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**TEXT OF COMMUNICATION OF 10 SEPTEMBER 2002 RECEIVED
FROM THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA TO
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY CONCERNING
RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS**

The text of a letter dated 10 September 2002 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and addressed to the Director General is reproduced herewith for the attention of the General Conference.

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MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Excellency,

At the outset, allow me to express once again my deepest gratitude to the International Atomic Energy Agency and you personally for the understanding and support to my country.

I am writing to you concerning the very important and sensitive question for Georgia as arrears to the International Atomic Energy Agency budget. In this respect let me draw your attention to the following issues:

As you might know, the initial years following Georgia's independence in 1991 were marked by local and regional conflicts which did not permit the preparation or implementation of a comprehensive economic program.

Despite our efforts, on the way of its independent development, Georgia was facing the number of serious political and economic difficulties, caused by different reasons.

Among them economic crisis, which weakened Georgia's macroeconomic performance in 1998-2000. The slowdown of the economy, in turn, led to a fall in real wages and in employment. Severe droughts in 1998 and in 2000, which affected almost all the country and created energy shortages by limiting hydroelectric power generation were followed by the disastrous crops failure in western Georgia in 2001 and a devastating earthquake in Georgia with the epicentre in Tbilisi on 25 April in 2002. The emergency situation was declared and thousands of people are left without homes. The government had to expeditiously mobilize resources. The loss amount is more than 100 million USD.

In consideration of all the aforesaid, I hope that the General Conference will consider my request, once again support us and make an exemption to retain Georgia's right to vote during the forthcoming 46th General Conference to be held in Vienna on September 16-20 in 2002.

Despite the existing difficulties, I consider that the cooperation with the IAEA is very important to Georgia and the Government will try to make all possible to cover Georgia's financial obligations to international organizations as well as to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I do hope that the Committee on Contributions will take into consideration all the above-mentioned circumstances and the fact that Georgia is doing its best to meet its commitments.

Excellency, please accept, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(signed) Irakli Menagarishvili