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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 Delegation of Georgia

as delivered at the 894th session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, December 15, 2011

Mr Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Lithuanian Chairmanship for its letter of 2 December 2011 in which it has expressed the intention to announce at today's meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council the Chairmanship's Initiative with regard to the follow up on the ODIHR/HCNM report: *Human Rights in the War-Affected Areas Following the Conflict in Georgia*.

We commend the Lithuanian Chairmanship for taking on this very important issue and express our hope that we will be able to engage in a substantial, co-operative and result-oriented deliberations in the months ahead, in order to ensure much needed and meaningful follow up process which will thoroughly review the implementation of report's recommendations.

Dear Colleagues,

As you are well aware, the ODIHR/HCNM report on the *Human Rights in the War-Affected Areas Following the Conflict in Georgia* has been issued on 27 November 2009 at the request of the Chairman in Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland, H.E. Alexander Stub.

The document reported on the grave violations of human rights in the aftermath of the Russian-Georgian war. It comprehensively assessed the post-war situation and illustrated serious concerns with regard to, *inter alia*, restrictions for freedom of movement, right to education and the right to receive medical treatment as well as intimidation, persecution and arbitrary detention on ethnic grounds, etc. It is noteworthy that the report presented concrete recommendations to all stakeholders, including the international actors, on how to improve the human rights situation on the ground.

We express our readiness to actively participate in non-politicised discussions on the follow-up of the recommendations, as proposed by the Lithuanian Chairmanship, and jointly take stock of what has been achieved over the past three years in taking forward these recommendations.

We would also like to commend the Chairmanship for its initiative to organise the meetings of human rights experts which will discuss and address all relevant human rights issues. We believe that such an initiative, once realised, will greatly contribute to the implementation of the ODIHR/HCNM report recommendations and facilitate improvement of human rights situation on the ground.

We sincerely hope that the initiative of the Lithuanian Chairmanship will find necessary support among the participating States, thereby enabling the incoming Irish Chairmanship to continue the non-politicised discussion and achieve progress in implementing the ODIHR/HCNM report recommendations for the benefit of the daily life of the war-affected population.

Thank you.