



GEORGIA

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations

**United Nations Security Council open debate on
“Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace”**

Agenda item “Maintenance of International Peace and Security”

10 January 2017, New York

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Mr. President,

Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and I would like to make following remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, let me welcome Swedish Foreign Minister, Madame Margot Wallstrom to the Security Council and acknowledge Sweden’s ambitious agenda for the Council right from the start of its membership. I thank the Swedish Delegation for convening this debate on Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace, giving an important opportunity for member states to reflect on the vision presented by the Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

We welcome the Secretary-General’s first priority of "a surge in the diplomacy for peace," to solve the ongoing conflicts and prevent others from erupting. Holistic vision and strategic decisions of the new leadership is critical to counter the UN’s standstill on early action and often failure to prevent and resolve conflicts, as we saw in Syria, Ukraine, my country Georgia, and the list goes on.

Georgia welcomes the efforts to build new political consensus in support of maintaining peace and security worldwide by preventing conflicts before they occur, in line with the concept of “sustaining peace”, which underlines the imperative of addressing all stages of the conflict cycle. Georgia shares the view on the importance of early action and proactive work of UN entities, both at Headquarters and field, across the main pillars of UN system, to identify early warning signs and address risks confronting peace. Here, let me recall the pledges and commitments undertaken by UN member states at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 with the view to preventing conflicts and stress that sustaining peace can only be achieved through joint determination and adherence to the principles of International Law, including the UN Charter.

Mr. President,

We view peace prospects as directly linked to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and international community’s continuous focus on strengthening human rights. As a

strong supporter of greater involvement of women in preventing conflicts, we also put particular emphasis on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Noting that the United Nations Security Council has a unique responsibility in the area of peace and security and conflict prevention, Georgia has a sad experience – and we should all learn from such lessons - of what happens when a permanent member of the Security Council, a party to the conflict, single-handedly vetoes the presence of the United Nations Observer Mission as an international monitoring mechanism, right after the full-scale war, at a time when the international security presence on the ground should have been increased, as was the case of UNOMIG in 2009.

Since then, both Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia that are under illegal military occupation by the Russian Federation, continue to be completely closed for international monitoring mechanisms. Following the several waves of ethnic cleansing, hundreds of thousands are displaced and in the absence of international monitoring mechanisms the humanitarian situation in the occupied regions remains critical; people are deprived of their basic human rights and freedoms, including but not limited to the freedom of movement.

Given this experience, Georgia believes that the veto right should be restricted not to allow its misuse, when the Permanent Member is involved in the conflict under consideration of the UNSC and, therefore, cannot exercise its rights impartially. This will importantly contribute to the prevention of mass violations of human rights and further escalation of conflict. In the same vein, Georgia has also endorsed the joint French-Mexican “Proposal regarding the use of veto in the Security Council”, as well as the initiative introduced by Liechtenstein “on a Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.” We believe, relevant procedural regulations should be elaborated to this end.

I thank you.