



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Georgia

*2870th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting
Brussels, 26 and 27 May 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council examined the situation in Georgia following the parliamentary elections held on 21 May 2008 which were an important test for democracy. The Council congratulated the people of Georgia on the peaceful conduct of the elections, welcomed the efforts made by Georgian authorities since the last elections and urged them to take all necessary steps to address the shortcomings and problems identified by the OSCE-led International Election Observation Mission.
2. The Council stressed the need for constructive dialogue between the government and the opposition to agree on the way forward. It emphasised the importance of stability in Georgia and in the region and urged all parties concerned to respect the rule of law and to use only democratic and peaceful means in seeking to resolve political differences.
3. The Council reiterated the European Union's serious concern about the recent series of events that have raised tensions between Georgia and the Russian Federation. In this context, the Council reaffirmed its full commitment to the principles of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders, as most recently reaffirmed in the UNSC Resolution 1808 of 15 April 2008. The Council recalled the Presidency Declarations on behalf of the EU of 18 April 2008 and 2 May 2008. It underlined that it is essential now to reduce the risk of further escalation and take steps towards normalisation of relations. The Council emphasised that all parties should tone down public rhetoric and abstain from provocations and implementation of decisions that undermine the above principles.

P R E S S

4. The Council expressed its support for the UNOMIG investigation into the shooting down of a Georgian unmanned aircraft and looked forward to discussing its results as soon as possible. The Council believes that UNOMIG should be reinforced, as recommended in the UN Secretary General's report S/2007/588 of 4 October 2007 and supported in UNSC Resolution 1781 of 15 October 2007.
5. The Council reconfirmed its support for international efforts aimed at a peaceful settlement of the Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts, especially the efforts by the UN, the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary-General and the OSCE. The Council welcomed the peace initiative on Abkhazia put forward by the Georgian President, as well as the recent direct talks by the parties, hoping that they will contribute to a constructive dialogue on the issue. The Council affirmed that the EU stands ready to contribute to all these efforts and called on the parties to continue these talks on a higher level in order to reach peaceful and sustainable solutions. The Council underlined the importance of the work of the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus and recalled that the EUSR for the South Caucasus and the European Commission will continue to implement confidence-building measures in support of resolving the conflicts.
6. The Council looked forward to strengthening EU-Georgia relations through active continuation of EU-Georgia political dialogue and implementation of the ENP Action Plan. The Council welcomed the establishment of the EU-Georgia Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security and the results of its first meeting on 30 April 2008. The Council took note of the Georgian wish for visa facilitation, and looks forward to continuing result-oriented work in the area of mobility. The EU is considering means of strengthening economic cooperation with Georgia and, if the necessary conditions are met, the possibility of a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.
7. The Council will continue to follow closely the situation in Georgia and will revert to it as appropriate."
