



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

On the extension of EU monitoring mission on the territory of Georgia

*Delivered at the 771th Permanent Council Meeting
Vienna 30 July, 2009*

Madam Chairperson,

Georgia would like to welcome the decision by the EU Foreign Ministers of July 27, 2009, to extend the mandate of the EU Monitoring Mission for another twelve months until the 14th September 2010.

The significance of EUMM presence on the ground is obvious more than ever today, when the international monitoring missions of the OSCE and UN no longer have the mandate to monitor on the territory of Georgia. By the deployment of the EU Monitoring Mission soon after the Russian aggression in August 2008, European Union has clearly demonstrated its strong will to promote peace and stability in Georgia.

We enjoy excellent cooperation with the EUMM and consider it as a significant deterrent for the escalation of the situation across the occupation line in Georgia. We believe that international community should constantly continue to exert pressure on Russia to fulfill its international obligations and allow EUMM's access to the occupied territories. Today, when we have lost the monitoring capabilities of the OSCE mission, it would be important to receive regular information about the situation on the ground from the European Union.

Madam Chairperson,

Let me also accentuate the essential role of the EUMM in the implementation of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRM). Four meetings have already taken place in the frames of these mechanisms. Notably, the last meeting was held on July 28, 2009 in Gali, Abkhazia, Georgia. We welcome the constructive mode that prevailed during this meeting and commend the agreement on practical arrangements of a "hotline" to facilitate urgent contacts between participants. We hope that on August 11, when the next meeting of the IPRM with regard to Abkhazia region is to be held, the remaining questions concerning practical work will be resolved and substantive progress will be reached on essential issues, i.e. problems related to freedom of movement across the administrative boundary and joint visits in the territories across the both sides of the ABL.

These issues are vital for improving the volatile situation on the ground. In this respect, let me remind you, that the violations of human rights in and across the occupied territories of Georgia occur on a daily basis. Georgian citizens are not allowed to move freely across the ABL. During the last week, on July 24 and July 26 dozens of Georgian citizens have been arrested for crossing the ABL by the Russian so called “border guards” and illegal militia and were pressured to provide Abkhazian passports. These actions constitute the violation of basic human rights and shall not be tolerated. We hope that further progress of the future Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms will be instrumental to avert these violations.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned, that the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism remains suspended with regard to Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia due to the unconstructive position of Russia and its Tskhinvali proxy regime.

Thank you