



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

RESPONSE TO SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE OSCE CIO,  
AMBASSADOR CHARALAMPOS CHRISTOPOULOS

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
30 April 2009

Madam Chairperson,

Let me first join others in warmly welcoming Ambassador Christopoulos back to the Permanent Council and thanking him for his update on the protracted conflicts in our region.

We commend the Greek Chairmanship and the Special Representative for your endeavours to secure a robust OSCE presence in Georgia. The frequent and fatal attacks on Georgian police officers near the administrative border, the precarious humanitarian and human rights situation in South Ossetia, and the unlawful detentions of OSCE military monitors provide ample reason for why this organisation needs to strengthen its presence in the country. We therefore support the Chairmanship's latest and carefully crafted proposal for one monitoring operation and the establishment of an OSCE Office in Tbilisi. Norway is convinced that the Chairmanship has turned every stone and been determined in its efforts to find consensus on decisions that will maintain a meaningful OSCE presence in Georgia. The drafts may not be ideal, but the status-neutral approach is the only feasible way forward, and something that all the participating States should be able to live with. We are certain that if there is genuine political will, a workable and

meaningful compromise solution could be found. We call upon all parties, and the Russian Federation in particular, to work towards this end without further delay.

Madam Chairperson,

Norway welcomes the news that the Geneva talks will resume on 18 and 19 May, and we urge the parties to reach agreement on urgent humanitarian questions, including those concerning internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as unhindered and unconditional access for humanitarian organisations and aid to South Ossetia. The parties must implement without delay the conflict mechanism that was agreed upon during the last round of the Geneva discussions. In this respect, we fully agree with the Special Representative that the mechanism will only be efficient as long as it is supported by military observers from the OSCE under one command on both sides of the administrative border.

Madam Chairperson,

Let me also take this opportunity to echo the concerns of the High Commissioner on National Minorities over the recent developments in the Gali District of Abkhazia. We fully agree with ambassador Vollebæk that the de facto authorities should put an end to the pressure on the ethnic Georgian minority in the Gali district through the limitation of their educational rights, compulsory “passportisation”, forced conscription into the Abkhaz military forces and restrictions on their freedom of movement. These incidents are examples of the need to implement without delay the recommendations of the November 2008 joint ODIHR/HCNM human rights assessment mission report in Georgia and the breakaway republics.

Madam Chairperson,

Norway appreciates the Greek Chairmanship’s active engagement in order to get the negotiations regarding the Transnistrian conflict back on track. I would like to recall that Norway’s position is clear; we firmly believe that the Transnistrian

conflict must be resolved through peaceful negotiations, with respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The parties to the conflict must resume their negotiations in the 5+2 format as soon as possible. We also hope that further progress may be achieved in the working groups in the social, economic and legal areas, and we welcome the holding of a seminar on confidence- and security-building measures in the military field.

Finally, Madam Chairperson,

My delegation would also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Christopoulos for his excellent work.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson