

**COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2003/473/CFSP
of 25 June 2003**

**regarding a contribution of the European Union to the conflict settlement process in Georgia/
South Ossetia**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 14 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) On 26 February 2001, the Council declared its willingness to play a more active political role in the Southern Caucasus and to look for further ways to support efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts in the region, in particular through strengthening cooperation with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
- (2) On 29 October 2001, the Council adopted Joint Action 2001/759/CFSP⁽¹⁾, regarding a contribution from the European Union to the conflict settlement process in South Ossetia.
- (3) The EU contribution under that Joint Action to the OSCE mission to Georgia has been effective in ensuring the functioning of permanent secretariats for the Georgian and the South Ossetian sides, under the aegis of the OSCE, and in facilitating meetings of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) and of the Experts' Group, which are the main instruments of the conflict settlement process.
- (4) The EU considers that its assistance has reinforced the effectiveness of its role, as well as that of the OSCE, in the settlement of the conflict.
- (5) The OSCE and the co-Chairs of the JCC have appealed for follow-up assistance from the EU, and the EU has agreed to offer further financial assistance to the conflict settlement process.
- (6) The Commission has agreed to be entrusted with the implementation of this Joint Action.
- (7) The Commission will ensure an adequate visibility of the contribution of the EU to the project,

HAS ADOPTED THIS JOINT ACTION:

Article 1

1. The European Union shall contribute to strengthening the conflict settlement process in South Ossetia.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 286, 30.10.2001, p. 4.

2. For this purpose, the European Union shall provide a contribution to the OSCE to finance meetings of the JCC and Experts' Group, to provide for organisation of conferences under the aegis of the JCC and to provide for publication of a JCC newsletter.

Article 2

1. Disbursement of financial aid provided under this Joint Action shall be conditional upon the holding of not less than two JCC and two Experts' group meetings within 12 months of the starting date of the financing agreement to be concluded between the Commission and the OSCE mission to Georgia. Both the Georgian and South Ossetian sides should make demonstrable efforts to achieve real political progress towards a lasting and peaceful settlement of their differences.

2. The Council shall entrust the Commission with the implementation of this Joint Action, with a view to meeting the objective specified in Article 1(2). To that end, the Commission shall conclude a financing agreement with the OSCE mission to Georgia on the use of the European Union contribution, which shall take the form of a grant.

3. The OSCE mission to Georgia shall be responsible for reimbursing mission expenses, for the organisation of conferences under the aegis of the JCC, and for the publication of a JCC newsletter. The financing agreement will stipulate that the OSCE mission to Georgia shall ensure visibility of the EU contribution to the project.

4. The Commission, through its Delegation in Tbilisi, shall liaise closely with the OSCE mission to Georgia in order to monitor and evaluate progress, so as to ensure the success of the action, as well as the correct use of the grant for the purposes set out in Article 1(2).

5. The Commission shall report in writing on the implementation of this Joint Action to the Council under the authority of the Presidency, assisted by the Secretary General of the Council, High Representative for the CFSP. This information will in particular be based on regular reports to be provided by the OSCE mission to Georgia under its contractual relationship with the Commission, as stipulated in Article 2(2) above.

Article 3

1. The financial reference amount for the purposes referred to in Article 1(2) shall be EUR 160 000.

2. The management of the expenditure financed by the amount specified in paragraph 1 shall be subject to the European Community procedures and rules applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, with the exception that any pre-financing shall not remain the property of the European Community.

Article 4

1. This Joint Action shall enter into force on 1 July 2003.
It shall expire on 30 June 2004.
2. This Joint Action shall be reviewed ten months after entering into force.

Article 5

This Joint Action shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 25 June 2003.

For the Council
The President
G. PAPANDREOU
