



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

*Delivered at the 767th Permanent Council Meeting
Vienna 2 July, 2009*

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Sixth round of the Geneva talks was conducted on 1st July, on issues of security and stability in Georgia's occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Regions, as well as safe and dignified return of refugees and IDPs to the places of their residence. A meeting of the two working groups was held, in which participants took part in an individual capacity.

The first Working Group dealt with the Incident Prevention Mechanism agreed during the fourth round of the Geneva Talks on 17-18 February 2009. So far only two meetings have been held on the Incident Prevention Mechanism with respect to the occupied Tskhinvali Region, as for the Incident Prevention Mechanism with respect to the occupied Abkhazia Region, it has not yet been put into effect owing to various artificial excuses cited by the Russian occupation forces and the Sokhumi proxy regime. It was emphasized during the first working group meeting that the Incident Prevention Mechanism is an essential instrument by which to reach and sustain security and stability in the occupied regions. It was agreed at the meeting that the Incident Prevention Mechanism with respect to Abkhazia will start functioning in Gali, on 14 July 2009. However, in parallel to this positive development, the Russian side and the Tskhinvali proxy regime refused to take part in the next meeting of the Incident Prevention Mechanism with respect to the occupied Tskhinvali Region.

Participants of the first working group discussed the issues of the non-use of force and establishment of international security mechanisms – international peacekeeping and police forces in the occupied regions. The Georgian side underlined the necessity of deployment of international peacekeeping and police forces on the occupied territories. It was stressed that against the background of Russia blocking the continuation of the activities of the OSCE and UN missions in Georgia and denying access of the EU monitors to the occupied regions, the need to start serious talks in the Geneva format on the deployment of international peacekeeping and police forces takes on an increasingly important focus.

The Georgian side emphasized that it remains committed to its commitments under the 12 August ceasefire agreement and contrary to Russia's claim, the provision on the non-use of force is in force and binding on Georgia as well as on Russia. Nevertheless, the Georgian side expressed readiness to consider the possibility of signing a full fledged agreement with Russian side, which would include provisions on non-use of force, on de-occupation of the country and deployment of international contingent in the occupied territories, as well as other provisions of the 12 August agreement. For this purpose the Georgian side submitted a draft document on non-use of force between Russia and Georgia, stipulating the stage-by-stage deployment of international police and observation missions on the occupied territories. Regretfully, the Russian representatives are not ready at this stage to seriously consider the Georgian proposal on introducing international security mechanisms, as well as on non-use of force and non-resumption of hostilities as the best possible confidence building measure between all participants of the discussions. We hope that at the Russian Federation will consider this document more seriously at the next rounds of the talks.

At the first Working Group meeting the Head of the EUMM Mr. Haber once again underlined that Georgia is fulfilling in good faith its obligations towards the EUMM and the allegations of the Russian Federation on increasing of the Georgian military forces in the territories adjacent to the occupied regions does not correspond to reality.

At the second Working Group of the Geneva talks the Georgian representatives underlined the alarming human rights' situation in the occupied regions. It was agreed to start work on a comprehensive plan, addressing the dignified and safe return of the refugees and IDPs. It was underlined that elaboration of security mechanisms and protection of human rights would represent significant guarantees for safe and dignified return of refugees and IDPs. It was also agreed that the independent experts, with an aim of its subsequent rehabilitation, should inspect the irrigation and potable water supply network. The Georgian side submitted to the second Working Group its proposals on safe and dignified return of refugees and IDPs, protection of their rights, respecting their property rights, registration of refugees and IDPs and issuing appropriate documents to them, as well as economic rehabilitation of occupied regions.

The participants agreed to hold the seventh round of negotiations on 17 September 2009.

Thank you.