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**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Turkey  
at the 762nd Meeting of the Permanent Council  
(28 May 2009)**

Mr. Chairman,

We warmly welcome Ambassador Semneby to the Permanent Council. Mr. Ambassador, we appreciate your efforts which are aimed at contributing to the well-being of a region which has a special and an important place in our national agenda. We thank you for sharing with us today your observations and assessments on the situation in the region.

As you have eloquently explained, since your last address to the Permanent Council, circumstances in some parts of the South Caucasus, unfortunately have deteriorated, despite occasional and relative sense of positive prospects in other parts.

The already complex nature of this geography has been further aggravated by the war between the Russian Federation and Georgia in August 2008. Since then, the Chairmanship-in-Office have strived tirelessly to normalize the situation as part of international efforts. Turkey has supported them, including their endeavours to preserve the OSCE's presence in Georgia and the "status neutral" approach underlying their suggestions to this end.

In the face of existing destabilizing tendencies peace and stability in the region are by no means guaranteed.

Apparently as one of the instruments that operationalize EU's Neighbourhood Policy, we welcome the Eastern Partnership initiative which encompasses the countries of the South Caucasus region. Here I would like to emphasize the complementary character of the objectives set forth in the context of this initiative and our proposal to establish a Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform which is another manifestation of our strong interest in the region. We believe that these two initiatives could create a synergy. Cooperative study of options and sharing perceptions on possible steps forward would optimize their effectiveness. Turkey, in this vein, is ready to act in a forthcoming manner.

Thank you.