



EMBASSY OF GEORGIA TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA
PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO THE OSCE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

S T A T E M E N T

of the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the OSCE
Mr. Paata Gaprindashvili

on the Tenth Round of the Geneva International Discussions

Delivered at the 805th Meeting of the Permanent Council

Vienna, April 15, 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Let me inform you about the tenth round of the Geneva Discussions, which was held on 29-30 March 2010. During the meeting the issues of security and stability in Georgia's occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions and the safe and dignified return of the IDPs and refugees to the places of their habitual residence were discussed. The discussions started with two information sessions on the registration of the refugees and internally displaced persons and the go-and-see visits to the places of the previous habitual residence. We welcome such information sessions and expect that this practice will continue during the forthcoming rounds as well. Particular importance needs to be attached to the information session on the monitoring of the human rights violations in the occupied territories. During such session participants shall be able to listen to the representatives of various international organizations and consider recommendations on the ways how to improve human rights protection in the occupied regions.

On 30 March discussions were held within the two working groups. Unfortunately, no results were reached this time too because of the extremely rigid position of the representatives of the Russian Federation. Different participants once

again raised the issue of the full implementation of the August 12 cease-fire agreement and the unconditional withdrawal of the Russian forces from the occupied regions of Georgia.

Mr. Chairman,

Dear Colleagues,

It is unfortunate and alarming that Moscow continues to block the document proposed by the Co-Chairs of the Geneva Talks on the non-use of force and the international security arrangements. The Georgian side has welcomed this document despite its rather minimal content and expressed it's believe that it represents a step to right direction.

Participants from Russia once again rejected calls of the international community to allow the presence of international missions, monitoring of the human rights violations and unimpeded access of the humanitarian cargoes to the occupied territories.

The necessity to resume functioning of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms was raised during the meeting. IPRM related to the Tskhinvali region has not been allowed to function since October 2009. Co-Chairs of the Discussions further focused on the necessity to take concrete steps to ensure the functioning of the Mechanism, to improve the effectiveness of it by ensuring OSCE's participation, carrying out joint visits and intensifying the exchange of information. However, the prospects of these elements materializing remain minimal at this stage due to the neglectful position of Moscow.

It should be especially noted that Moscow representatives' participation and statements during the talks were particularly threatening and aggressive, in comparison with the previous rounds.

In the Working Group II, participants continued to discuss the document on the joint undertakings proposed by the co-chairs. This document envisages a combination of the measures aimed at ensuring the safe and dignified return of the refugees and internally displaced persons to the places of their habitual residence.

This time protection of the human rights and the go-and-see visits were discussed in detail. Moscow once again tried to politicize the issue in order to block any opportunity of an agreement. Moreover, representatives of Moscow continued to question the fundamental right of the refugees and IDPs to return to their homes in safety and dignity. This is very alarming and we once again call on international community to pay particular attention to this issue and give its adequate reaction to it.

It was agreed to hold the next round of Geneva Talks to be held on 8 June, 2010.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to briefly comment on Russia's Permanent Representative's remarks on the Georgian "State Strategy" and developments around it. Indeed the Strategy was one of the issues discussed during the talks. Representative of the Sokhumi regime has stated that his authorities were looking forward to see an Action Plan to the Strategy for their further consideration. I would concur with Russia's Permanent Representative's desire to have the Strategy as one of the topics for the discussions and deliberations at the Corfu Process. As for the initiative to invite representatives of the authorities in control of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia in the Corfu Process to present their views on the Strategy and Action Plan, it requires further careful analysis and more sophisticated approach.

Mr. Chairman,

Unfortunately a list of illegal actions undertaken by the Russian Federation keeps expanding. Recent facts of yet another violation of international law have been already highlighted by the EU and the US at today's session and I would not dwell on them now, since the Georgian Foreign Ministry has already given its reaction to these illegal acts. Let me finish my statement by saying and repeating that Russia continues demonstratively to neglect its obligations under August 12, 2008 six point cease fire agreement and vigorously to violate international law, it continues to pose a direct threat to peace and stability in the South Caucasus region and beyond.

Thank you.