



FSC Chairmanship: Estonia

OSCE Chairmanship: Finland

**35th (SPECIAL) JOINT MEETING OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION
AND THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1. Date: Wednesday, 11 June 2008

Opened: 10.40 a.m.

Closed: 12.10 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ms. T. Parts (FSC) (Estonia)
Mr. A. Turunen (PC) (Finland)

3. Subjects discussed — Statements — Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: OPENING REMARKS BY THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS

None

Agenda item 2: INTRODUCTION BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION OF
ITS REQUEST OF 9 JUNE 2008 (FSC-PC.DEL/27/08) FOR
A JOINT FSC-PC MEETING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH
PARAGRAPH 16.3 AND 16.3.1.1, CHAPTER III OF THE
VIENNA DOCUMENT 1999, AND WITH REFERENCE TO
THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF
GEORGIA TO THE OSCE IN ITS NOTE VERBALE
No. 06/333, DATED 28 MAY 2008

Russian Federation (Annex 1)

Agenda item 3: INTRODUCTION BY GEORGIA OF ITS REQUEST OF
10 JUNE 2008 (FSC-PC.DEL/28/08) FOR A JOINT FSC-PC
MEETING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 16.3
AND 16.3.1.1, CHAPTER III OF THE VIENNA
DOCUMENT 1999

Georgia (Annex 2) (FSC-PC.DEL/35/08)

Agenda item 4: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Slovenia-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro; the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, in alignment) (FSC-PC.DEL/29/08), Norway (Annex 3), Canada (Annex 4), United States of America (Annex 5), Azerbaijan (Annex 6), Russian Federation, Georgia, Chairperson of the PC (Annex 7)

Agenda item 5: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

To be announced



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22

11 June 2008

Annex 1

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Distinguished colleagues,

The Russian delegation requested the convening of a joint meeting of the Forum and the Permanent Council under paragraph (16.3) of Chapter III of the Vienna Document in view of the fact that the bilateral meeting held last week in the presence of some 30 States at the initiative of the Georgian side did not yield any positive results. Under an artificial pretext our Georgian partners effectively refused to make available the material on which the report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) of 26 May 2008 was based.

Before expressing our views on this refusal, we should like to reaffirm that Russia had nothing to do with the incident involving the Georgian unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) over Abkhazia on 20 April this year.

It is entirely a matter of relations between Tbilisi and Sukhumi. Russian aircraft have not been flying in that area.

So as to avoid any misunderstandings, we should like to stress that we do not have any doubts as regards the impartiality of the United Nations experts involved. However, metaphorically speaking, even the most skilful doctor is not immune to medical errors. Moreover, the investigation did not take place under ideal conditions. First of all, the Georgian side did not limit itself to giving the United Nations experts the relevant documentary material but for some reason or other it handed over to them at the same time the results of an investigation conducted by experts from the United States of America and the three Baltic countries. Naturally, it should not have done this because such a step looks like an attempt to influence a United Nations investigation by means of a specifically targeted supply of information. In addition, the experts from the United Nations mission were unfortunately unable to liaise with representatives of the Abkhaz side, who are avoiding any contacts for political reasons. It was of course difficult to gain a complete and objective picture without their involvement.

But all this is ultimately just details. What is most important is the quality of the “evidence” submitted by the Georgian side. We have serious doubts as to its reliability because:

- It has not been established as a fact nor documented that a Russian aircraft violated Georgian airspace, which leads the Russian side to presuppose that a military aircraft found within this airspace could have belonged to any State, including Georgia itself;
- The quality of the aforementioned material makes it impossible to identify the type and country of origin of the aircraft with even a low degree of certainty. It is no coincidence that specialists from the United States of America and the United Kingdom have so far been unable to determine whether the aircraft in question was an SU-27 or a MIG-29;
- It is clear from a fragment of the video footage that three different episodes have been put together, and this is confirmed by the fact that it is impossible to localize the site of the incident, by the abrupt change in weather conditions and the degree of luminosity as well as by the slow approach speed of the aircraft towards the UAV;
- The computer record of the aerial situation is unreadable and impossible to study and analyse, especially as regards the destination logs and the absence of civil aviation airways, including international airline routes in the region;
- In spite of the claims by the Georgian side that it exercises complete control over Abkhaz airspace, the investigative material contains no data on the interception of radio communication between the pilot and ground control providing guidance, without which a successful attack on an aerial target by a modern fighter jet is virtually impossible.

