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**Chairmanship: Greece****764th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

1. Date: Thursday, 11 June 2009  
  
Opened: 10.15 a.m.  
Closed: 12.45 p.m.
  
2. Chairperson: Ambassador M. Marinaki
  
3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

## Agenda item 1: OSCE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE

Chairperson, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, Czech Republic-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, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/439/09), Russian Federation, United States of America (PC.DEL/435/09), Ukraine (PC.DEL/438/09)

## Agenda item 2: REPORT BY AMBASSADOR TERHI HAKALA ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE OSCE MISSION TO GEORGIA FOR THE PERIOD MARCH-DECEMBER 2008, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PC.DEC/861 AND PC.DEC/883 AND ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE END-OF-MANDATE PROCEDURE

Chairperson (Annex 1), Ambassador T. Hakala (PC.FR/11/09 OSCE+), Czech Republic-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 countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Azerbaijan, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment)

(Annex 2), Canada (Annex 3), Norway (Annex 4), Switzerland (Annex 5), Russian Federation (Annex 6), United States of America (Annex 7), Georgia (Annex 8), Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre (Annex 9)

Agenda item 3: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

- (a) *Appointment of a human rights ombudsman in Tajikistan:* Czech Republic-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, Montenegro and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/441/09), Tajikistan, Chairperson
- (b) *Municipal elections in Yerevan, Armenia, held on 31 May 2009:* United States of America (PC.DEL/437/09), Russian Federation, Czech Republic-European Union, Armenia (PC.DEL/444/09 OSCE+), Uzbekistan, Chairperson

Agenda item 4: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE  
CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Invitation of the Chairperson-in-Office by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mr. Franco Frattini, to the outreach session devoted to Afghanistan and Pakistan of the G8 meeting of foreign ministers, to be held in Trieste on 26 and 27 June 2009:* Chairperson
- (b) *Press release by the Chairperson-in-Office about a deadly blast in Pakistan (SEC.PR/258/09):* Chairperson
- (c) *Participation of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the Asian Partners for Co-operation in the 2009 OSCE-Japan Conference, held in Tokyo, Japan, on 10 and 11 June 2009:* Chairperson
- (d) *Organizational matters related to the informal ministerial meeting to be held in Corfu, Greece, on 27 and 28 June 2009:* Chairperson

Agenda item 5: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

*Announcement of the distribution of the report of the Secretary General (SEC.GAL/98/09 OSCE+):* Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

Agenda item 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Speech "On a New Beginning", delivered by the President of the United States of America, Mr. Barack Obama, at the Cairo University, Egypt, on 4 June 2009:* Uzbekistan, United States of America
- (b) *Seminar on Future OSCE Chairmanships: Policies and Challenges, held on 9 June 2009, in Vienna, Austria:* Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/443/09)

- (c) *Call for pledges to the Election Support Team to be sent to Afghanistan:*  
Chairperson
  
- (d) *Organizational modalities related to the Conference on Strengthening Energy Security in the OSCE Area, to be held in Bratislava, Slovakia, on 6 and 7 July 2009 (SEC.GAL/88/09) (SEC.GAL/89/09):* Chairperson

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 17 June 2009, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



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

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**764th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 764, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

Dear colleagues, it is with mixed feelings of great pleasure but also sadness that I once again today welcome Ambassador Terhi Hakala in the Permanent Council, to give her farewell presentation.

Ambassador, since your last appearance, in March 2008, our Mission to Georgia has had to cope with the most turbulent and challenging times for the country and its people, and you and your very dedicated team were faced with unusually harsh situations.

On top of that, since the Mission's mandate was not extended by 31 December 2008, you were entrusted by the Organization with the onerous duty of smoothly closing down one of the largest and most important OSCE field operations.

