



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 Recent Illegal Actions of the Russian Federation

As delivered by the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the OSCE,
Ambassador Paata Gaprindashvili

to the 795th session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, February 25, 2010

Thank You, Mr. Chairman,

I am grateful to the EU for raising this issue at today's Permanent Council meeting. Indeed while we in the OSCE are engaged in the process which aims at improving confidence and trust we should not lose a sight from increasingly alarming developments in the occupied regions of Georgia.

My delegation has already circulated statements of the Georgian Foreign Ministry with regard to the recent illegal actions of Russia. Let me bring some aspects of these statements to your attention today as well.

Unfortunately Russia's current leadership continues thinking and acting in its international relations only in terms of tanks and warships, or as it puts it in terms of hard security. Russia, in grave violation of its internationally undertaken commitments under the 12 August 2008 cease-fire agreement, which was brokered by the president Sarkozy on behalf of the EU, further reinforces its illegal military presence on the occupied regions of Georgia. Recently signed treaty between President Medvedev and the leader of the proxy regime in Abkhazia on the creation of a joint military base in Gudauta is yet another demonstration of it. The treaty shall be valid for 49 years with possibility of extension for 15 more years.

Moscow entertains itself by trying to place within "legitimate" frames its continued military occupation and annexation of the Georgian regions. Since Russian occupation force together with militias of their proxy regimes conducted ethnic cleansing, Russia's actions in the occupied regions continue to go uncontrolled given that it was through the disgraceful efforts of the Kremlin that international monitoring missions were expelled from Georgia and it is Russia who objects to the introduction of international security arrangements in the occupied regions.

It is noteworthy that at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, in accordance with the joint statement of the Russian Federation and Georgia (annex 14 of the Final Act of the Conference of the State Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) the Russian Federation undertook the commitment to withdraw the Gudauta Military base by 1st July 2001. However, despite numerous statements and assurances made by president Putin, this commitment, like many others, had never been materialized and Russian military base has continued functioning for years afterwards. Exactly with an aim of legalizing such unlawful actions, the Russian Federation keeps trying to impose on the international community its concept of New European Security Architecture.

Suspension of the implementation of the CFE Treaty by the Russian Federation (which itself is a violation of the treaty) has served *inter alia* the goal of using the Georgian territories as its own military springboard.

In grave violation of the August 12 cease-fire agreement, the efforts to legalize the forceful redrawing of the borders of the sovereign state, military occupation and ethnic cleaning, as well as policy of annexation of indisputably Georgian territories through the economic expansion, destruction of cultural heritage and appropriation of Georgian natural resources continue up until now. Facts of grave violation of basic HRs on the occupied territories are still a daily practice.

Dear Colleagues,

This list is unfortunately too long. But let me make it very clear to everybody in this room and elsewhere: Russia poses an existential threat to my country and to its multiethnic population. Russia is a threat to the security from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Sooner or later Russia's illegal actions should be stopped and not contained. Sooner it happens, better for Europe to be indeed free and safe place.

Thank You, Mr. Chair