

Mr. Churkin (Russia)

First of all, I would like to thank the representatives of the United Nations Secretariat for their briefings. I think that their briefings compellingly testify to the fact that despite the continuing problems -- and there are many caused by the most recent military escapade undertaken by Georgia against South Ossetia -- the situation is gradually normalizing, and there is more and more active involvement in this process by international humanitarian organizations.

Incidentally, the conflict zone has already been visited by quite a number of leaders of international humanitarian organizations, and virtually all of them are giving a high assessment of the role of the Russian Federation in remedying the humanitarian consequences of what occurred as a result of the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia.

Now, I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Georgia for having put forward the initiative of holding today's meeting since it is providing me with an opportunity to read out here, in this Chamber, to the members of the Security Council, this statement, and since the Permanent Representative of Georgia asked for this meeting to be open and public, to in fact read to all members of the international community the following two decrees of the President of the Russian Federation, signed on 26 August of this year.

"Decree on the recognition of the Republic of Abkhazia:

"First, in the light of the expression of the free will of the Abkhaz people to recognize the Republic of Abkhazia as a sovereign and independent State;

"Second, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is to hold negotiations with the Abkhaz side on the establishment of diplomatic relations and on the agreement to prepare the appropriate documents;

"Third, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is authorized to hold, with the participation of interested federal bodies and executive authorities, negotiations with the Abkhaz side on the preparation of a draft treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance, and to submit those documents in the proper order for signature; "Fourth, in connection with the appeal of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia to the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation to ensure, before the conclusion of the treaty in paragraph three of this decree, the implementation by the armed forces of the Russian Federation of peacekeeping functions on the territory of the Republic of Abkhazia."

The second decree reads as follows:

"Decree on the recognition of the Republic of South Ossetia:

"First, in the light of the expression of the free will of the South Ossetian people to recognize the Republic of South Ossetia as a sovereign and independent State;

"Second, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is to hold negotiations with the South Ossetian side on the establishment of diplomatic relations and on the agreement to prepare the appropriate documents;

"Third, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation is authorized to hold, with the participation of interested federal bodies and executive authorities, negotiations with the South Ossetia side on the preparation of a draft treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance, and to submit those documents in the proper order for signature;

"Fourth, in connection with the appeal of the President of the Republic of South Ossetia to the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation to ensure, before the conclusion of the treaty in paragraph three of this decree, the implementation by the armed forces of the Russian Federation of peacekeeping functions on the territory of the Republic of South Ossetia."

That is the content of these two decrees signed by President Medvedev on 26 August of this year.

Today's meeting of the Security Council cannot be fully valid without the participation of the representatives of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Without an understanding of the aspirations of the peoples of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it is impossible to have an objective picture of what is taking place. We are convinced that the day will soon come when members of the Security Council will be able to hear their positions.

Russia has recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, aware of its responsibility for ensuring the survival of their brotherly peoples in the face of the aggressive and chauvinistic policy of Tbilisi. The basis of that policy was the motto proclaimed in 1989 by the then-President of Georgia, Mr. Gamsakhurdia: "Georgia for Georgians", which he tried to implement in 1992, having annulled the existence of entities on Georgian territory and having sent Georgian troops to attack Sukhumi and Tskhinvali in order to reinforce by force the reign of illegality that had already been established.