Clearly, the OSCE Mission to Georgia provided outstanding services to the OSCE cause and to the Georgian people, irrespective of ethnic origin; it is an "accomplished mission", but clearly not "a mission accomplished", and this is not due to the lack of dedication by you, Ambassador Hakala, and your excellent staff. There is a consensus among the participating States that the situation on the ground requires more, and not less, OSCE presence, and that is what the Chairmanship has been trying to achieve. We remain committed to using any opening, no matter how small, in order to maintain the OSCE on the ground.

We are all eager to listen to your report, both on the activities of the Mission during the last nine months of 2008 and on the monitoring activities till today, as well as on the closing-down phase during this year.

In addition to the appreciation of myself, and of all my colleagues, I would like to express the personal appreciation of the Chairperson-in-Office, H.E. Minister Dora Bakoyannis, for your dedicated service and tremendous efforts and your personal contribution to the success of her visit in Tbilisi earlier this year. I wish you all the very best in your new assignment.



**764th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 764, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Terhi Hakala and thanks her for her latest, and regrettably last, report regarding the Mission to Georgia and the military monitors. We would like to highlight our full support for and appreciation of the hard work of Ambassador Hakala and her dedicated and loyal staff under difficult circumstances during the past year, in a time when the Mission's activities were probably more urgently needed than ever.

At the outset, the EU would like to reiterate its firm commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. We also would like to solemnly recall the Conclusions of the Presidency of the Extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008, in which the European Council strongly condemned Russia's unilateral decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and to reiterate our call for full implementation of the agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008.

We commend the Mission for its continuous efforts, over the many years of its existence, to promote security and stability. Our particular appreciation goes to the Military Monitoring Officers (MMOs), who successfully contributed and, in our view, still continue to contribute to this aim by building confidence and giving early warning signals whenever necessary, including by providing spot reports. One recent example is the MMOs' daily patrol report for 8 June 2009, describing the rapid deterioration of the security situation in the Perevi-Karzmani area, which is a matter of serious concern. We equally value other confidence-building measures carried out by the Mission, including the Economic Rehabilitation Programme (ERP). The EU has always been a strong supporter of the ERP, and regrets that it could not be continued after August 2008, due to lack of access to South Ossetia, Georgia. The EU hopes that similar projects could be implemented there once the conditions permit.

Given the current situation in Georgia, the Mission's activities in other dimensions, carried out until December 2008, remain relevant, notably those aimed at strengthening the democratic process promoting human rights (including those of persons belonging to national minorities), independence of the judiciary, and freedom and pluralism of the media.

We deeply regret that all these valuable programmes and other activities cannot be continued. We remain convinced of the urgent need for a continued cross-dimensional OSCE

presence throughout Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population. We call again on the Russian Federation to join others in order to reach a consensus on the Greek Chairmanship's Draft Decision of 8 May 2009 on an OSCE Office in Tbilisi and the deployment of OSCE monitors in the framework of the implementation of the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008, for the sake of security and stability in the region.

In conclusion, we again thank Ambassador Hakala and her dedicated staff for their hard work for the OSCE Mission to Georgia over the past year, and wish them success in their future endeavours.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Azerbaijan, align themselves with this statement.

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\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



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**764th Plenary Meeting**

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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

I join others in warmly welcoming Ambassador Hakala back to the Permanent Council, and thanking her for her comprehensive report. Great appreciation and thanks are due to both the OSCE Mission and the Government of Georgia for their longstanding, productive partnership under very challenging circumstances. Canada has fully supported the work of the OSCE in Georgia in all three dimensions, and we stand ready to do more – should a new OSCE mandate be realized.

We concur with Ambassador Hakala that the Mission has spared no effort in harnessing all the tools it had at its disposal to provide a constructive, creative and viable alternative to the current very regrettable situation facing Georgians and their country since last summer's armed conflict.

It is regrettable that, due to the intransigence of one participating State, the OSCE was prevented from reaching a consensus on extending the mandate of the Mission and its monitors in Georgia, particularly at a time when more – not less – international presence is needed, due to mounting tensions and incidents in the region.

