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Prohlášení

Statement

Déclaration

Vienna 12 February 2009

Permanent Council No. 750

EU Statement on the Detention of OSCE MMOs in Adzvi village area

Final draft version

The EU expresses its deep concern about the incident that happened on 10 February 2009 when an OSCE MMO patrol was detained, questioned and their documents and car checked by a group of South Ossetian militiamen in the area close to the Georgian administered village of Adzvi. We thank the OSCE Mission to Georgia for its prompt, detailed, factual spot report and commend the two MMOs for their calm and responsible behaviour.

According to the Spot Report the militiamen were joined by two persons in Russian uniforms. This group of armed persons behaved in an intimidating manner towards the unarmed MMOs. They forced them to move to the militia station in Goyata in South Ossetia, Georgia and detained them for several hours.

Such behaviour against representatives of the international community is unacceptable. The MMOs were fulfilling their tasks in accordance with their mandate and have diplomatic immunity.

The EU therefore expects the incident to be fully investigated and seeks full clarification of the behaviour by the militia and the individuals wearing Russian uniforms. The security of international observers, who contribute to the stability of the region, and their freedom of movement on the ground in the framework of their mission remain a major concern for us. This incident illustrates once again the need to establish without any delay an incident prevention mechanism which should cover all missions deployed in Georgia. We are generally concerned with the proliferation of incidents of this kind in the last few weeks on both sides of the administrative boundary line.

Finally, the EU reiterates its firm commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and MONTENEGRO, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.