In the light of this, the Russian side officially requested on several occasions that the Georgian side make available all the material and evidence it has in connection with the incident of 20 April 2008, notably the notorious video footage and radar data, so that they can be properly verified by Russian experts. We made it known that we were willing to involve foreign specialists in this verification.

Regretfully, our Georgian partners categorically refused to make this material available, asserting that it had been given to us on 23 April during a meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

We have carefully double checked and can state that these claims do not correspond to the facts: we did not receive any material in New York from our Georgian colleagues. A completely absurd situation has arisen in which so-called “evidence” was given, in addition to the United Nations, to many NATO countries and members of the European Union, just not to Russia, against whom unscrupulous accusations have been made.

There is another no less important point that deserves attention. As can be seen from paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 of the UNOMIG report of 26 May, several versions exist of the aforementioned video recording. The first one was posted on the website of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs on 21 April. On 29 April, the United Nations mission received

additional video material containing missing video footage lasting 12 seconds and also a close-up recording of the radar tracks. Finally, on 14 May a DVD was made available to UNOMIG containing virtually the full video stream from the UAV's camera, albeit without the record starting procedure.

The question naturally arises as to how we should understand all these manipulations with the so-called "evidence"? Along with the Georgia's refusal to make this material available to the Russian side for in-depth analysis, all this merely strengthens our conviction that the Georgian accusations against Russia are based on extremely shaky foundations to put it mildly.

In conclusion, we should like once again to state firmly that until a detailed rather than a fleeting and one-sided analysis has been conducted by Russian specialists of the complete video footage and all the radar data, we cannot regard the investigation as objective and complete. Until we are provided with this material, there is simply no sense in any further discussion on this subject.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22
11 June 2008
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 3

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GEORGIA

Madam Chairperson,
Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

Allow me to focus your attention on an issue of high security concern for our OSCE community: the fact of open aggression against a sovereign State on the eastern flanks of Europe, which is a continent of peace and stability.

Earlier today, the Russian Federation attempted to divert our attention from this alarming event by vigorously trying to focus our thoughts on unsubstantiated facts and extraneous concerns that even after painful elaboration fail to display a contextual nexus with the Vienna Document.

I remain hopeful that despite this our community will remain keenly alert to this issue.

What is more, I remain hopeful that the Russian Federation will constructively engage in this review and will display a sober attitude to our legitimate concerns.

Those of you who follow Georgia-related issues are aware of the fact that Georgia recently became subject to a series of acts by the Russian Federation that amount to tacit annexation of its territories.

Open Russian military build-up and brazenly separatist statements forced us to utilize unarmed national intelligence capabilities in order to collect data. Since military confrontation is not an option for us, we chose the most peaceful and civilized means of obtaining information about what was happening in reality on the other side of the administrative border with Abkhazia, which is still a closed territory for us.

And let me remind everyone that what we are talking about is a one-metre long unarmed flying device, equipped with a camera.

As we all know by now, a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) operated by the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs was shot down by a Russian aircraft — an act of unprovoked aggression against the sovereign territory of Georgia.

Now, allow me to give a brief account of the chain of events that unfolded on 20 April, as exposed not only by Georgian data but by the report of independent experts and the report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG).

At 09:45 a fighter jet was detected by the radar stations (“36D6”) of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia in north-western Abkhazia, Georgia, at 27.8 km from the Russian Federation border heading southeast.

At 09:55 an air-to-air missile launched by the mentioned aircraft shot down the UAV of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia at a distance of 8 km from the settlement of Anaklia, on the territory of Gali district of the Abkhazia, Georgia.

At 10:05 the fighter jet crossed the State border of Georgia in the direction of the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation.

You can see the video taken by the UAV just moments before it was shot down and the radar data on the screen right now. These are precisely the materials that we distributed to everyone, including the Russian Federation. Several copies of the presentation you are viewing now, including the video footage taken by the UAV and the radar data, will be made available to interested delegations by the Georgian delegation.

