

Good Afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen

Madam Moderator, thank you for the floor.

Georgian delegation would first and foremost like to thank our Polish colleagues for once again hosting ODIHR conference this year. We would also like to welcome back Ambassador Vollebaek to OSCE in the capacity of High Commissioner on National Minorities.

In this short intervention Georgia would like to draw your attention to the continuous violation of human rights of ethnic Georgians residing on the territory of the Gali region, Abkhazia, Georgia. These people are denied a right to receive education in their own language. Schools, which teach Georgian history, literature and language, are constantly raided, including those schools which are regularly renovated by international donors as a part of the confidence building measures. Recent facts date back to just two weeks ago. Moreover, practice of abduction of people, trafficking in persons, forced slavery, recruitment to armed forces against the will of recruits, have become widespread practices, not even to mention such heinous crimes as robbery and torture of people by Abkhazian law enforcers.

Madam Ambassador,  
Honorable High Commissioner On National Minorities,

This is a good time to revive the idea of opening Human Rights Office jointly by OSCE/UN. Together with all the virtues that opening of such an office might entail, it will serve as a clear message to all stakeholders in the conflict that human rights violations in Abkhazia, Georgia will never be tolerated.