In this connection, Canada again calls on the Russian Federation to consider supporting the Greek Chairmanship's compromise proposal to extend the OSCE mandate in Georgia. We, along with the overwhelming majority of the OSCE participating States, see the Chairman's package as the best possible basis for consensus, since it would maintain a status-neutral approach and secure a meaningful OSCE presence in all the war-affected regions of Georgia.

Georgia, as the host State, wants an OSCE presence in its territory and has requested our help because there are still real needs to be addressed, especially in the wake of the armed conflict last August. We join others in deeply regretting that the OSCE was prevented from fulfilling this wish of Georgia and continuing its longstanding role in this country, and its important work on conflict prevention and resolution.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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**764th Plenary Meeting**  
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## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NORWAY**

Madam Chairperson,

Let me first join previous speakers in warmly welcoming Ambassador Terhi Hakala back to the Permanent Council, unfortunately for the last time in her present capacity, and in thanking her for her report.

What is even more unfortunate is that the whole existence of the OSCE Mission to Georgia – for many years one of the flagships among OSCE missions – is coming to an end, and that this is happening at a time when a continued, robust OSCE presence in Georgia would have been more needed and more useful than ever. As we have stated on every relevant occasion, we have strongly supported all the valiant efforts of the former Finnish and the present Greek Chairmanships to secure a meaningful continued OSCE presence in Georgia, with two main pillars.

We firmly believe that a continued and strengthened presence of OSCE military observers, operating on both sides of the administrative boundary line, could have made a significant contribution to overseeing the adherence to the six-point agreement of 12 August by all the parties to the conflict, to easing tensions and preventing unfortunate incidents, and to providing reliable and unbiased information. As pointed out by the representative of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the EU, the present group of monitors have clearly proven their worth, even within the severe limitations imposed on their activities. Speaking of the military monitors, let me also echo the concerns expressed by the EU regarding the deterioration in the security situation in the Perevi-Karzmani region, as reported by the monitors.

In addition to the continued need for monitors, we also remain convinced that the maintenance of a regular OSCE mission in Tbilisi, with comprehensive activities in all three dimensions, could have played a very useful role in assisting the host country in the further development of Georgian society and institutions.

Madam Chairperson,

On this very sad occasion, I must pay a sincere tribute to Ambassador Hakala and her competent and dedicated staff for their hard work and all their achievements, under very difficult circumstances, especially during the past year. Let me also express my Delegation's



profound sympathy and commiseration with the staff of the Mission for all the uncertainty and the other personal difficulties they have had to endure during these past months, and for the profound disappointment they must have felt when all the flexibility, dedication and stamina they had shown proved to be fruitless.

I must also voice a particular note of regret that it was not possible to complete various projects under the confidence-building economic rehabilitation programme, to which Norway is a contributor, mainly because of lack of access to the Georgian region of South Ossetia.

Madam Chairperson,

I must take this opportunity to reiterate Norway's unwavering commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and also to recall our previously expressed regrets over Russia's unilateral decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the signing of agreements on the joint protection of borders, and the holding of so-called "parliamentary elections" in the South Ossetian region of Georgia on 31 May. These were all steps in the wrong direction and represent further setbacks in the search for a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict in Georgia.

Finally, Madam Chairperson,

My delegation remains convinced that the Chairperson's compromise proposal of 8 May, hammered out after months of laborious negotiations, in which no stone was left unturned, was a good and very reasonable compromise, and in fact represented the only viable solution for maintaining a meaningful OSCE presence in Georgia, of which everybody claims to be in favour. I therefore also take this opportunity to appeal once more to the Russian Federation to reconsider their position on this issue.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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**764th Plenary Meeting**

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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND**

Madam Chairperson,

The Swiss delegation welcomes Ambassador Terhi Hakala and thanks her for her detailed report. On behalf of Switzerland, I should like to thank her and her team for their valuable work, which was carried out in extremely complicated conditions.

