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DELEGATION OF UKRAINE

**Statement on behalf of the Member States
of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development - GUAM
at the opening plenary session of the 2007 OSCE Human Dimension
Implementation Meeting
(24 September 2007, Warsaw)**

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

[While Ukraine and Moldova have aligned themselves with the statement just delivered by the European Union,] now I have the honour to speak on behalf of the GUAM countries – Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. At the outset, allow me to welcome the participants of the 2007 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We are pleased to note that for the 12th time this annual event is hosted by Poland, a steadfast and reliable friend and partner of the GUAM. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate GUAM countries' appreciation and support for the Spanish Chairmanship's guidance of the OSCE throughout the year. We also wish to commend the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and Ambassador Strohal for the hard work in preparation of this important event.

This year, our countries commemorate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the GUAM. Last year in Kyiv, in their Declaration on the establishment of the GUAM as international organization, our Heads of State reaffirmed their commitment to democratic values, to the full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to the rule of law both in internal and international affairs. The GUAM Charter, which was adopted at the Baku Summit this June, clearly stipulates that the main purposes of our organization encompass the promotion of democratic values, the rule of law and respect of human rights. The preamble of the Charter contains a reference to the Helsinki Final Act, Charter of Paris for a New Europe and the Charter for European Security – the documents which, together with other OSCE decisions, represent a comprehensive *aquis* of common values and commitments. Today, we reaffirm our determination to act in solidarity to promote full implementation of the principles and commitments undertaken within the OSCE and the GUAM.

We recognize that, as young democracies, we are facing a number of challenges. As was rightly pointed out in the EU statement, "*no country represented in this meeting ... holds a perfect record in terms of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*". But we are prepared to fully engage with these challenges and to move forward with the ongoing reform processes, with building stable and prosperous democratic societies in the interest of our peoples. We wish to note the valuable practical contribution of the OSCE and its field missions in assisting our governments in this endeavour.

The assistance of the ODIHR as a leading OSCE institution in the human dimension is of particular importance for our countries. We further encourage the ODIHR to continue assistance, in particular aimed at human capacity building and express the readiness of our Governments to further close interaction and active collaboration with this OSCE institution.

GUAM countries reiterate their deep concern by the persistence of unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area, in particular, in the territory of Georgia, Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Azerbaijan. These conflicts not only undermine the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, impede full-scale democratic reforms and sustainable development, jeopardize regional security, negatively impact pan-European integration processes, they most seriously affect human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people living in those areas. We consider that swift and peaceful settlement of these conflicts should remain a top priority for the OSCE and we support the increased and result-oriented OSCE involvement in their peaceful resolution. We should consolidate our efforts towards demilitarization and democratization of the regions in conflict, reintegration of uncontrolled territories, return of internally displaced persons and refugees and ensuring peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups within the internationally recognized borders of States.

In conclusion, the GUAM looks forward to holding productive and forward-looking discussions at the HDIM, with constructive participation of the numerous non-governmental organizations, whose presence we greatly appreciate. We hope that a two-week review of our joint commitments to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms will contribute to further consolidating our joint efforts in enhancing their implementation.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.