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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1489th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 September 2024

On the provocative actions by the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia

Madam Chairperson,

We are obliged to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to the recent incident involving representatives of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM).

On 17 September, a man and a woman from the EUMM illegally crossed the Georgian-Abkhazian border. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated occurrence. Just this spring, on 21 March and 8 and 20 April, there were three incidents involving unauthorized entry by members of the Mission into the territory of South Ossetia for the purpose of provocation. All of these cases have been discussed during regular meetings under the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) on the Georgian-South Ossetian border in Ergnet.

We regard any violations of Georgia's border with Abkhazia and South Ossetia as unacceptable. Claims by the members of the EUMM that they lost their way or "forgot" to wear the vests identifying them as monitors sound unconvincing, to say the least. These actions by the Mission are inconsistent with its statements regarding the neutrality of its activities.

We take note of the individual oral apologies to the Russian border guards by the Mission's representatives. We trust that the EU monitors' acknowledgement of responsibility for the incident that occurred will be reflected in a separate press release in addition to the message posted on the EUMM website on 17 September this year.

We also expect the recently appointed Head of Mission, Bettina Boughani, to restore order to the structure under her authority so as to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future.

Thank you for your attention.