The OSCE Mission to Georgia is undoubtedly one of the most important field missions ever deployed by our Organization. Its area of activities encompassed all three dimensions of the OSCE's work, but its key task clearly lay in conflict management and in defusing political tensions – prior to the war last August and even more so in the period after it. As Ambassador Hakala has explained, the Mission was also very much committed to the country's economic rehabilitation and pressing concerns regarding the protection of the environment. Moreover, the at times dire humanitarian plight of displaced persons since the war has required the support of the international community, including the OSCE.

It is clear from Ambassador Hakala's report that the Mission, especially through the work of its military monitoring officers, work in which Switzerland was involved, made an essential contribution to reducing the number of incidents on the administrative border with South Ossetia after the conflict of last August. In this way, it has been possible to re-establish the feeling of security, so shaken by the war, among the population in the affected areas and also to provide the humanitarian support urgently required in a more targeted manner.

In view of the precarious situation on the ground, it is all the more incomprehensible that it has not been possible to provide the OSCE Mission to Georgia with a new comprehensive mandate that would have allowed it to continue its operations aimed at conflict management, humanitarian support and reconstruction.

Switzerland regrets this most strongly. We believe that the potential for conflict in the region is still dangerously high and that great efforts are needed to reduce this potential and promote reconstruction. The OSCE could have had a very important role to play in this effort.

We very much hope that the closure of the Mission to Georgia will not damage too severely the OSCE's reputation and its capacity to take action. There is no doubt this closure is harming the credibility of our Organization given that, after all, one of its key tasks is to

help to overcome conflict situations. This, however, requires a willingness to compromise by all parties involved. We therefore call on all the OSCE participating States to contribute to resolving conflicts through dialogue and constructive co-operation.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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**764th Plenary Meeting**

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

Madam Chairperson,

A serious discussion on the results of the work of the OSCE Mission to Georgia that is closing down and whose mandate, as you know, expired on 31 December 2008 has been long overdue. The time has come, using as an example this field presence and its actions or inaction at a critical point in modern European history, to draw a number of conclusions of a generalizing nature. These conclusions are extremely necessary for they could, in our view, genuinely help our Organization to gain “a second breath” and, by honestly and objectively analysing the mistakes made, to earn its rightful place in the Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

The Georgian leadership’s military adventure in South Ossetia last August further exacerbated the structural crisis experienced by the OSCE over the last decade, beginning in 1999, when, with a massive use of force, the armed forces of a group of participating States belonging to NATO, in violation of the norms of international law and without the approval of the United Nations Security Council, grossly violated the sovereignty of an OSCE participating State, namely Yugoslavia.

Georgia’s treacherous attack on South Ossetia was a most flagrant violation of international norms and humanitarian principles and delivered a heavy blow to the OSCE’s prestige. The Georgian aggression was launched in spite of Russia’s warnings and in the face of repeated assertions by the authorities in Tbilisi that they had no intention of starting a war with Tskhinval. We all heard these assurances, here in Vienna at meetings of the Permanent Council and also during a visit to the region in July 2008 by the permanent representatives of some participating States. In fact it turned out that under the cloak of this sanctimonious demagoguery Georgia was secretly making careful preparations for an invasion of South Ossetia.

We shall soon mark the first anniversary of those terrible and bloody events of last August. On 8 August 2008, Georgian troops began the massive shelling of the sleeping city of Tskhinval, using among other things large-calibre artillery guns, tanks and multiple rocket launchers, resulting in heavy casualties among the republic’s civilian population and the Russian peacekeepers. However, so far the OSCE has been unable not only to provide a fair

assessment of Tbilisi's actions but also to recognize the indisputable fact of Georgia's treacherous attack on Tskhinval.

The authority of the Organization has been seriously undermined in the eyes of the South Ossetian people and leadership. One should not forget the unseemly behaviour during the military activities of the staff of the office in Tskhinval who refused to allow women and children from nearby houses to take refuge in their bomb shelter, thereby leaving them to perish under the fire of Georgian "Grad" multiple rocket launchers (relevant cases were cited by representatives of South Ossetian non-governmental organizations at last year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw).

