that not all participants attended the full session of the second working group. We would like to stress again that, despite difficulties and differences amongst participants, the EU considers the continuation of the Geneva discussions to be of utmost importance. They provide the only forum in which all sides are represented and three major international actors – the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations – work in close cooperation for the security and stability in the region. We reiterate our full support for the OSCE's active participation in the meetings, in which good use can be made of its extensive cross-dimensional experience, of which the gas and water issues are an example. We are looking forward to the next round of consultations set for 27 July 2010, and reiterate our strong call to all participants to engage constructively towards concrete progress in both working groups.

The EU welcomes the fact that - for the first time since October last year - on 3 June a meeting in the framework of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism took place in Ergneti, in which views were exchanged relating to the issue of missing persons and detainees. However, we regret the fact that no additional items could be discussed, despite the clear need for it. We join the co-facilitators in their call upon all participants to convene a regular meeting of this IPRM shortly. Recent incidents in the Gali region underline the importance of a properly functioning IPRM.

The situation in Georgia, including its Abkhaz and South Ossetian regions, remains of concern to the EU. We reiterate our firm support for the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity

recognized by international law. We call once again for full implementation of the 12 August and 8 September 2008 agreements, including the withdrawal of all military forces to the positions held prior to the outbreak of hostilities. We also reiterate our call for unhindered access of the EUMM to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and unhindered and unconditional access for humanitarian organizations in particular to the South Ossetian region.

We remain convinced of the urgent need for a meaningful cross-dimensional OSCE presence throughout Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population, including a robust monitoring capacity able to operate unhindered across the administrative boundary line. We reiterate our call to the Chairmanship-in-Office to intensify its efforts to bring the OSCE back to Georgia as soon as possible.

Los países candidatos TURQUÍA, CROACIA\* y la ANTIGUA REPÚBLICA YUGOSLAVA DE MACEDONIA\*; los países del Proceso de Estabilización y Asociación y los países candidatos potenciales, ALBANIA, BOSNIA Y HERZEGOVINA y MONTENEGRO; los países de la Asociación Europea de Libre Comercio y los miembros del Espacio Económico Europeo, ISLANDIA, LIECHTENSTEIN y NORUEGA; así como la REPÚBLICA DE MOLDAVIA se suman a esta declaración.

\*Croacia y la Antigua República Yugoslava de Macedonia siguen perteneciendo al proceso de Estabilización y Asociación.