

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on the referendum on "Adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Ossetia"**

The EU strongly regrets the so-called referendum on "Adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Ossetia" of April 8 in South Ossetia, Georgia.

The holding of the referendum does not contribute to confidence building measures and hampers the scope and effectiveness of the EU assistance to the region.

The EU supports the efforts of the OSCE to facilitate a negotiation process. However, the holding of the referendum runs counter to the efforts by the OSCE to assist the parties in finding a solution to the conflict.

The holding of the referendum does not in any way lessen the need for the South Ossetian side to seek a compromise solution which respects international law and in particular the territorial integrity of Georgia. The EU expects the South Ossetian side to accept the invitation by the CiO of the OSCE to attend the meeting in Bucharest on the settlement of the South Ossetian conflict.

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The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.