This is why it is now so difficult to find a mutually acceptable formula for the continuation of the OSCE's work in South Ossetia, whether in the form of a field presence or of monitors. It is important to restore South Ossetia's trust in our Organization, and we are sure that assistance in achieving this can in many respects be derived from direct contacts with Tskhinval, getting together to work out the modalities for the future presence, something that Russia has been and still is actively calling for.

And the position of the South Ossetian side is understandable. After all, the behaviour of the OSCE and its field mission on the eve of the Georgian aggression, during that aggression, and after it makes it perfectly clear that the Organization was not up to the conflict resolution tasks entrusted to it. It is clearly stated in the Charter for European Security that the OSCE is "a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation". To put it bluntly, last August the OSCE failed to prove its worth in any of those four areas.

We have to face the truth. Like it or not, with Saakashvili's military adventure and the OSCE's response to it, including that of the field mission, came the moment of truth, and frankly, the OSCE was not up to the job. It was unable either to prevent the aggression or stop the aggressor or help to resolve the crisis. Russia did that for it as part of efforts to enforce peace, in full accordance with the norms of international law and obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, working also in co-operation with France, which held the European Union presidency at the time.

It is symptomatic that the less the OSCE and its field mission in Georgia have demonstrated a willingness to do some soul-searching and take a serious look at the tragic events of last August, the more we have heard, from the platform of the Permanent Council and elsewhere, unfounded accusations against Russia and fresh outbursts of anti-Russian rhetoric from certain participating States. What is more, the most strident criticism of Russia has come from the very countries that, in violation of international agreements, including those reached earlier within the OSCE (the Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers of 1993, the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security of 1994 and the Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons of 2000), have supplied and are continuing to supply the Georgian authorities with military equipment and munitions or have simply closed their eyes to Georgia's dangerous preparations.

In any case, this kind of connivance merely encouraged Tbilisi to unleash bloodshed, in other words to play out the worst possible scenario of bringing South Ossetia back under its control through the use of force.

A few separate words should be said about the work of the OSCE military monitoring officers, especially since this topic was the subject of unprecedented and shocking reports in the media. *Der Spiegel*, *The New York Times*, *The Sunday Times* and the *BBC* published a series of sensational exposé articles on the Georgian leadership's crimes. These articles were based on the testimony of eyewitnesses to these tragic events – personnel of the OSCE Mission to Georgia at that time, namely, Mr. Ryan Grist, the then deputy head of the presence, and Mr. Stephen Young, senior officer of the OSCE military monitors.

Thanks to these journalistic investigations, it became known that on the eve of the Georgian attack on South Ossetia OSCE observers were reporting military preparations by Tbilisi, but for some reason their reports failed to reach all the participating States of the Organization. The Russian Federation has stated on numerous occasions and at many different levels that this kind of situation is unacceptable. We have also insisted on a thorough investigation, which however, as it turns out, has yet to take place.

Unfortunately, it has to be recognized that in its reports since the war the OSCE Mission to Georgia has been making inappropriate use of unverified information that to a considerable degree reflects Tbilisi's one-sided and subjective approach. The monitors selected as their main source of information not their personal observations but some kind of "information" received through contacts with representatives of the Georgian law enforcement agencies, village authorities and local residents. As a result, the patrol reports are full of countless references along the lines of "the Georgian police reported", "the Georgian police stated", "according to the Georgian police", "the police believe", "according to local residents", and so forth.

Things have got to the point where in their reports the military monitoring officers have begun to reproduce Georgian media coverage, notably *Rustavi 2* and *Imedi*, on a "possible Russian invasion of Georgia this spring". What is this if not the broadcasting of blatant Georgian propaganda?

