



**GUAM Statement
at the 682nd meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
18 October 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Organization.

Initial steps towards the quadrilateral cooperation among Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova were taken in 1996 during the CFE Review Conference here in Vienna. Later, on 10 October 1997 in Strasburg Presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine signed a Joint Communiqué on the establishment of the GUAM consultative forum, which laid down the foundation of GUAM cooperation and integration. This forward-looking step was determined by similarity of challenges and threats that our countries were faced with, and based upon commonality of approaches in seeking efficient solutions to the existing problems.

The first meeting of GUAM Heads of State, held on 7 June 2001 in Yalta, became a crucial event in the formation and institutionalization of the GUAM as an international structure. The Yalta Charter of GUAM, signed by the Presidents, outlined the purposes, principles and directions of cooperation of the participating states. The Charter also established the organizational structure of the GUAM.

The Chisinau Summit meeting of the GUAM Heads of State in 2005 demonstrated the shared views of the countries on the democratization of society, European integration, economic development, stability and security in the region. The Heads of State expressed their common position on the need for transformation of the GUAM into an international organization, which aims would promote strengthening democracy, provide stability and sustainable development in the region.

This decision was implemented at the Summit, held in May 2006 in Kyiv, when the GUAM Heads of State declared the establishment of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM and adopted its Charter. During the Summit the Ministers of Foreign Affairs approved the Rules of Procedure, Provision on the Secretariat and Financial Provisions of GUAM. The Secretariat, which has become fully operational since September 2007, is headed by H.E. Mr. Valeri Chechelashvili, the former First Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia.

The second Summit of the Organization was held in Baku in June 2007 under the motto “GUAM: Bringing Continents Together”. The Baku Declaration of the Summit reaffirmed common interests and approaches of the Member States and their aspiration towards the creation of a common space of integration and security in the

GUAM region. The Summit also adopted a number of decisions to promote the practical cooperation among the GUAM States in several spheres.

Nowadays, the GUAM Member States actively cooperate within a number of international organizations, first of all - the UN and the OSCE. They adopt common positions on many important issues of international policy. In 2003, the GUAM was granted an observer status in the UN General Assembly.

The OSCE plays a special role in the history and development of the GUAM. The Permanent Delegations of the GUAM Member States have been closely cooperating and coordinating their positions in all dimensions of the OSCE. Our GUAM+ format meetings with a number of participating States provide an important opportunity for the exchange of views on the issues of common interest.

The cooperation of the GUAM with the United States, established in 2002, made a substantial contribution to the promotion of the GUAM goals. With the adoption on 6 December 2002 in Porto of the GUAM-US Framework Program on Trade and Transportation Facilitation, Customs and Border Control, Combating Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking this cooperation took on a practical dimension. Our countries appreciate continuous support of the United States for the development of the GUAM.

The Baku Summit demonstrated a growing interest of a number of states and international organizations in developing cooperation with the GUAM. Participation of the Presidents of Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Vice-President of Bulgaria and other high-level representatives from the US, Estonia, Latvia and Japan, as well as the OSCE, BSEC, UNESCO testifies to that fact. Along with the regular GUAM-US meetings, GUAM-Japan and GUAM-Poland meetings were held during the Summit.

The recent GUAM Summit, held in Vilnius on the October 10, 2007 during the Energy Security Conference became another important step in this direction. We hope that this broad partnership will create favourable conditions for addressing the problems we are facing.

Mr. Chairman,

Being a natural and voluntary association of like-minded countries the GUAM has successfully passed through various tests and proved its strong viability and practical relevance. We have built up successful multilateral cooperation through establishing Free Trade Zone, implementing Trade and Transport Facilitation project and Virtual Law enforcement Center – a good mechanism of international and interdepartmental exchange of information for combating trans-border crime, customs fraud and other criminal activities. The GUAM has become an effective instrument of regional cooperation that facilitates the realization of major multilateral projects in the spheres of energy, economy, transportation and tourism, based on its unique transit-transportation potential. In the GUAM framework, we managed to realize those good projects the implementation of which has not been very successful under the umbrella of other regional organizations.

However, the process of full development and integration of our States is still impeded by the existence of unresolved conflicts in the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Aggressive nationalism, armed

separatism and disintegration have no future in our region, since they fully contradict the principles of democracy, rule of law and human rights, which constitute the very basis of the GUAM. In this connection we reaffirm our unswerving commitment to finding peaceful solutions to these conflicts on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of States. Consolidated efforts of the GUAM States and the international community are important to settle these conflicts by means of re-integration of uncontrolled territories into the states that they are part of.

In this regard, at the initiative of the GUAM Member States, the item entitled "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development" was included into the agenda of the 61st and 62nd sessions of the UN General Assembly in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

Concluding, I would like to reaffirm the adherence of the GUAM Member States to the purposes of the Organization, which are enshrined in its Charter, and their readiness to further contribute to strengthening international and regional security and stability, ensuring sustainable development, as well as to the promotion of democratic values, rule of law and respect for human rights.

I thank you.