We qualify this action on the part of the Russian Federation as an act of aggression. This is a despicable act that shakes the foundations of international law; if unchecked, it bodes ill for the future stability of the existing international order.

Georgia realized that as a responsible State it had to engage in the investigation process and involve as many international actors as possible to make sure that no-one would question the findings of the investigation. Transparency became the cornerstone of our actions.

Allow me to bring before you the actions we undertook to ensure the transparency of the investigation.

A day after the incident, on 21 April, the video footage taken by the UAV and the radar data were released to the media.

On 23 April the Georgian Foreign Ministry distributed the same materials to all EU and NATO Member States.

On the same day we circulated all the materials at the Security Council of the United Nations to all its members. A special Security Council session was convened precisely for this purpose, at which the now Head of the Parliament of Georgia Mr. David Bakradze conveyed Georgia’s concerns and expectations to the international community.

We invited independent experts from European nations and proposed to the Russian Federation that we should exchange radar data on 23 April.

Independent experts consisting of representatives of the United States of America, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania arrived in Georgia and worked from 30 April to 2 May.

UNOMIG started its investigation on 7 May and completed it on 26 May 2008. The Georgian side co-operated openly with UNOMIG, allowing it full access to the whole territory of Georgia and to all sites of interest related to their impartial investigation.

Exactly in the same manner, we provided the independent expert group with full access to the materials and sites of interest..

We also involved the OSCE in this process. Allow me to remind you that the first information about the 20 April incident was presented at the Permanent Council on 24 April. On 30 April the Finnish Chairmanship launched the Bucharest Mechanism and at the behest of the Estonian Chairmanship the Forum for Security Co-operation became actively involved in the issue. Since then, we have continued to provide the FSC and the PC with regular updates on the investigations.

Regrettably, throughout this process we have witnessed an inconsistent and unconstructive approach on the part of the Russian Federation. In various statements, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation claimed that materials were not authentic, arguing that the territory featured in the UAV footage did not correspond to the real territory, and that it was not a MiG-29 or a Su-27 that shot down the UAV but, firstly, the Abkhazian anti-aerial system, and then an Abkhazian L-39.

Despite the fact that we have addressed this concern previously, once again allow me to show that the place is exactly as it is seen on the radar video and even Google Earth. You can see the materials on the screen right now.

In addition, contrary to the statements on behalf of the Russian Federation that they never received any materials from the Georgian side, we would reiterate that the Russian Federation was provided with all relevant materials on 23 April during the UN Security Council session.

Among its many unsubstantiated claims, we took particular note of the statement made by the Russian Federation on the importance of UNOMIG playing a leading role in investigating the 20 April incident.

For the sake of full transparency we refrained from publishing the report of the independent experts until UNOMIG issued its own report.

As you all know by now, the report confirmed our claims — the twin-fin fighter jet owned by the Russian Federation entered the territory of Georgia, shot down a Georgian flying aircraft, and left the territory of Georgia.

The report explicitly stated that “based on the authentication of the radar record, the FFT could confirm that the interceptor — a MiG-29 ‘Fulcrum’ or a Su-27 ‘Flanker’ — headed south towards the UAV and the Ceasefire Line and after the interception and the shooting down of the UAV, turned back to north heading toward MAYKOP/KRASNODAR

into the Russian airspace. Absent compelling evidence to the contrary, this leads to the conclusion that the aircraft belonged to the Russian air force.”

The report also emphasized that the materials provided by the Georgian side were authentic. The same was stated by the group of international experts. The whole international community thus confirmed what we already knew, namely, that the Russian Federation was behind the shooting down of the UAV.

As there were no questions left unanswered, we decided to engage with the Russian Federation in meaningful dialogue to reduce risks and prevent such incidents from happening in the future.

This is the reason why we activated the Vienna Mechanism on 28 May.

Our intention is to engage in a constructive dialogue through which we may receive an assurance that no similar activities will take place in the future.

