



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1275 Vienna, 16 July 2020

EU statement in reply to the current issue raised by Georgia

The European Union is deeply concerned about the alleged shooting and illegal detention of a Georgian citizen, which took place on 11 July at the Administrative Boundary Line between the Tbilisi Administered territory and the Georgian region of South Ossetia. We call for the immediate release of the detained Georgian citizen and to refrain from any new steps that could further escalate the already fragile security and humanitarian situation on the ground.

The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) is closely observing the situation on the ground on a daily basis, including during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The EUMM has been facilitating exchange of information regarding the alleged shooting incident and subsequent detention and continues to follow it up closely. In this context, we recall that the EUMM mandate covers the whole territory of Georgia, including its regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

We call on all relevant actors to use all existing mechanisms of communication, including the EU Monitoring Mission-managed hotline and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) in Ergneti and we urge for its swift and full resumption. Dialogue to lower tensions and to address the challenges of the conflict-affected population is vital in order to build trust and confidence, thus contributing to a durable and sustainable solution of the conflict.

The continuing Russian illegal military presence in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is unacceptable. This presence violates the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Georgia, further divides communities and puts at risk the health and lives of the conflict-affected population.

The European Union reiterates its firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. The European Union calls on Russia to fulfil its obligations under the EU-mediated ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and its subsequent implementing measures of 8 September 2008. The European Union also calls for access for the EUMM to the whole territory of Georgia, including the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as per its mandate, as well as for human rights monitoring mechanisms, humanitarian and civil society organizations.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the EFTA country ICELAND, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.