

Prohlášení

Statement

Déclaration

Vienna 11 June 2009

Permanent Council No. 764

EU Statement in response to the report by Ambassador Terhi Hakala on the activities of the OSCE Mission to Georgia for the period March-December 2008, on the implementation of PC.DEC/861 and PC.DEC/883 and on the implementation of the End of Mandate Procedure

The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Terhi Hakala and thanks her for her latest, and regrettably last, report regarding the Mission to Georgia and the military monitors. We would like to highlight our full support and appreciation for the hard work of Ambassador Hakala and her dedicated and loyal staff under difficult circumstances during the last year, in a time when the Mission's activities were probably more urgently needed than ever.

At the outset, the EU would like to reiterate its firm commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. We also would like to solemnly recall the Conclusions of the Presidency of the Extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008, in which the European Council strongly condemned Russia's unilateral decision to recognise the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and reiterate our call for full implementation of the 12 August and 8 September 2008 agreements.

We commend the Mission for its continuous efforts, over the many years of its existence, to promote security and stability. Our particular appreciation goes to the Military Monitoring Officers (MMOs), who

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successfully contributed and, in our view, still continue to contribute to this aim by building confidence and giving early warning signals whenever necessary, including by providing Spot Reports. One recent example is the MMO's daily patrol report for 8 June 2009, describing the rapid deterioration of the security situation in the Perevi-Karzmani area, which is a matter of serious concern. We equally value other confidence building measures carried out by the Mission, including the Economic Rehabilitation Programme (ERP). The EU has always been a strong supporter of the ERP, and regrets that it could not be continued after August 2008, due to lack of access to South Ossetia, Georgia. The EU hopes that similar projects could be implemented there once the conditions permit

Given the current situation in Georgia, the Mission's activities in other dimensions, carried out until December 2008, remain relevant, notably those aimed at strengthening the democratic process, promoting human rights (including those of persons belonging to national minorities), independence of the judiciary, and freedom and pluralism of the media.

We deeply regret that all these valuable programs and other activities cannot be continued. We remain convinced of the urgent need for a continued cross-dimensional OSCE presence throughout Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population. We call again on the Russian Federation to join others in order to reach consensus on the Greek Chairmanship's Draft Decision of 8 May 2009 on an OSCE Office in Tbilisi and the deployment of OSCE monitors in the framework of the implementation of the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008, for the sake of security and stability in the region.

In conclusion, we again thank Ambassador Hakala and her dedicated staff for their hard work for the OSCE Mission in Georgia over the last year, and wish them success in their future endeavours.

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 and LIECHTENSTEIN, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and AZERBAIJAN align themselves with this statement.

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