By resorting to all possible diplomatic tools and instruments, one of which is the Vienna Mechanism, Georgia is acting as a responsible sovereign State capable of countering overt acts of aggression with civilized means.

Likewise, we will seek to bring any such acts before the eyes and judgement of the international community.

Any responsible member of the international community must try to avoid committing such incidents in the future.

We continue to be struck by the veil of ignorance and complete negligence displayed by the Russian Federation towards our legitimate concerns.

We are also daunted by many other actions committed by the Russian Federation that are not the explicit subject of today’s meeting but are deeply relevant to international peace and stability.

We mean a cascade of legal and military steps taken by Russian Federation on the territory of Georgia that clearly violate Georgia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty. From an international perspective, they represent clear acts of aggression against a sovereign State.

In the past two months, Russia has gravely escalated the crisis in Abkhazia and South Ossetia through its virtual legal recognition of the separatist regimes, its illegal military build-up in Abkhazia, and its acts of aggression in the air.

We believe that Russia is wrong in viewing Georgia as it does. We are not a threat to Russia: on the contrary, our partnership could lead to great mutual advantage.

You would all without exception agree that stability in Georgia means stability in the Caucasus. We therefore fail to understand why our efforts at being economically vibrant, politically democratic, and territorially secure should be a problem for anyone, especially for the Russian Federation.

Regardless of what Russia perceives or misperceives, Georgia will continue its chosen path of development. On this we will not be diverted. We will continue to pursue democratic and economic progress and will tirelessly try to settle disputes by peaceful means.

We will seek to engage in a dialogue with the Abkhaz and the South Ossetians so that we can arrive at a resolution of these disputes.

We hope and trust that a comprehensive peace plan offering an unprecedented degree of autonomy both in Abkhazia and in South Ossetia will finally become a cornerstone of our relations.

In this regard, we are encouraged by the statements made by Prime Minister Putin recently, in which he stressed that the peace initiatives proposed by President Saakashvili are “the right plan”.

We must grasp the opportunity of the moment and pursue the Peace Plan. To this end:

- This process must begin soon;
- Russia must reverse the actions it has been pursuing in Abkhazia, Georgia, in the last two months;
- Russia must decide now whether it is impartial or party to the dispute;
- Russia should allow for increased international involvement in the conflict regions for the process to become inclusive and meaningful.

This is where we stand today. To be honest, we can hardly see any other way out of this political impasse.

In conclusion, allow me to once again use this Forum to reaffirm my Government’s stated commitment to a comprehensive, peaceful, and negotiated solution to the separatist conflicts on Georgia’s territory. We will continue a direct dialogue with the Abkhaz, in which our aim is reach a final settlement of the conflict within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia by offering internationally guaranteed measures, including the widest possible autonomy.

Meanwhile, we remain hopeful that the OSCE and the mechanisms created to safeguard peace and stability will remain relevant in the face of emerging challenges. We also hope that the OSCE will do its best to develop the rapid-reaction mechanisms designed to deal with such cases as the 20 April incident.

We would like to thank those participating States who allowed this meeting to take place and who provided us with an inclusive forum for discussing and condemning the violence, as discussed at length above.

We remain hopeful that a new approach towards Georgia will emerge: one that respects our territorial integrity and sovereignty, one that is consistent with the actions of a

responsible member of an international community of States, and one that is aimed at peace and not at war. All these things seem possible only through the concerted efforts of the whole international community.

Thank you.



35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 4

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY

Madam Chairperson,

Norway is deeply concerned over the many measures and incidents testifying to and also contributing to increased tensions in the Georgian region of Abkhazia and between Georgia and the Russian Federation, and notably:

- Establishment of formal links between the Russian Federation and the *de facto* authorities of Abkhazia;
- Massive granting of Russian citizenship to inhabitants in the area;
- Build-up of forces in the region;
- The flying and downing of UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) over Abkhazia;
- Most recently, the uninvited and unannounced transfer of Russian railway troops to the territory of Abkhazia and Georgia.

We welcome UNOMIG's timely initiative in investigating the shooting down of a Georgian UAV on 20 April and take note of its thorough report, which indicates that the UAV was downed by a Russian aircraft.

