



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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P 59

**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the
escalation of tension between Georgia and Russia**

The EU remains seriously concerned by the recent series of events that have raised tensions between Georgia and the Russian Federation. This includes the announcement by the Russian Ministry of Defence on 29 April to increase the number of CIS peacekeepers in Abkhazia and to establish 15 additional check-points along the administrative boundary-line and the incident involving the downing of a Georgian unmanned aerial vehicle in Georgian airspace on 20 April.

The EU calls on all sides to refrain from any steps that could increase tensions and urges the sides to take action to rebuild confidence.

The EU reiterates its firm commitment to 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.

P R E S S

The EU reconfirms its support to international efforts aimed at a peaceful settlement of the Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts, in particular those of the United Nations and its Special Representative in Georgia, with the assistance of the United Nations Secretary General's Group of Friends and the OSCE.

The European Union Special Representative and the European Commission will continue to implement the package of confidence-building measures in support of resolving the conflicts.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Azerbaijan align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
