

**Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
on the detention of the officers of Russia's special services in Georgia**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia expresses its satisfaction with the cooperation between OSCE and Georgia aimed at defusing the tension between Georgia and the Russian Federation sparked by the detention on charges of espionage of four agents of the Russian special services in Georgia, on September 27, 2006.

The turnover of the four detainees to the OSCE Chairmanship on October 2, 2006 manifested clearly the positive outcome of the initiative of OSCE Chairman-in-Office Karel de Gucht and the Georgian Government's good will and constructive approach. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia views it as one of the ample proofs of OSCE's real potentiality.

It is beyond the Georgian side's ability to understand the Russian leadership's artificially exaggerated reaction to the efforts of the neighboring state to effect its own law, the more so that it is not the first case of disclosing illegal activity of the Russian special services worldwide.

The Ministry takes a special note of the fact that by conducting intelligence activity on the neighboring state's territory, Russia directly violated the multilateral agreement among the CIS countries as well as the Agreement between Georgia and Russia on withdrawal of Russian military bases from and their temporary functioning on, the territory of Georgia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns a series of inadequate measures taken by the Russian side: detention of citizens on national lines and their deportation from Russia, blockade of transport, ban on the issuance of visas to Georgian citizens, etc. These unconstructive steps will not lead their initiators to any desired effects and will eventually have a detrimental impact on Russia itself for such steps indicate clearly that the principles of democracy and free market economy are not determinant in Russia's policy that again portrays Russia as an unreliable partner.

It is also of great concern that despite the efforts of OSCE and the Georgian Government's good will resulting in the return of the officers of the Russian special services to Russia on October 2, the Russian side continues a series of anti-Georgian acts, including attacks on the Georgian Embassy in Moscow.

It unequivocally confirms the rightness of Georgia's position that the country threatening it with unjustifiable economic sanctions and the use of military force voiced repeatedly in the statements of Russian high-ranking officials, cannot in reality act as a neutral and unbiased mediator in the conflict resolution process on the territory of Georgia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia states that the positive result of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office's initiative underlines once again the great capacity of OSCE and international organizations in general to tackle crisis situations and conflicts in a far more effective manner. Guided by this example, the Ministry reiterates the huge importance of close cooperation between Georgia and OSCE as well as other international organizations as we believe that the international organizations have at their disposal the aptest and most effective mechanisms for conflict resolution.

October 2, 2006