

III

(Acts adopted under the EU Treaty)

ACTS ADOPTED UNDER TITLE V OF THE EU TREATY

COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2008/450/CFSP

of 16 June 2008

regarding a further 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 27 June 2006, the Council adopted Joint Action 2006/439/CFSP regarding a further contribution of the European Union to the conflict settlement process in Georgia/South Ossetia ⁽¹⁾, which was extended by Joint Action 2007/484/CFSP ⁽²⁾ until 31 December 2007.
- (2) The EU's assistance under Joint Action 2006/439/CFSP has reinforced the effectiveness of its role, as well as that of the OSCE, in the settlement of the conflict in Georgia/South Ossetia. In particular, the EU's contribution to the OSCE mission to Georgia has been effective in ensuring the functioning of permanent secretariats for the Georgian and the South Ossetian representatives, under the aegis of the OSCE, and in facilitating meetings within the framework of the Joint Control Commission (hereinafter referred to as 'JCC') which is the main forum of the conflict settlement process.
- (3) The OSCE has appealed for follow-up assistance from the EU, and the EU has agreed to offer further financial assistance to the conflict settlement process. This financial assistance should focus on support for JCC meetings, for Steering Committee meetings on an economic rehabilitation programme and a related newsletter, for a confidence-building workshop and for a meeting of representatives of the law enforcement bodies.

- (4) The assistance to be provided by the EU under this Joint Action is complementary to the work of the European Union Special Representative (hereinafter referred to as 'EUSR') for the South Caucasus appointed by Joint Action 2008/132/CFSP ⁽³⁾, whose mandate is, *inter alia*, to contribute to the prevention of conflicts, to assist in conflict resolution and to intensify the European Union's dialogue with the main interested actors concerning the region,

HAS ADOPTED THIS JOINT ACTION:

Article 1

1. The European Union shall contribute to strengthening the conflict settlement process in South Ossetia.
2. For this purpose, the European Union shall provide a contribution to the OSCE to finance meetings of the JCC and other mechanisms within the JCC framework.
3. The European Union shall provide a contribution to the OSCE to finance Steering Committee meetings on an economic rehabilitation programme, the Economic Rehabilitation Programme Newsletter, a confidence-building workshop and a meeting of the representatives of the law enforcement bodies.
4. As part of the EU's support for a series of confidence-building measures in Georgia, the European Union shall also provide a contribution to host an informal JCC meeting in Brussels or in the capital city of the Member State exercising the Council Presidency.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 174, 28.6.2006, p. 9.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 181, 11.7.2007, p. 14.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 43, 19.2.2008, p. 30.

Article 2

The Presidency, assisted by the Secretary-General of the Council/High Representative for the CFSP, shall be responsible for the implementation of this Joint Action, with a view to the fulfilment of its objectives as set out in Article 1.

Article 3

1. Disbursement of financial aid provided under this Joint Action shall be conditional upon the holding of regular meetings of the JCC and the other mechanisms in the JCC framework, as well as the holding of Steering Committee meetings on an economic rehabilitation programme and the issuing of a newsletter on the programme, a confidence-building workshop, a meeting of the representatives of the law enforcement bodies, as well as an informal JCC meeting in Brussels or in the capital city of the Member State exercising the Council Presidency, 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 Commission shall be entrusted with the task of controlling and evaluating the implementation of the EU's financial contribution, in particular with regard to the conditions set out in paragraph 1. To that end, the Commission shall conclude a financing agreement with the OSCE mission to Georgia on the use of the EU contribution, which shall take the form of a grant. The Commission shall also ensure the correct use of the grant for the purposes set out in Article 1(2), (3) and (4).

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 correct purchase and handing over of equipment. The financing agreement shall stipulate that the OSCE mission to Georgia shall ensure visibility of the EU contribution to the project and that it shall provide the Commission with quarterly reports on its implementation.

4. The Commission, in close cooperation with the EUSR for South Caucasus, shall liaise closely with the OSCE mission to Georgia in order to monitor and evaluate the impact of the EU contribution.

5. The Commission shall report in writing on the implementation of this Joint Action to the Council, under the responsibility of the Presidency, assisted by the Secretary-General of the Council/High Representative for the CFSP. This report shall in particular be based on quarterly reports to be provided by the OSCE mission to Georgia, as stipulated in paragraph 3.

Article 4

1. The total financial reference amount for the EU contribution referred to in Article 1(2), (3) and (4) shall be EUR 223 000.

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 Union.

Article 5

1. This Joint Action shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

It shall apply until 16 June 2009.

2. This Joint Action shall be reviewed 10 months after its entry into force. To that end, the EUSR for the South Caucasus, in association with the Commission, shall assess the need for further support to the settlement process in Georgia/South Ossetia and make recommendations to the Council, as appropriate.

Article 6

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

Done at Luxembourg, 16 June 2008.

For the Council

The President

D. RUPEL