We find that this incident lends itself very well to the use of the procedure laid down in Chapter III of the Vienna Document 1999, and we note with satisfaction that a series of very substantive contacts and meetings have already taken place under this procedure, unfortunately without leading to any agreed conclusions, but contributing to shedding more light on the situation and keeping the dialogue open. It is to be hoped that this meeting will bring the dialogue forward and contribute to gradually reduced tensions and a resumption of more forward-looking efforts at bringing about a lasting solution to the conflict.

We welcome the Georgian decision to suspend the flying of UAVs over the conflict zone, taken in response to UNOMIG's views on that matter.

We appeal to all parties to the conflict to show moderation and restraint, both in deeds and in words, and to refrain from all actions and rhetoric that could exacerbate the situation.

We commend the Finnish Chair for all its expedient and determined efforts to help defuse the crisis and re-launch the negotiating process. We fully share the Chair's view that resumption of negotiations aimed at settling the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian conflicts would be the best way to promote confidence and stability in the region. We welcome all bona fide initiatives and contributions to that end.

We welcome President Saakashvili's peace plan, which in our view deserves careful and positive consideration.

We welcome the reports of direct contacts between the two Presidents of Georgia and of the Russian Federation, and we appeal for the continuation of such contacts at all levels, particularly the highest level.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22
11 June 2008
Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 4

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA

Madam Chairperson,

Our delegation, in our 8 May 2008 intervention at the 712th Permanent Council meeting, in our 30 April 2008 intervention at the 544th meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and in our 24 April 2008 intervention at the 710th Permanent Council meeting, had repeatedly called for a full accounting of the incident in which a Georgian unmanned aerial drone vehicle (UAV) was shot down over Abkhazia, Georgia on 20 April 2008. We therefore welcomed and took good note of the UNOMIG's report into this incident.

UNOMIG's conclusion that a Russian Federation air force fighter plane was responsible for the downing of the unarmed Georgian UAV has elicited our concern. The unsanctioned use of force by a party entrusted with peacekeeping responsibilities is not consistent with its obligations as a neutral party.

The UNOMIG report also states that from a strict peacekeeping perspective, enforcement action by third parties, in this case the Russian Federation, in the zone of conflict, is inconsistent with the Moscow Agreement. This action undercuts the ceasefire and separation of forces regime. Moreover, in peacekeeping operations — with very few exceptions authorized by international authorities — the deployment of peacekeeping forces should only be carried out with the consent of the host country, which in this case is Georgia.

The UNOMIG report also states that Georgian UAV flights are in contravention of the Moscow Agreement. Regardless, an unarmed UAV flight cannot justify the Russian Federation's choice to respond with force on 20 April 2008. Our delegation firmly believes the proper course of action would have been for the Russian Federation to launch a diplomatic protest, bring its concerns to the OSCE, to invoke Chapter 3 of the Vienna Document 1999 or to raise the issue at the UN Security Council. Any of these measures would have been an appropriate and measured non-violent response to the overflights by Georgian UAVs.

This incident and other recent actions by the Russian Federation, such as the deployment of additional Russian forces, including paratroopers, heavy artillery and railway construction troops, in the Abkhazia region of Georgia have escalated tensions in the region and made a difficult situation worse.

In line with its role as a neutral facilitator and peacekeeper, the Russian Federation should do its utmost to lower the tensions that currently exist in the region.

Canada also calls on all parties involved to display restraint in words and deeds and to engage in actions that further confidence building measures between all parties. In this regard, we welcome Georgia's announcement to suspend further UAV flights, and the peace initiative proposed by the President of Georgia. Canada strongly urges the Russian Federation to support talks between Georgia and Abkhazia.

Canada fully supports the United Nations' leading role in resolving the protracted conflict in Abkhazia, and we would like to stress the importance of full co-operation and responsible actions from all of the parties involved in the peace process. Canada further supports the Finnish Chair's earlier conclusion that high-level political discussions are key to de-escalating tensions. In this context, Canada notes the recent dialogue between the Presidents of Russia and Georgia is a positive step.

