



საქართველოს მუდმივი წარმომადგენლობა ევროსა და
პენაში არსებულ სხვა საერთაშორისო ორგანიზაციებში

PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO OSCE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA

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Statement of the Georgian Delegation
at the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism

Berlin, 28-29 April, 2004

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation fully aligns itself with the Statement by the distinguished representative of Ukraine on behalf of the GUUAM Group, but upon instructions from my Government, I should like to speak in my national capacity as well.

Georgia attaches overriding importance to this conference since we fully realize that the main threat to international peace and security emanates from the phenomena that are the prime consequence of intolerance, violence and extremism.

Speaking from the historical perspective, ever since times immemorial Georgia has upheld racial and religious tolerance as a fundamental canon of its existence. Forced to fight powerful adversaries for survival, it, nevertheless managed to avoid being xenophobic and fanatical in religious matters. In the capital city of Tbilisi the Georgian and Russian Orthodox churches, an Armenian Gregorian Cathedral, a Mosque, a synagogue and a Lutheran church stand side by side in a neighborhood that is only one square kilometer in area. Christian from the fourth century on, Georgia has also seen Islam take root in some of its historical provinces. And never was there animosity or hatred, and never was anyone denied the right to live according to his or her creed or religion.

We, Georgians take pride in our centuries long coexistence and friendship with the Jewish people. In 1998 Georgia and Israel jointly celebrated a truly auspicious anniversary: The 26 centuries long friendship of our two peoples. The State Commission established especially for that occasion was chaired

by the President of Georgia and the whole event enjoyed the wide coverage of the local and international mass media.

Mr. Chairman,

It is true that impatience and irritation are often spawned by ignorance and misunderstanding. we believe that the proper education of the younger generation will greatly contribute to the eradication of intolerance and prejudice against the Jewish people. Let me join with other speakers in thanking the OSCE and the Government of Germany for organizing this conference which serves as just another indication that the progressive world remains vigilant against any manifestation of intolerance and hatred based on ethnicity, race or religion.

Thank you