



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 Permanent Representative of Georgia to the OSCE
Mr. Paata Gaprindashvili

In response to the address of the EU Special Representative for South Caucasus
Mr. Peter Semneby to the OSCE Permanent Council

Delivered at the 822nd Meeting of the Permanent Council

Vienna, July 8, 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

I am delighted to welcome Ambassador Peter Semneby, the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus back to the OSCE Permanent Council Session and thank him for his comprehensive address.

Allow me to commend Ambassador Semneby's hard work and express my sincere gratitude for his tireless efforts in contributing to Georgia's political and economic achievements. The EU Special Representative has become a powerful tool for channelling EU's support to Georgia.

We welcome EUSR's efforts to hold a series of productive meetings with representatives of Government of Georgia, political parties, as well as NGOs. We appreciate Ambassador Semneby's engagement in monitoring the local municipal elections of May 30.

Thanks to EUSR's efforts, the Border Support Team has provided assistance and advice in operation planning and management issues for the Georgian border posts from September of 2005. With EU assistance, successful projects have been conducted in the Border Police of Georgia, notably, Law on the Border Police was adopted in 2006, Integrated Border Management Strategy and its Action Plan were elaborated in 2008 and 2009, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of Land Border Defence were created in 2008 and the Standard Operating Procedures of the Border Check Points will be finalized soon.

We highly value the EUSR's engagement and input in the preparation of the Georgian Government's "Strategy on the Occupied Territories" and its Action Plan which are based on the spirit of engagement and the commitment to peaceful conflict resolution. We are encouraged with the EUSR's statement that the EU is ready to support individual activities and mechanisms in this respect.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year has shown significant progress in EU-Georgia relations and we hope that this process will continue in the future. On June 17, 2010, in Brussels, the Visa Facilitation Agreement was signed between the EU and Georgia. In July 2010, the EU and Georgia will launch negotiations on the Association Agreement, with a view of achieving political association and gradual economic integration with the EU, including the establishment of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Georgia is committed to closely cooperate with the EU and ensure the success of the negotiations.

Furthermore, by the end of 2010 we expect to conclude EU-Georgian Readmission Agreement; bilateral agreements with the EU on the Mutual Protection of Geographical Indications of Agricultural Products and other Foodstuff and Common Aviation Area.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU is an important security actor for Georgia. In 2008 the EU French Presidency successfully mediated the August 12 six point cease-fire agreement between the Russian Federation and Georgia and prevented my country from a large scale occupation. Unfortunately, Russia remains in full violation of the above mentioned agreement.

The EU was quick to deploy the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) immediately after the war and continues to play a critical role in promoting stability and security in the country. Regretfully, up until now the EUMM, which remains the only international presence on the ground, has no access to the occupied Georgian territories.

The EU as a co-chairmanship of the Geneva Discussions plays a vital role in maintaining dialogue on security and humanitarian issues. I will not go on underlining the importance of the Geneva Process as we have already thoroughly discussed the issue last week. But I would like to underline once again that we should spare no efforts to ensure continuation of Geneva talks and not allow its termination.

We are highly grateful for the EU's unwavering support and firm commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders, as well as the non-recognition policy which it pursues towards the occupied Georgian territories.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like once again to thank Ambassador Semneby for his excellent job done so far and wish him all success in his future endeavors.

Thank you.