



STATEMENT
As delivered by the delegation of Georgia
in response to the Address of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy,
H.E. Angelino Alfano
At the 1171st Special Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
Vienna, 11 January, 2017

Mr. Chairman,

Georgian delegation joins others in warmly welcoming the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, H. E. Angelino Alfano to the Permanent Council meeting today and thanks him for presenting the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship's priorities.

Mr. Minister,

We highly value our excellent relations and cooperation with Italy, and appreciate your support in the process of Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Georgia stands ready for an active and close cooperation also in the OSCE, to strengthen our organization, bring peace and security, aimed at capturing the "authentic spirit of Helsinki".

Italian OSCE Chairmanship's motto: "Dialogue, Ownership, Responsibility" is indeed very pertinent and timely.

We fully share the position that fulfilling the Helsinki commitments by participating States and showing the political will is a key in addressing our common security challenges.

Together with numerous significant challenges, the occupation of Georgia's territories, annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, the existing conflicts, undermine the security and stability in the OSCE region.

We encourage the Chairmanship to strengthen the OSCE's engagement in the process of peaceful resolution of the Russia-Georgia conflict, especially in light of increasingly deteriorating security and human rights situation in the occupied regions of Georgia.

Restoration of the full-fledged and comprehensive OSCE Mission in Georgia would also significantly contribute to the OSCE's engagement.

We welcome the OSCE's active role in the Geneva International Discussions, as the only format to achieve security and stability on the ground, in full compliance with the EU mediated 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement. We believe that the Italian Chairmanship will continue the due efforts to facilitate the reaching progress on core issues pertaining to the negotiation agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me stress, that the issue of IDPs, whose number is only increasing in the OSCE region, should not be left beyond the organization's due attention.

Herewith, I would like to thank the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship for its efforts to focus on the issue of displacement last year.

We hope that the Italian Chairmanship will build on this and further advance discussions on this important topic.

Minister Alfano,

We wish you and your team a successful chairmanship and look forward to your visit in Georgia this year.

Thank you.