



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

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ENGLISH only

STATEMENT MARKING 10 YEARS SINCE
THE HOSTILITIES IN GEORGIA IN AUGUST 2008

Delivered by Chargé d’Affaires a.i. Henning Hj. Johansen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 30 August 2018

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr Chair,

This month, ten years have passed since hostilities broke out in the Georgian region of South Ossetia. The ceasefire agreement reached on 12 August 2008 included the requirement that Russian troops withdraw to the lines they had held before the start of hostilities. This requirement has not been met. On the contrary, Russia has expanded and consolidated its military presence in the two breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It has recognised the two regions as independent states and has signed so-called ‘treaties’ with these two parts of Georgia, purporting to integrate them more closely into Russia’s governance structures.

In the Geneva International Discussions, one key issue has for some time been the aim of securing a commitment by the parties not to use force. The political leadership of Georgia has made such a commitment. Once again, we call on the breakaway regions and Russia to do likewise.

In order for the humanitarian and human rights situation in the breakaway regions to improve, international humanitarian actors and human rights mechanisms must have

access. We call on Russia and the de facto authorities of the breakaway regions to ensure full and unimpeded access for such actors.

As the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide stated on August 7th: 'Our support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity remains unchanged. We also support Georgia's right to chart its own course. So-called 'spheres of influence' have no place in the 21st century.

Thank you, Mr. Chair