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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1534th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 September 2025

**On the comments made by the representative of Georgia concerning security and stability in the Trans-Caucasus**

Mr. Chairperson,

Since my country was mentioned directly, I shall exercise my right of reply. Although, to be honest, we do not listen to the Georgian representatives very often here either. However, unlike the Georgian delegation, we have a reason for this – it is not entirely clear who exactly they represent in Vienna. Let me explain.

I should like to quote a recent statement made on 8 August this year – the anniversary of the start of the conflict – by Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, who said, in particular: “Today, we must recall all those documents that were signed by the Government of that time ... which clearly states [sic] that it was Saakashvili’s regime that started the war. [...] These documents cannot be avoided, they are irrefutable proof that the ... Government of that time started the war, delivering the gravest blow to our country’s national interests. This is treason.” Here is another similar statement made by Prime Minister Kobakhidze in April of this year: “Everyone knows about the 2008 war. We followed the events, and I also remember very well the night of 7 to 8 August, when it was announced that constitutional order had been restored. There were triumphant statements from the regime at that time about the capture of villages, the entry into Tskhinval and the advance towards the Roki Tunnel. Thus, there was no question of any defence, only of an attack carried out by the regime.” This raises the question of who to believe in this situation.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation has consistently advocated a comprehensive and sustainable peaceful settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-South Ossetian conflicts from the very outset. Nevertheless, the aggression carried out in August 2008 by Mikheil Saakashvili’s regime against a peacefully sleeping Tskhinval demonstrated the impossibility of Abkhazia and South Ossetia remaining a part of Georgia. Against that background, our country decided to recognize the republics as sovereign and independent States. In our view, the calls to review the situation that has developed in the region are aimed at undermining peace and stability in the region.

At the same time, practical issues of interaction between Georgia, on the one hand, and Abkhazia and South Ossetia, on the other hand, pertaining to post-conflict resolution should be discussed within the framework of the International Discussions on Security and Stability in the Trans-Caucasus, with the participation of all stakeholders. We believe that any attempts to politicize this issue run counter to the negotiations being conducted as part of the International Discussions on the Trans-Caucasus.

In this regard, we call upon all OSCE participating States to demonstrate a responsible approach and refrain from any actions and statements that could undermine the interests of peace in the Trans-Caucasus.

Thank you for your attention.