We reiterate the necessity of peaceful and constructive negotiations leading to a resolution of this conflict in a manner that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

Lastly, Canada appreciates that the Finnish Chairman-in-Office has offered his support for further discussions on this matter, and that the Finnish PC Chair and the Estonian FSC chair have been able to arrange for this discussion to take place today. We firmly believe that the OSCE, with its conflict prevention mandate, should pursue options to help decrease tensions in the region.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22
11 June 2008
Annex 5

Original: ENGLISH

35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 4

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

Tensions between Russia and Georgia over the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have been a constant theme of discussion in the OSCE during the last year. We welcome the fact that both countries have sought to use the conflict prevention mechanisms of the OSCE in order to air their differences and seek to de-escalate tensions. In that regard, this meeting, like the two that preceded it, is the culmination of one stage in the process.

We are asked to review the claims and counter-claims of both sides. For the U.S., one issue is clear. UNOMIG's report, as well as the independent analysis of all available data by a team including U.S. experts and representatives of other countries, leads to one clear conclusion: on 20 April, a Russian fighter plane shot down a Georgian UAV over Georgia's sovereign airspace. Russia's efforts to cast doubts are completely unconvincing in light of the irrefutable evidence. This Organization, which has repeatedly stood up for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, should openly condemn this violation.

A second series of claims and counter-claims, addressed in meetings earlier today, revolve around the legality of the UAV flights themselves, and also other allegations of Georgian violations of the Moscow Agreement. The United States is not a party to that agreement, and we do not believe the OSCE can effectively pronounce itself on the intricacies of that agreement. UNOMIG has responsibility in this regard, and its own reports give a more nuanced picture than that presented in the Russian documentation. Although we understand unarmed UAV flights are not explicitly mentioned in that agreement, UNOMIG has declared they consider them to contravene the agreement, and we are heartened that the Government of Georgia declared before the UN Security Council that they were suspending any further such flights.

A third area of concern is the introduction of new troop concentrations into an already tense region. Here again, the record is clear: UNOMIG reports additional troops and heavy equipment being introduced by Russia into UNOMIG's area of operation, and there are credible reports of other weaponry not suitable for peace-keeping functions, such as surface-to-air missile batteries and long-range heavy artillery, being deployed to Abkhazia outside of UNOMIG's area of operation. The movement of ten or more trainloads of Russian Defence Ministry railroad troops into an area outside of UNOMIG oversight, and

without consultation with or approval from the Georgian authorities is also a matter of concern.

But, fellow delegates, concern is not a policy.

We in the OSCE should use this meeting of the joint FSC-PC to engage in creative thinking. We should seriously consider how our Organization can contribute to easing tensions. That is where I would like to focus the rest of my intervention.

The gradual building of confidence, creation of clear channels of communication, flexibility on the part of all interested parties, and a significant contribution from the international community will be key to any lasting progress in Abkhazia. All parties will best be able to avoid conflict in the near term if each evaluates the actions of the other accurately — something which we fear has not been happening consistently, as the claims and the counter-claims we have seen during this process reveal. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) can provide avenues to share accurate information. We see this invocation of the Vienna Document process as a reassuring first step in that regard.

For example, given UNOMIG's limited mandate, the OSCE could perhaps co-ordinate with and supplement UNOMIG, should the UNSC concur, working in areas outside of UNOMIG's responsibility.

We should call for the withdrawal of military equipment recently sent to Abkhazia by Russia, and could task our Chairman-in-Office to lead negotiations aimed at that goal.

The Vienna Document offers suggestions for other types of measures that could complement such efforts, for example, inviting other OSCE States to visit areas of interest and/or concern. An important confidence-building step would be a Russian pledge to forego unilateral steps and to reduce its military presence in Abkhazia to the level that preceded the recent increase in tensions. In our view, this would be important to de-escalating the situation.

Clear declarations from the OSCE or our Chairman-in-Office encouraging the parties to avoid a return to inflammatory rhetoric could also be an important step toward de-escalation. The meeting between Presidents Saakashvili and Medvedev in St. Petersburg last week was an important step in this regard, but more should be done.

