

[Extract]

United Nations

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Security Council

Sixty-third year

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New York

[...]

The situation in Georgia

Mr. Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias

Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to express my gratitude for the briefings that were given to us by Under-Secretary-General Pascoe and Assistant Secretary-General Mulet. Panama has listened very closely and with great concern to the views expressed in this Chamber over the past few days by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Georgia and by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and other members of the Council.

Regarding this matter, Panama would like to state that we are concerned by and condemn the decision taken by the Georgian Government to seek to impose its authority over South Ossetia through the use of force. Panama is also concerned by and condemns the entirely disproportionate, and therefore illegitimate, use of force by the Russian Federation with the stated aim of protecting its citizens and peacekeeping forces.

Panama recalls that the right of self-defence provided for in Article 51 of the Charter has some basic restrictions, and any abuse of these by the Russian Federation is a violation of its fiduciary obligations as a permanent member of the Council. Panama issues a call for the Council to immediately express itself in favour of a cessation of hostilities and a return to the status quo ante. The Council should also support the diplomatic efforts undertaken by a number of countries and international organizations. Panama expresses its respect for the territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia, and also wishes to

recognize the right to self-determination of the people of South Ossetia. Panama is aware of the conflict between those two principles.