The constant monitoring of the Russian military contingent's posts from the South Ossetian side of the border and never-ending complaints about the notorious "refusal of access" to South Ossetian territory to assess the security situation there have become the favourite subjects of these reports.

It is worth remembering that Permanent Council Decisions No. 861 of 19 August 2008 and No. 883 of 12 February 2009 set only numerical parameters, namely 20 monitors, and also the zone of their responsibility, namely the areas adjacent to South Ossetia. In other words, to date the military monitoring officers are in the region without their monitoring modalities having been agreed upon and approved by the Permanent Council. It is therefore not clear with what justification the monitors can "demand" access to the territory of South Ossetia and "complain about" some sort of refusal to grant them such access.

We absolutely cannot understand who authorized the monitors to observe the positioning of Russian and South Ossetian posts along the Georgian-South Ossetian border, the personnel and armaments deployed at those checkpoints, and the movements of Russian troops and equipment on the South Ossetian side of the border. We constantly find this kind of information in the monitors' reports. It needs to be borne in mind that this kind of

“monitoring” activity is not part of the observers’ functional duties, since, we repeat, no modalities for the work of the military monitoring officers have in fact been agreed.

We believe that, given the changed circumstances, the role of the OSCE in Georgia must also change. Unfortunately, a number of countries, including Georgia, are artificially linking the retention of an OSCE field presence in the region with the existence of a single monitoring operation on both sides of the Georgian-South Ossetian border.

We have supported the continuation of the work of the OSCE military monitoring officers in the areas adjacent to South Ossetia, and continue to do so. Their presence in that area is essential to help to better monitor and prevent the emergence of new aggressive plans by Tbilisi directed at its neighbours.

And there is no doubt that designs of this kind are being hatched by the current Georgian leadership. No sooner had the Russian troops left the positions that they had occupied in the security zones on the borders with South Ossetia and Abkhazia than Tbilisi began to concentrate there its military units, including special-purpose units belonging to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, move up heavy weaponry, build fortifications and set up new field camps and observation posts.

There is no end to Tbilisi’s threats and belligerent rhetoric. Just yesterday, speaking at a meeting of the government, Mikheil Saakashvili directly stated: “We shall liberate our territories – there is no historical alternative, and we shall not leave this task to future generations. We are dealing with it every hour”.

As for the future of the OSCE presence in Georgia and South Ossetia, including the monitoring operations in the region, the Russian position on this issue is well known and was once again set out in detail at the last meeting of the Permanent Council by Mr. Grigory Karasin, State Secretary and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Permit me to single out the most important point. The OSCE document must meet two fundamental requirements – it should reflect the new politico-legal realities in the region, which have changed as a result of the Georgian military aggression against South Ossetia, and it must also take into account the views of the South Ossetian side. We are convinced that without this it will be impossible to resume dialogue between Georgia and South Ossetia and to return the OSCE to South Ossetian territory. A failure to recognize these obvious truths will only further undermine the authority of our Organization.

Lastly, as regards the technical closure of the Mission, we hope that all the lessons learned will be set out in the After Action Report, which in our view the Secretary General should present to the Permanent Council. In addition, we should like to receive the report on the inspection by the Office of Internal Oversight and the report of the external auditors.

We wish Ambassador Hakala every success in her future career.

We would ask that the text of this statement be attached to the journal of today’s meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

Thank you for your attention.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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**764th Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The United States warmly welcomes to the Permanent Council the Head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, Ambassador Terhi Hakala. We thank you for your comprehensive report. We appreciate your strong leadership, and commend the extraordinary dedication with which you and your staff have met the unprecedented challenges of the last eight months.

We sincerely regret that you had to report today on the end-of-mandate procedure for the OSCE Mission to Georgia. The United States strongly supported the Mission, and worked for months to ensure its continuation.

We believe the Mission played a critical role in conflict resolution efforts, not only helping to build confidence and encourage dialogue, but also working to improve security on the ground. The Mission's military monitoring officers were especially critical to these efforts, and undoubtedly helped reduce tensions in the region.

