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Swedish Presidency of the European Union

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EU statement on the latest round of Geneva discussions

The EU is pleased to note that during the seventh round of the Geneva discussions on Georgia, on 17 September 2009, a constructive exchange of views took place on basic elements of a framework for future Security Arrangements including binding arrangements for the non-use of force, as well as on a number of humanitarian issues.

The EU remains firmly committed to the Geneva discussions. Despite existing difficulties and differences amongst participants, we consider the continuation of the Geneva discussions of great importance, as the only forum in which all sides are represented and three major international actors - the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations - work in close co-operation for the security and stability in the South Caucasus. We fully support OSCE's active participation in the meetings, in which good use can be made of its valuable and extensive experience. We are looking forward to the next round of consultations on 11 November, and hope for active engagement of all participants towards making concrete progress.

Postal address
Obere Donaustrasse 49-51
1020 Vienna, Austria

Visitor's address
Obere Donaustrasse 49-51
1020 Vienna, Austria

Telephone
+43 (0) 1 217 53 0

Fax
+43 (0) 1 217 53 380

E-mail: osse-del.wien@foreign.ministry.se
euoffice@osce.org

Against this background, we attach great importance to regular meetings of the two incident prevention and response mechanisms, as effective confidence building measures. We note with satisfaction that both mechanisms are meeting this week: the one in Gali took place on 22 September, and the one in Ergneti is set for today.

In concluding, the EU reiterates its firm support for the security and stability of Georgia, based on full respect for the principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognised by international law, including the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The candidate countries TURKEY, CROATIA* and FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO and SERBIA, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY align themselves with this statement.

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