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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and  
their implications for international peace,  
security and development**

**Security Council  
Sixty-seventh year**

**Identical letters dated 15 October 2012 from the Permanent  
Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 12 October 2012, on the 21st round of the Geneva International Discussions.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as an official document of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Alexander Lomaia  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the identical letters dated 15 October 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

**Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the 21st round of the Geneva International Discussions**

The 21st round of the Geneva International Discussions was held on 11 October 2012. The participants in the Geneva Discussions took part in an individual capacity in the two working groups, one focusing on security and stability in Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, and the other on issues related to the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees to the places of their original residence. The discussions were co-chaired by the representatives of the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and attended by participants from Georgia, the Russian Federation and the United States. The 21st round of the Discussions was attended by elected members of the Parliamentary majority, Mr. Paata Zakareishvili and Mr. George Volski. The participants from Georgia stressed their shared commitment to the Geneva International Discussions and highlighted the importance of the continuity of the process. The Head of the Provisional Administration of the former South Ossetian Autonomous District and the Chairman of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, as well as representatives of the proxy regimes in Tskhinvali and Sokhumi, also took part in the 21st round of the Geneva Discussions.

On 10 October, an information session on missing persons was held. Invited experts from Ireland's Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains acquainted the participants with the historical context of the establishment, unique institutional arrangements and functioning of the Commission. Drawing on specific case studies, they demonstrated the operational techniques and specific ways in which the Commission manages to implement its strictly humanitarian mandate by keeping its investigations separate from those of the justice system.

In the framework of Working Group I of the Discussions, the participants addressed the issue of non-use of force. Georgia once again called on the Russian Federation to fulfil its outstanding obligation and to reciprocate Georgia's unilateral pledge not to use force. Following the discussion, an expert group was tasked with reviewing a proposal tabled by the co-chairs based on earlier suggestions by the participants from Georgia and the Russian Federation. The drafting session identified that concern for ensuring security and stability is shared, although there are a number of areas where differences of opinion persist. The Georgian side stressed that the drafting session is an important step in the right direction and called upon other participants for a constructive and paced out discussion of the outstanding issues. The co-chairs will submit the adjusted document for the review of participants at the 22nd round of the Geneva Discussions.

In Working Group I, participants from Georgia also raised concern over the continued obstruction by the proxy regime in Sokhumi of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism. Georgia underlined the importance of timely resumption of the Mechanism, which represents a crucial tool for addressing the security

concerns on the ground. Unfortunately, despite the constructive proposals of the Georgian side, shared by the co-chairs, the Head of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia, General Andrzej Tyszkiewicz, is still refused access to the occupied Abkhazia region of Georgia.

During the session, the co-chairs commended Georgia for the restraint shown during the recent Russian military exercises in the region. The co-chairs noted with concern that prior to the Parliamentary elections in Georgia, a military build-up was observed close to the occupation line inside the Tskhinvali region that was unprecedented since 2008. The co-chairs therefore appealed to the participants to ensure the transparency of their military movements.

The participants discussed the security situation on the ground. Participants from Georgia strongly protested against the multiple cases of illegal incursion into Georgian airspace by Russian aircraft during the past several months.

The representatives of the occupation regimes in Sokhumi and Tskhinvali, as well as Moscow, made a concerted effort to initiate a change in the format of the Geneva Discussions, both in terms of an upgrade of the status of the participants to that of delegations and in terms of subordinating the humanitarian agenda of Working Group II to the status-driven political discussions. Representatives of Georgia and the co-chairs stressed the vital importance of keeping the agreed format of the Geneva Discussions intact. They also pointed out that humanitarian and human rights issues can and must be addressed in a process that is separate from the eventual political agreement.

The participants from Georgia stressed the importance of ensuring freedom of movement across the occupation line, which is one of the key concerns of the populations affected by the conflict. The recent cases of restrictions placed on the ethnic Georgian residents in the Gali district, specifically regarding access to education, were noted with grave concern by Georgia.

Progress remained elusive in Working Group II on the issues related to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees. The participants from Sokhumi and Tskhinvali continued to block the discussion on these core humanitarian issues. The proposal of Georgia on facilitating humanitarian access for certain categories of residents to graves and cultural and religious sites on the other side of the occupation line, which had been submitted during the previous round of the Discussions, was left unanswered.

In the framework of Working Group II, the participants from Georgia shared with the co-chairs factual data on the violation of the human rights of the residents of the occupied territories, including the right to education in their native language, freedom from persecution and arbitrary detention, and freedom of movement. Particularly grave concern was voiced regarding the statements to the media by Mr. Leonid Tibilov concerning the planned destruction of the remnants of Georgian villages. Calls were made to allow international monitoring of the human rights situation on the ground. The co-facilitators referred to the need to send a positive signal to vulnerable populations by making explicit the commitment of all sides to the key humanitarian and human rights principles.

The 22nd round of the Geneva International Discussions will be held in December 2012.

Tbilisi, 12 September 2012