



PC.DEL/620/08

14 July 2008

ENGLISH only

Présidence française du Conseil de l'Union Européenne

**Conseil Permanent Extraordinaire No. 721
14 juillet 2008**

European Union Statement on the situation in Georgia

The EU took note with concern of recent reports about unauthorized flights over South Ossetia/Georgia. We are especially alarmed by the 10 July statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, which confirms the flights of Russian military aircraft over South Ossetia/Georgia, without the consent of the Georgian government, allegedly to “clarify the situation”. The EU would like to remind the Russian Federation of the strong commitment made by all OSCE participating States - including the Russian Federation - to Georgia's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized land, sea and air borders. Such violations of Georgia's sovereignty are unacceptable.

The EU condemns any act which might raise tensions and place at risk the search for a peaceful and sustainable solution to the conflict. The EU urges all parties to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from provocative actions.

We would like to thank the Special Envoy of the CiO, Mr. Talvitie, for his prompt visit to the region and for his report to the Permanent Council today. We welcome the intention of the Chairman in Office himself to remain seized of the matter and to intensify his contacts both with Moscow and Tbilisi.

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We once again urge parties to resume talks without further delay, and use all negotiating formats - including the JCC and Authorised Delegations, or any other agreed format - in a constructive manner to explore ways of increasing the effectiveness of the conflict resolution process. We also reiterate our call for the immediate deployment of the additional OSCE mission monitoring officers.

The EU is ready to play an active political role in assisting the conflict settlement process in a complementary way, including by promoting dialogue and by contributing further to confidence-building measures agreed between the parties.

The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, the European Free Trade Association countries and members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein, as well as Ukraine and Azerbaijan align themselves with this statement.

*Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

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