

PROTOCOL OF 8TH MEETING OF EXPERT GROUPS OF AUTHORIZED DELEGATIONS OF SIDES CARRIED OUT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF NEGOTIATION PROCESSES ON THE FULL-SCALE SETTLEMENT OF THE GEORGIAN-OSSETIAN CONFLICT

Kashtelu Branku – Lisbon, 29-29 October 2002.

In accordance with the Protocol of 7th meeting of expert groups of authorized delegations of sides (Tskhinvali, 4 October 2002) the 8th meeting of expert groups of authorized delegations of sides was held in Kashtelu Branku and Lisbon (Portugal) on 26-29 October 2002 in the framework of negotiation processes on the full-scale settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict through the mediation of Russian Federation, with the participation of representative of the Republic of South Ossetia – Alania, OSCE and the European Commission (list of participants attached).

Mr. Antoniu Martinsh da Kruje, acting head of OSCE, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal participated in the meeting.

Participant of the meeting condemned hostage-taking act in Moscow, which entailed numerous victims.

Participants discussed situation around the conflict zone, measures to be taken in order to increase trust, guarantee for safety and realization of the agreement, and also the role of economic rehabilitation of the zone in the process of political settlement.

Participants agreed on that the previous meetings of expert groups and discussion of different aspects of political settlement, among them discussion of a draft interim document, served for improvement of mutual understanding between sides and widened basis for searching ways of settlement of the conflict acceptable for both sides.

Sides noted in alarm that the situation has been getting worse for last months, links between law-enforcement bodies and CKU have weakened, and that diversion from some of important agreements are being noted.

Incorrect expressions and their interpretations made by mass media resulted in lowering the level of trust reached by Georgian and South Ossetian sides.

Disregard or slow implementation of reached agreements raises suspicion among the people regarding perspectives of peaceful settlement of the problem.

Starting with regret, that the positive dynamic of conflict resolution process has been substantially violated, participants expressed their common opinion on necessity of taking effective measures, which will prevent future complications of the situation.

Sides once again underlined importance of following principals of peaceful settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, set pit in the Agreement of 24 July 1992.

Being assured in need for the fastest elimination of negative tendencies emerging recently, both sides confirm the necessity to undeviatingly follow the agreements reached earlier, reinforce measures of trust, guarantee of safety and take steps towards peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Participants underlined importance of implementation of the rehabilitation projects in order to create favorable conditions for political resolution of the problem. They also mentioned that in order to attract investments for economic rehabilitation of the zone it is important to make definite progress in the process of political settlement of the conflict.

Participants noted particular importance of the Agreement of 23 December 2000 concluded between Governments of Russian Federation and Georgia on cooperation in the rehabilitation of economy within the zone of Georgia – South Ossetia conflict and in bringing back adoption and implementation of programs of free-will return of refugees and also regretted rate of elaboration of intergovernmental Russian-Georgian program on cooperation in rehabilitation of the economy within the zone of Georgia- South Ossetian conflict and mechanisms of its implementation.

Participants were informed on new proposals made by the European Commission regarding implementation of project, among them MTDS project, monitoring of economic situation and evaluation of demands within the conflict zone and recommended sides in conflict to hold internal consultations as soon as possible in order to study proposals in details and for their future discussions with the European Commission.

Representatives of the European Commission expresses will of the European Commission to participate in the work of experts group of authorized delegations of sides. Participants of the meeting recommended the European Commission and sides to carry out all procedures required for the resolution of this issue.

Sides elaborated following recommendations:

1. To organize series of meetings for parliament representatives of side;
2. To start publishing CKK bulletin with the aim to keep population informed on the progress being made in the process of peaceful settlement;
3. To hold session of CKK, where issues of CKK's operation, introduction clarities into the mechanism of its operation and appropriateness of recently arranged block-posts of law-enforcement bodies within the conflict zone will be discussed.
4. To consider expedient regular appearance of the political authorities of Georgia and South Ossetia in mass media supporting resolution of Georgian-Ossetian conflict and explanation of importance of steps being taken in the process of settlement.
5. Sides to broadcast new, interactive and other types of programs providing direct contact with representatives of both sides in live with the aim to strengthen trust in the conflict zone.
6. Georgian side to speed up elaboration and adoption of the legislation on restoration and protection rights of refugees, forcedly moved and other persons, suffered from Georgian-Ossetian conflict on living space and property;

7. Corresponding bodies of both sides to discuss issue of reconstruction of roads within the conflict zone and also in the areas of mixed residence of Georgian and Ossetian population.

8. Sides to search possibility for the rehabilitation and reinforcement of resource base of objects of social purpose within the conflict zone (Hospital in Tskhinvali, etc.) in order to increase trust between sides.

9. OSCE missions in Georgia to continue holding meetings with the representatives of donors of specific projects.

10. Sides to speed up implementation of the Russian-Georgian Agreement of 23 December 2000.

11. Co-chairman of CKK to organize meetings between residents of settlements within the conflict zone with the aim to reinforce and develop trust between sides involved in the conflict.

Sides expressed their appreciation to Portuguese chairmanship of OSCE and Portugal Government for their invitation to hold 8th meeting of expert groups in Kashtelu Branku and Lisbon. Sides thanked Kashtelu Branku authorities for their hospitality.

South Ossetian side

Georgian side

Russian Federation side

North Ossetian side

(The Archive of the Mission of OSCE to Georgia)

Source: http://www.rrc.ge/law/protos_2002_26_10_E.htm