



## WORKING FOR SECURITY AND STABILITY AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING

### Background



The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) is an unarmed civilian monitoring mission. It was established by the European Union on 15 September 2008.

Over 200 civilian monitors were sent by EU Member States to contribute to the stabilisation of the situation on the ground following the August 2008 conflict. They monitor compliance by all sides with the EU brokered Six-Point Agreement of 12 August, signed by both Georgia and Russia, and the Agreement on Implementing Measures of 8 September 2008.

The Mission started its monitoring activities on 1 October 2008, beginning with oversight of the withdrawal of Russian armed forces from the areas adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Ever since, the Mission has been patrolling day and night, particularly in the areas adjacent to the South Ossetian and Abkhazian Administrative Boundary Lines. The Mission's efforts have been primarily directed at observing the situation on the ground, reporting on incidents, and, generally, through its presence in the relevant areas, contributing to an improved security situation.

### Mandate



The Mission's mandate consists of stabilisation, normalisation and confidence building, as well as reporting to the EU in order to inform European policy-making and thus contribute to the future EU engagement in the region.

Originally authorised for 12 months, the mandate has since been extended three times and is currently effective until 14 September 2012.

EUMM is mandated to cover the whole territory of Georgia, within the country's internationally recognised borders, but other than a few joint visits on specific cases, the *de facto* authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia have so far denied the Mission access to the territories under their control.

First and foremost, the Mission is working with all parties to prevent any return to armed conflict, as well as to help make the areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia safe and secure for the local population. The Mission wants to contribute to the freedom of movement of citizens who live close to the Administrative Boundary Lines of Abkhazia and South Ossetia so that they can go about their daily lives without fear and obstacles.

### Implementation of the Mandate

All 27 EU Member States have contributed personnel, both women and men, from a variety of civilian, police and military backgrounds to the Mission. This mixture of professional skills and experiences has been vital to ensure a balanced and effective approach to a complex environment.

The Mission has its Headquarters in Tbilisi and three Regional Field Offices in Mtskheta, Gori and Zugdidi.

The monitors in each Field Office are split into three teams covering:

- Confidence Building in the areas adjacent to the Abkhazian and South Ossetian Administrative Boundary Lines
- Compliance with the Memoranda of Understanding signed between the Mission and the Georgian Ministries of Defence and Internal Affairs
- Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues

The Memorandum of Understanding signed between EUMM and the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs in October 2008 introduces a degree of transparency (and imposes restrictions) on the equipment used and the activities performed by the



*Georgian police forces in the adjacent areas.*

*The Memorandum of Understanding signed between EUMM and the Georgian Ministry of Defence in January 2009, and amended in July 2010, limits the Georgian Armed Forces' positioning of troops and heavy equipment in the areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines. This unilateral engagement made by the Georgian government contributes to substantiating its commitment to the principle of non- use of force, as contained in the Six-Point Agreement. Security would be further enhanced if reciprocating measures were introduced by the Russian Federation.*

*Under an agreement reached at the Geneva Discussions in February 2009, regular meetings under the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism take place between the parties to the conflict. Participants from the EUMM, UN, OSCE, Georgia, Russia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia take the opportunity to discuss and resolve specific incidents and issues. The meetings have proved useful in developing greater confidence and co-operation between the parties. Attached to the Mechanism is a "hotline" telephone system working in both theatres. The hotline has proven very useful for participants to quickly establish a common understanding of events surrounding specific incidents and it has repeatedly helped to de-escalate possible tensions.*

*The Mission also monitors the normalisation of the situation after the 2008 war, including, inter alia, the restoration of the rule of law in the areas directly affected by the 2008 conflict and the return to normal living conditions for Internally Displaced Persons (both from the 1991 – 1993 and the 2008 wars) and local residents in areas adjacent to the Administrative Boundary Lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia.*

*Thanks to its extensive presence on the ground, the Mission has the capacity to gather regular and timely information on the situation. Where appropriate, this information is then passed on to the relevant local, national and international bodies responsible for providing concrete assistance.*

## Main Challenges

- *While results on the stabilisation component of EUMM's mandate are tangible, significant work remains to be done as far as confidence building is concerned. At the same time, the Mission insists that giving it access also to South Ossetia and Abkhazia would help increase transparency, bring clarity on incidents that have already taken place and thus decrease the risk of future destabilising incidents.*
- *The 2008 Six- Point Agreement, together with the Implementing Measures, remains the basis for the continued presence of EUMM on the ground and its efforts towards stabilising the situation. Point Five of the Agreement remains to be implemented, as the continued presence of Russian Federation military personnel and equipment in both South Ossetia and Abkhazia represents a violation of this part of the Agreement.*

## Progress



- *In the autumn of 2008, there were widespread concerns that a resumption of hostilities were a concrete possibility. Today, although the conflict is far from finding its solution, these fears are no more. There is a greater sense of security among the parties to the conflict and the population on the ground, and the process of stabilisation has been consolidated.*
- *The two Memoranda of Understanding between the EUMM and the Georgian Ministries of Defence and Internal Affairs have greatly increased the transparency of the Georgian police and armed forces, which has contributed to stabilisation.*

*• The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meetings have registered some success, especially by offering an opportunity for all participants to discuss events and incidents, raise issues of concern on the general security situation and the conditions for the civilian population.*

- *EUMM is perceived by EU Member States and others as an important element to ensure security and stability in the areas adjacent to the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.*
- *EUMM has developed good working contacts with the security forces of the Russian Federation present in the two theatres.*