



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

on the Eleventh Round of the Geneva International Discussions

*Delivered at the 812<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council*

*Vienna, June 10, 2010*

Mr. Chairman,

Eleventh round of the Geneva talks was held on 7-8 June 2010 where the issues of security and stability in Georgia's occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions and the safe and dignified return of the IDPs and refugees to the places of their habitual residence were discussed. Meetings of the two working groups were held, in which participants took part in an individual capacity. Deliberations were moderated by the UN, EU and the OSCE and attended by the participants from Georgia, United States and the Russian Federation. Head of the provisional administration of the former South Ossetian Autonomous District Mr. Dimitri Sanakoev and the Chairman of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia Mr. Giorgi Baramia took part in the eleventh round of the Geneva talks. Representatives of the proxy regimes from Tskhinvali and Sokhumi also participated in the working groups.

Discussions were marred with the walk-out of the participants from the proxy regimes of Tskhinvali and Sokhumi from the working group on the issues related to the safe and dignified return of the IDPs and refugees. Due to the unconstructive position of the Russian Federation and its proxy regimes, participants were unable to finalize first reading of the "Agreed Undertakings" - a document, which has been in the process of elaboration since the beginning of 2009, and which, as it seems now, is far from an agreement. It is especially unfortunate that such a demarche happened on the issues, which are of direct relevance to the

well-being and future of the victims of ethnic cleansing.

Both working groups focused their attention on the existing security and human rights situation in the Gali region, Abkhazia, Georgia. The Georgian side condemned violence that had occurred in Gali, including the recent killings and arson of the houses of innocent civilians. Participants agreed to hold a special IPRM meeting next week and to discuss the worsening security and human rights situation in the Gali region with particular attention to the recent incidents. Also, on June 7 an information session was convened by the Co-Chairs, where the representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) briefed the participants of the various best practices of human rights protection in the conflict-affected areas. The Georgian side believes that despite the unconstructiveness of some participants, Geneva Discussions represent a valuable forum, where the issues that affect the daily lives of the population living in the occupied territories could be discussed. Protection of the human rights and dignity of the population living under occupation is among the priorities of the Georgian government at the Geneva talks.

In the working group on security and stability the Georgian participants once again raised the issue of the full implementation of the August 12 cease-fire agreement, and, in particular, the unconditional withdrawal of the Russian forces from the occupied regions of Georgia. The Georgian, as well as the other participants of the Discussions expressed particular concern over the statement of the Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia G. Karasin, who put under question the existence of the August 12 cease-fire agreement and the obligations stemming from this document. Such a statement once again demonstrates that Russia is trying at any cost to avoid its international legal obligations vis-a-vis Georgia and the whole international community.

Mr. Chairperson,

Dear Colleagues,

As we have seen such a neglectful position has been further aggravated by the Russian Ambassador today. Apparently, it has become a policy of Russia, which is very, very alarming and extremely dangerous one for the peace and stability in Georgia and beyond.

The Russian Ambassador also made a reference to Georgia in the context of a possible OSCE Summit. He said that the Georgian issue should be a subject of Summit discussions and I would like to share such a view. Let me hereby repeat my request to hold a Corfu style meeting on Georgia and discuss ways on how to move things forward. I request to use an opportunity of Geneva Co-Chairs forthcoming visit to the OSCE for this purpose and to launch constructive and meaningful dialogue on Georgia in the OSCE.

Mr. Chairperson,

Participants in Geneva continued discussing the document of the Co-Chairs on the non-use of force and international security arrangements. Unfortunately, on this issue no consensus is yet possible due to the extremely rigid position of the Russian Federation and its proxy regimes. Co-Chairs once again called upon them to engage in the discussions on the document in a constructive manner.

The Georgian side particularly stressed the necessity to unconditionally release all persons that have been unlawfully detained by the Tskhinvali proxy regime since the end of the active hostilities in August 2008. This issue will continue to be addressed at the Geneva discussions until all detained persons are reunited with their families. The Georgian participants have also expressed concern about the fact that normal functioning of the Tskhinvali IPRM has not been possible due to the unconstructive approach of the Tskhinvali proxy authorities. Co-Chairs shared the position of the Georgian participants that regular and full work of this IPRM should be resumed shortly.

During the eleventh round Co-Chairs proposed a set of ideas on building trust and transparency and further consolidating the IPRMs. In this context it is of particular importance to address the ways to facilitate the unhindered movement of the local residents across the occupation line as well as to conduct joint visits to the areas of concern. It was agreed to return to these issues during the next rounds.

One of the issues that the Co-Chairs attempted to solve was ensuring the unhindered supply of gas and water to the war-affected populations. Once again it became clear that the proxy authorities of Tskhinvali under the guidance of Moscow prefer to politicize the issues of purely humanitarian nature. As a result of such an attitude basic utilities are not provided to the war affected population on both sides of the occupation line. The Georgian side hopes that there is still a room for reasonable compromise, which could lead to the resumption of gas to the population of the occupied Akhagori region.

The Georgian side maintains hope that a due assessment of the irresponsible behavior of Moscow and its proxy regimes during the 11th round of the Geneva Discussions will be provided by the international community. Only through the objective evaluation of the current process it will be possible to reach tangible results within the Geneva framework. On its behalf, the Georgian side once again reiterates readiness to continue full and constructive engagement in the talks with an aim of discussing all outstanding issues, including the most sensitive and controversial ones, for the benefit of security and stability in Georgia's occupied regions and improvement of the daily lives of the IDPs and those persons living under the foreign occupation.

Participants agreed to hold the 12th round of Geneva talks on 27 July, 2010.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me now turn to the issue of the recently held municipal elections in Georgia.

On May 30<sup>th</sup> Georgia held municipal elections that were widely monitored by the international and domestic observers. We also think that elections marked a significant step towards meeting international standards as well as towards establishing more mature political landscape based on a meaningful dialogue instead of confrontation. A competitive campaigning environment was fostered by government-led reforms, based on an inclusive dialogue with both - civil society organizations and political parties. Voter turnout in the capital was higher than in 2006 local and 2008parliamentary elections.

International observers, including the OSCE/ODIHR mission, have all noted a progress. The Central Election Commission (CEC) and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Free and Fair Elections (IATF), the two main governmental bodies responsible for the election, were praised for their effective work. The efforts of the Georgian Parliament to build a transparent process based on inclusiveness were also recognized.

In accordance to the OSCE preliminary conclusions the authorities and election administration made clear efforts to proactively address problems. Overall, the election administration managed elections in a professional, transparent and inclusive manner. The campaign took place in mostly calm environment. Voting was assessed positively in 96% of polling stations visited.

International observers have also noted that shortcomings remain. The government of Georgia is committed to address remaining deficiencies and fully cooperate with the ODIHR and other relevant bodies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.