



ENGLISH only

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

at the 902nd session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, February 16, 2012

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellences,
Dear Colleagues,

Today I would like to draw your attention and express the deep concern about the deteriorating security and human rights situation in the occupied territories of Georgia.

Recently Georgia has acquired overwhelming evidence that the Russian special services have resumed their subversive and terrorist activities from the occupied regions of Georgia. Major Yevgeni Borisov, who is a prime suspect of organizing more than a dozen of terrorist acts from Abkhazia has returned from Russia and has obviously resumed planning terrorist acts. Since January 2012 there have been two further attempts of planting explosives, latest one in Zugdidi marketplace just last week. Georgian special services were lucky to intercept these attempts. However, it is clear that if these terrorist acts continue, we will inevitably have an increased death toll in addition to the already existing two casualties.

The delegation of Georgia strongly calls on Russia and would like to plead you all to join me in this call, to immediately halt all subversive activities and planning of terrorist attacks from the occupied regions!

Moreover, Russia continues the militarization of the two regions by deploying heavy offensive weaponry and developing military infrastructure. Another example of militarization is a creation of the so-called "Ossetian Battalion" within the 4th Russian military base located in the Tskhinvali region.

Now, more than ever it is important that Russia finally makes a unilateral pledge of the non-use of force against Georgia! We have all observed the recent hostile military rhetoric towards Georgia and we see how Russia mobilizes its armed forces in the occupied regions. We would like to call on Russia to drop all attempts to further militarize these regions and stop plans for the further military aggression against Georgia. Now, more than ever there is a need to allow EU Monitoring Mission into Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region and to find a consensus on the restoration of the OSCE presence on the ground with strong military monitoring capabilities.

Because of Russia's total control of the situation in the Tskhinvali region and its gross interference in the processes that take place on the ground there is an ongoing risk of further dramatic deterioration of the security situation in the region. You are all aware of the recent developments related to the power struggle between the Moscow seconded group led by former leader Eduard Kokoity and the current de facto Prime Minister Vadim Brovtsev and the group of local dissidents led by Jambulat Tedeev and Alla Djioeva. While Georgia does not recognize the legitimacy of these so-called electoral processes, we are still appalled to observe the extent of Russian control and intervention in these affairs. Mr. Brovtsev is a Russian citizen and a former businessman from Chelyabinsk who was seconded to South Ossetia just few years. Russia has used every possible instrument to ensure that the total control over South Ossetia is maintained and no "unknown elements" are allowed into the power structure in this occupied region. As a result first the results of the so-called elections were annulled, then the so-called "deal" was brokered by Moscow, which was immediately violated in the best Soviet and Russian traditions, after which Mr. Tedeev and his supporters were detained, while Mrs. Djioeva's office was raided last week, she was physically assaulted and was subsequently hospitalized in a grave health condition.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me now focus on the deteriorating human rights situation in the two occupied regions.

There have been several reports over the recent week regarding the forceful displacement of ethnic Georgians from the village of Adzyujba, which is in the Ochamchire district of Abkhazia. The news agency "Ekho Kavkaza" reported that these persons have been evicted from their homes based on their ethnic belonging supposedly for "cooperating" with Georgian authorities during the 1993 war. This is a shocking fact. In the 21st century we still have ethnic based violence in Europe!

I would like to call on the High Commissioner on National Minorities to closely inspect this matter and report to the OSCE on this development. Moreover, we will look forward for the joint ODIHR-HCNM report on the status of the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the 2008 report on the human rights situation in the war affected areas in Georgia. These human rights abuses are unacceptable and we need to pay more attention to them. By closing our eyes and ears, these violations will not go away!

Furthermore, there have been reports of the ethnic violence by Russian troops. A teenage school student was physically assaulted by Russian soldiers yesterday in the Tagiloni village in the Gali district for carrying Georgian textbooks. Freedom of movement of the local residents continues to be violated, as people are still detained for allegedly crossing the so-called state border. Around dozen detainees remain in prison in Tskhinvali despite the agreement within the Geneva framework not to arrest the local residents with such charges.

We would like to call on the co-chairs of the Geneva Discussions to seriously take up these issues and to dedicate considerable attention to them at the upcoming Geneva round at the end of March 2012.

Thank you for your attention.