



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council N° 1177
Vienna, 1 March 2018**

**EU Statement on the latest developments in South Ossetia,
Georgia**

The European Union is deeply concerned about the latest developments in South Ossetia, Georgia, in particular the tragic death in custody of a Georgian citizen, Mr. Archil Tatumashvili, and the detention of two others.

We express our condolences to Mr. Tatumashvili's family. We call on the de facto authorities in the Georgian region of South Ossetia to ensure that there is swift and full transparency on the circumstances of this tragic incident. We note that this tragic incident is being discussed today at the IPRM meeting in Ergneti and we expect that further information on the circumstances surrounding the detention of three Georgian citizens and the subsequent death in custody of Mr. Tatumashvili will be provided in a constructive and transparent manner. The European Union is ready, through its Monitoring Mission (EUMM), to facilitate discussions through the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) and the hotline, and support ongoing investigations.

We call on the authorities in control in Tskhinvali to hand over the body of Mr. Tatumashvili to his family without delay.

Following the release from custody of the two other Georgian citizens detained, Mr. Kutashvili and Mr. Pavliashvili, we expect the de facto authorities in Tskhinvali to ensure that they are allowed to travel to Tbilisi administered territory without delay.

This tragic incident calls for those in de facto control of South Ossetia to allow full and unhindered access for international human rights mechanisms and humanitarian institutions.

This latest incident underlines the need for additional measures to ensure transparency and improve confidence in the affected region. The European Union continues to firmly support peace building and conflict resolution in Georgia, including through its co-chairmanship of the Geneva International Discussions and the Monitoring Mission on the ground.

The European Union reiterates its firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. The European Union calls on Russia to fulfil its obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and its subsequent implementing measures of 8 September 2008. The European Union also calls for access to the breakaway regions for the EUMM, as per its mandate, as well as for humanitarian organizations.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.