

**Address of GUAM Secretary General, Amb. Valeri Chechelashvili
to the 2009 Annual Review Security Conference
“Regional cooperation: opportunities, challenges and synergy”
(Vienna, 23-24 June 2009)**

At the outset, let me express sincere gratitude to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the invitation to take part in 2009 Annual Security Review Conference. I would like also to commend the Greek OSCE Chairmanship for the efforts to ensure for all participants the opportunity to share their views in a wide and universal forum.

It is an excellent opportunity for all us to brainstorm on different aspects of international cooperation in order to reinforce our common contribution to cooperative and comprehensive security. We all are anticipating interesting discussions, and as an outcome, recommendations of this high-level forum.

In GUAM Organization we believe, that peaceful resolution of existing conflicts is of utmost importance for comprehensive and lasting security in Europe. In this light, it is important, that GUAM Heads of States have approved and signed back in 2006 in Kyiv **Joint Declaration of the Heads of state of the Organization for democracy and economic development – GUAM on the issue of conflict settlement**, providing clear vision of conflict resolution process, which proved to be a cornerstone of comprehensive European security, particularly in the light of last year war between two OSCE Participating States, which resulted in annexation of 20% of territory of one of them.

These conflicts belong both to OSCE and GUAM space. We believe main ideas of above mentioned document could serve as universal approach, contributing, through conflict resolution process, to pan-European security. Let me remind them:

- settlement of conflicts on the territories of the GUAM States shall be carried out exclusively on the basis of respect to sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of these states; this is one of the priority objectives of cooperation within GUAM;
- the territory of a state may not be a subject of acquisition or military occupation, resulting from the threat or use of force in breach of the relevant norms of international law. No territorial acquisitions and the resulting self-declared entities may be recognized as legal under any circumstances whatsoever;

- the obligation of states of non-interference with the affairs of any other state and non-exertion of military, political, economic or any other pressure thereupon;
- the lack of prospects and malignancy of separatism and disintegration, the incompatibility of the use of force and the practice of ethnic cleansing and territorial seizures with the universal and European values, the principles and ideals of peace, democracy, stability and regional cooperation;
- the importance of consolidation of efforts of the GUAM States and the international community to settle conflicts on their territories by means of re-integration of uncontrolled territories into the states that they are part of, return of forcibly displaced population to the areas of permanent residency and ensuring peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups within the internationally recognized borders of the states, development of civil society, restoration of destroyed infrastructure on these territories, and also, use of communications to the benefit of all parties;
- the importance of demilitarization of conflict zones and establishment of security in these zones with the help of multinational peacemaking forces deployed therein under UN or OSCE auspices for providing conditions for return of population and peaceful coexistence of ethnic communities;
- the status of self-rule for the communities constituting the population of uncontrolled territories that will create the necessary conditions for effective exercise of their rights to equal participation in administration of state affairs, including through formation of legitimate regional authorities at all levels; this status can be determined exclusively within the legal and democratic process.

To speak about new architecture of European security, ignoring these fundamental principles means to float against the mainstream of international cooperation. I am confident, that mainstream of international cooperation will prevail. The interventions of vast majority of speakers this morning back this hope.

To conclude with, I can only associate myself with your basic statement, Madam Chairperson, that security of OSCE Participating State couldn't be ensured at the expense of other OSCE Participating State.

I am confident, that this conference will substantially contribute to our common agenda. Looking forward for motivated and interesting discussions, I would like to express once again my gratitude to OSCE and Greek Chairmanship for the excellent organizational arrangements of this conference.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.