In addition to all of this, the Mission implemented a wide range of human rights, democratization, and economic development programs, and assisted the government of Georgia in implementing OSCE commitments. We particularly appreciated the Mission's efforts to help strengthen civil society, protect the rights of minorities, build effective democratic institutions, and promote freedom of the media. We also supported the Mission's Economic Rehabilitation Program, and hoped it would further the conflict resolution process by encouraging dialogue and improving the lives of people on both sides of the South Ossetian administrative boundary line.

Regrettably, the opposition of one participating State prevented the Mission from continuing its valuable work – and brought us today to this disappointing juncture. In mid-May, after months of intensive consultations, the Russian Federation rejected the Greek Chairmanship's status-neutral proposal for a continued OSCE presence in Georgia, after insisting on extensive amendments that were unacceptable to the great majority of OSCE participating States. Russia's rejection of the Chairmanship's artfully crafted compromise followed a similar move at the end of last year, when Russia blocked consensus on a constructive proposal put forward by the Finnish Chairmanship. We note that both proposals were supported by the overwhelming majority of participating States. Russia's repeated rejections of sound compromises ultimately forced the OSCE Mission to Georgia to cease its



operations, dismiss its personnel, and sell off its assets – a sad fate for one of the OSCE’s largest and most important field presences.

This is not the first time Russia has blocked or forced the cessation of OSCE activities in Georgia. Allow me, Madam Chairperson, to remind the Permanent Council that Russia, in 2004, called for the closure of the OSCE’s Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia. That operation had successfully addressed a difficult issue between Georgia and Russia, and helped enhance transparency in the border region. But Russia blocked consensus on proposals to renew the operation’s mandate – despite efforts to make the operation more efficient, and despite the host country’s request that it continue – and the operation ceased after its mandate expired on 31 December 2004. Later, Russia repeatedly ignored calls for the establishment of a permanent checkpoint at Didi Gupta, international monitoring of the Roki Tunnel, and an increase in the number of OSCE monitors in the South Ossetian region.

Russia’s actions then and now are inconsistent with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Karasin’s statement to the Permanent Council just last week, when he said an OSCE presence in the region is “not only useful, but also essential”. The deputy foreign minister acknowledged the importance of OSCE observers in establishing stability in the region and introducing “a normal language of communication” – but despite this, and to our great disappointment, Russia has not acted in ways that would guarantee the continued operation of OSCE observers or the broader Mission.

In fact, many Russian actions in Georgia, such as its establishment of military bases in the breakaway regions, and its deployment of FSB border guards to the administrative boundary lines, have undermined rather than improved stability in the region. The same holds true for allowing Russian companies to explore for oil and gas in Georgian waters, and for promoting illegitimate elections in the South Ossetian region.

We remain hopeful that Russia will seriously consider the detrimental consequences of these actions. We urge Russia to honor the commitments it made in the 12 August cease-fire agreement and the 8 September implementing measures, which call for Russia to withdraw its troops to positions held prior to the start of hostilities, and to provide free and unhindered humanitarian access to the South Ossetian and Abkhaz regions of Georgia. Again, we remind Russia that it has a responsibility to ensure that respect for human rights is upheld and international humanitarian law is observed in those areas of Georgia that are under Russian occupation.

In closing, Ambassador Hakala, the United States again thanks you and your staff, and commends your extraordinary work. We are deeply saddened by the fate of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, and sought for months to prevent this outcome.

We remain committed to finding a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in Georgia, and will continue to support Georgia’s sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



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

PC.JOUR/764  
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Annex 8

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**764th Plenary Meeting**

PC Journal No. 764, Agenda item 2

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GEORGIA**

Madam Chairperson,  
Ambassador Hakala,

Let me welcome you today very warmly at the last Permanent Council meeting that you will attend in your current capacity.

