



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 Delegation of Georgia

at the 954th session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, May 30, 2013

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Georgia I would like to express our deep concern over the installation of barbed wire fences by the Russian military forces across the occupation line in the Tskhinvali region, which represents a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of international law, primarily of Georgia's territorial integrity and the inviolability of internationally recognized borders, as well as of the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement.

In addition, these illegal activities disregard and violate the right of free movement and other civil, social, economic and cultural rights of people residing in the affected regions and in the adjacent areas. Such a provocative action causes particular concern against the background of the grave security and human rights situation and the absence of any international observation in Georgia's occupied regions.

In April-May 2011, the first barbed wire installations have been established by the Russian FSB border guards in the Dvani area. Since January 2013, the process has been re-activated in the Gori and Kareli districts. As a result houses and yards of the local population have been divided. Moreover, the people residing within the occupied regions and in the adjacent areas found themselves deprived from their fundamental rights

and freedoms, including but not limited to the freedom of movement, family life, right to education and other civil and economic rights. The access of local population to their agricultural lands and water resources has been blocked. The installation of the barbed wires in the mentioned villages has already affected 17-18 Georgian families. Out of 4 houses, left behind the barbed wire fence, three families have already fled their places of residence, thus, creating a further generation of IDPs.

Since 27 May 2013, the Russian occupation forces and border guards have reactivated the process of the installation of barb-wire fences in the villages of Ditsi and Dvani. By now, the total length of barbed wires along the Tskhinvali occupation line has reached 22-25 km and the process of arrangement is still in progress. The barb-wire fence has intruded into the territory controlled by the central Government of Georgia by 120-150 meters. The Russian border guards confirm that the instruction they are following to move the occupation line further into the territory controlled by the central Government of Georgia has been directly received from Moscow.

The issue has constantly been raised by the Georgian participants at the Geneva International Discussions. Furthermore, the representative from the Ministry of Internal Affairs has brought this matter to the attention of the Incident Prevention and Reaction Mechanism meetings. In April 2013, the process of installation has been observed by the EUMM and the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairmanship for Conflicts.

We call upon the Russian Federation to immediately stop and reverse the process of the wire fence installation across the occupation lines of the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions, and to comply with the provisions of the 2008 Ceasefire Agreement and its commitments under international law.

Russia, as an occupying power which temporarily administrates the Georgian regions, bears the responsibility for the ongoing flagrant violations of fundamental rights and freedoms of the population residing in the affected territories and their vicinity.

By bringing this alarming situation to the attention of the international community, we urge the international organizations and the partner countries to take immediate and adequate action in response and exert pressure to immediately stop such illegal activities.

Thank you.