These steps, in our view, would all contribute to a de-escalation of the immediate tensions, and allow all sides to focus on reinvigorating the peace process through direct negotiations between the Abkhaz and the Georgian government. President Saakashvili recently unveiled new ideas that we consider worth pursuing further; they need to be elaborated on, and serious direct discussions between Tbilisi and Sukhumi should begin. An agreement on the non-use of force could be an element of that process, but should not be seen as an end in itself. A further confidence-building measure might include expanding the composition of the CIS peacekeeping force — perhaps first by including other members of the CIS, in an effort to boost Georgian confidence in the work of the peacekeepers. It is vital that the peacekeepers act to ensure the safe return of refugees to all parts of Abkhazia.

Other measures that could contribute to advancing negotiations might include humanitarian measures that focus on health concerns of the local population. As negotiations proceed along these lines, it will be helpful to broaden participation by the international community to ensure greater political (and economic) commitment to the negotiations process by actors outside the immediate region.

Madam Chairperson, the FSC-PC format is a step above our previous debates on military technicalities in the FSC. This forum requires us to begin to lift our eyes above the debate about military matters, and to turn our attention to addressing the root problems. Military movements could well prove the spark, but in the long-run we need to clear away the tinder that could turn this spark into a regional calamity. This meeting, if it is to have a lasting impact, must be the beginning of that process. We have offered our views in that spirit.

I request, Madam Chairperson, that these remarks be placed in the journal of the day. Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22

11 June 2008

Annex 6

Original: ENGLISH

35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 4

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Chairperson,

We associate ourselves with the previous delegations in expressing concern regarding the increased tense situation in Abkhazia, Georgia. I would like to reiterate our full respect of and support to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of state borders of Georgia.

We express our firm position that the protracted conflicts in the territory of Georgia should be settled exclusively on the basis of these principles.

As the representative of the country which is the immediate neighbour and strategic ally of Georgia, I would like to stress that stable and united Georgia constitutes an important factor for stability and security of the whole region of South Caucasus.

In connection with the latest developments, we call upon all parties to refrain from any actions which could lead to further escalation of the situation and urge them to continue to be engaged into constructive dialogue aimed at searching of ways for solution of conflict situation.

I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation
Permanent Council**

FSC-PC.JOUR/22
11 June 2008
Annex 7

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35th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the PC
FSC-PC Journal No. 22, Agenda item 4

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION AND
THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

The FSC and PC Chairmanships welcome the resolve of Georgia and the Russian Federation to use the OSCE Mechanism for Consultation and Co-operation as regards Unusual Military Activities to examine issues related to developments in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, and in particular their impact on bilateral Georgian-Russian relations. We believe that various activities undertaken in the framework of this Mechanism in the course of the last few weeks, including during the joint FSC-PC meetings today, indicate clearly the continuing relevance of this Mechanism and the OSCE as a forum for dialogue on the security concerns of participating States.

We also thank the participating States for their active and constructive participation in the assessment of the situation referred to the joint FSC-PC meetings by Georgia and the Russian Federation.

The Chairmanships take positive note of the statements by various participating States expressing their unequivocal support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders, and stressing that the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict should be settled on the basis of international law. We also share the opinion expressed during the debate that any use of force in the zone of conflict is unacceptable and runs counter to the fundamental principles and commitments of the OSCE.

The Chairmanships believe that Georgia and the Russian Federation should refrain from any unilateral action that could further aggravate the situation in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict or in their bilateral relations. We also agree with statements by participating States that direct talks between Tbilisi and Sukhumi should be re-established and that ideas reflected in the peace initiative, launched recently by President Saakashvili, should be examined in the framework of such talks.

Furthermore, the Chairmanships call on Georgia and the Russian Federation to continue their dialogue to clarify the matters reflected in their respective Notes Verbales of 28 and 30 May and discussed today, and to find ways to calm the existing tension and to avoid its reoccurrence in the future. In particular, we encourage the sides to consider developing regional and/or bilateral measures to promote confidence.

The Chairmanships stand ready to assist the sides in such endeavors, as well as in their efforts to promote the peaceful settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz and the Georgian-Ossetian conflicts as a necessary requirement to peace and stability in the region. In this context, we welcome calls by some of the participating States for further examination of ways the OSCE might contribute to calming the existing tension in the region.