Your comprehensive report, Ambassador Hakala, once again clearly highlighted the importance and magnitude of the activities of the OSCE Mission to Georgia. Indeed, the Mission's work went far beyond mere words about conducting its activities in all three dimensions of the OSCE; the Mission succeeded in reaching out to people throughout Georgia; it gained confidence and respect among a great variety of local communities down to the grass-roots level, including in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, by building constructive, goal-oriented and friendly relations with them. As a representative of a host nation and on behalf of my Government, let me thank the Mission, its international and local staff and you personally, Ambassador Hakala, for the professionalism and dedication with which you all have fulfilled your duties and tasks in the challenging and difficult circumstances.

Farewells always are accompanied by emotions. I am sure that this particular one does not awaken any positive emotions in anybody in this hall, with the exception of one delegation which has chosen to pursue its traditional way of turning a blind eye and looking the other way.

What has brought this Organization to this unfortunate pass is more than clear to everybody. Russia executed its pre-planned and deliberate sequence of actions against the principles of transparency and accountability before and after the August war against Georgia.

In 2004, against the will of the overwhelming majority of the OSCE participating States, Russia vetoed the continuation of the Border Monitoring Operation in Georgia. In subsequent years, Russia blocked an increase in the number of the OSCE monitors in the Tskhinvali region, and it also opposed and bluntly rejected a proposal supported again by the overwhelming majority of the OSCE participating States to permit an OSCE checkpoint to be set up in Didi Gupta and to establish joint Russian-OSCE-Georgian monitoring of the Roki tunnel. In 2008, again against the will of the international community, Russia vetoed the deployment of the additional OSCE monitors in South Ossetia. The subsequent implementing

measures of 8 September, signed by the Russian President, stated that the OSCE monitors should continue to carry out their responsibilities in conformity with their personnel and deployment scheme, as it had been on 7 August, and again the Russian Federation continued to stand isolated in this forum in opposing the adoption and implementation of the decisions which would have had a positive impact on peace and security in the OSCE area.

In defiance of the OSCE community, Russia opposed the continuation of the OSCE Mission to Georgia on two occasions during the past seven months. The Russian rejection on 22 December and on 13 May caused the OSCE presence in Georgia to be discontinued. Both proposals were the result of long discussions and negotiations and were supported by the overwhelming majority of this Organization's participating States. Last week, the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister's statement and his miserable performance over this issue destroyed even the last hopes for a consensus to be reached on the mandate of the OSCE Mission to Georgia.

This said, nevertheless, I would like to agree with Ambassador Hakala that "... this might be the right departure point for a renewal of a presence – whatever shape or form it might take, and recall the success of a rich range of activities over the last years of its existence". Madam Ambassador, I think you could agree with my approach that, whether one chooses to be on the common wavelength or not, this Organization should be able to prove that there are relevant and meaningful options for it to continue its activities in Georgia, including the occupied regions. What is required is a greater flexibility and imagination on the part of the OSCE participating States, the Secretariat and the institutions. That would be the best response to Russia's attempts to close this case and send it to the archives and to undermine the credibility of the Organization, and the best way to contribute to security and stability in the OSCE area.

Dear Terhi,

Let me thank you once again for your service in Georgia; I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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**764th Plenary Meeting**  
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**STATEMENT BY  
THE DIRECTOR OF THE CONFLICT PREVENTION CENTRE**

I refer to allegations made by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation regarding the reporting by the OSCE Mission to Georgia in August 2008.

I have made it clear on several occasions that all the reports sent by the Mission to Georgia were distributed to all the delegations.

I raised this matter earlier in the Permanent Council, as well as directly, during talks I had with the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation.

At the time, there were indeed speculations in a number of media outlets. Also, personal views on the events were expressed.

But no proof has been brought to substantiate the allegations that not all reports were distributed.

Finally, I would like to add that, here in this forum, I personally quoted from some of the reports as clear early warning signals.

With this, I would hope that this debate is now finally behind us.