

GEORGIA UPDATE

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INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

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Think Tank, NGO & Other Reports of Note

Amnesty International: The Human Cost of War in Georgia
The Atlantic Council: Post-Conflict Georgia

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We're not yet returning to the cold war, and it's up to Russia if we will or not. Georgia was hugely significant, and Europe didn't come to the right conclusions about what the lessons are. If NATO had offered MAP to Ukraine and Georgia in Bucharest, I doubt we would have had this crisis."

Lech Kaczynski in *Newsweek*

UPCOMING MILESTONES

- Oct. 9-10:** French FM Kouchner in Georgia for meetings with government
- Oct. 10:** Deadline for the second phase of the Russian troop withdrawal
- Oct. 11-15:** PM Gurgenedze in Washington to meet World Bank, IMF, US officials, investors
- Oct. 15:** ICJ to issue initial ruling on preliminary measures in Georgia's case v. Russia for ethnic cleansing
- Oct. 15:** Peace talks begin in Geneva.
- Oct. 22:** Donors conference to support Georgia to be held in Brussels, organized by the EU, France & World Bank
- Oct. 26-28:** US Department of Commerce Investor Trip to Georgia
- Nov. 23:** Rose Revolution 5th Anniversary

TOP STORIES

Deadline Friday: 2 Days Remain for Russia to fulfill the second phase of the withdrawal

Nearly 300 EU monitors began monitoring on Oct. 1 the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia. According to the Sarkozy ceasefire agreement, Russia has until Oct. 10 to extract all Russian military forces from “security zones” created after the invasion and to return all troops to their pre-Aug. 7 positions. The Russian Army illegally established 25 checkpoints; as of 7 October, 15 remained. Also, Russia has announced its intention to keep 3,800 troops in each of South Ossetia and Abkhazia—which, if it follows through, would constitute a direct violation of the Sarkozy agreement.

Ethnic Cleansing: UN Says Better Security Needed to Prevent Ethnic Cleansing

The UN expressed heightened concern about the lack of security and protection of ethnic Georgians living in the buffer zones. Calling the region’s widespread violence and prevailing insecurity “unacceptable,” the UN demanded that aid workers be permitted by Russian forces unrestrained access into both the security and conflict zones to provide humanitarian relief. The UN praised the Georgian Government for its swift action in helping to provide displaced civilians with aid and shelter.

<http://georgiaupdate.gov.ge/Ethnic-Cleansing-5D-09-08.pdf>

<http://www.rferl.org>

<http://ap.google.com/article>

War Investigation: Council of Europe Calls for International Investigation of War

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) passed a resolution Friday urging an immediate investigation Russia’s invasion of Georgia. President Saakashvili has been calling for such an international investigation since August 17. Georgian Parliament Speaker David Bakradze stressed that the resolution allows international courts to examine cases of widespread ethnic cleansing committed by Russians following the Sarkozy ceasefire agreement. PACE reasserted its support of Georgia’s territorial integrity and national sovereignty and urged Russia to denounce the declaration of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states.

<http://www.civil.ge>

<http://www.eurasianet.org>

SPECIAL SECTION: PROGRESS REPORT ON RECONSTRUCTION & DEMOCRATIC REFORM:**Donor Conference: EU, World Bank Organize Donor Conference Oct. 22 in Brussels**

A ministerial-level donors conference—jointly organized by the European Commission, the French EU Presidency, and the World Bank—will be held in Brussels, Belgium, on October 22. The Commission has said it will contribute up to €500 million euros to help with reconstruction and to re-launch Georgia’s economy; it hopes EU member states will match that amount. The conference will focus in particular on educational, health care, and infrastructure development projects. Meanwhile, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development says at least \$3 billion in international aid is needed to revitalize Georgia’s economy and attract foreign investment.

<http://www.eubusiness.com>

<http://www.ft.com>

US Aid Approved: Congress Passes Bill with First \$365 million in Aid for Georgia, Pledges More

The US Congress swiftly passed—and President Bush immediately signed—a bill that includes \$365 million in immediate funding for Georgia’s economic reconstruction; an additional \$205 million will be reprogrammed this year from existing budgets—and \$470 million is expected next year. The US and Georgia also have begun discussing a Free Trade Agreement, as well as the expansion of their bilateral investment treaty and the Generalized System of Preferences program.

<http://www.thestar.com>

<http://www.eurasianet.org>

PM Gurgenzidze in the Sunday Telegraph: “Georgia Can Be a Guiding Light for Other States”

In The Sunday Telegraph, PM Gurgenzidze urged the West to continue championing Georgia’s democratization and economic liberalization. He recounted the extraordinary efforts needed to deregulate the country’s once highly centralized economy and to root out corruption. Now, after Russia’s invasion, the PM notes the urgency for Georgia’s friends to help preserve the country’s democratic transformation and uphold its democratic aspirations.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk>

President Saakashvili UN Address: Promises Wave of Democratic Reforms in “Second Rose Revolution”

President Saakashvili called on UN members to “refuse to stand silent in the face of this armed aggression and assault on human rights.” He also said he would launch a second Rose Revolution. “Whereas others launched this war with arms, we will wage it with values,” he said. “We will fight the specter of aggression and authoritarianism with the most potent weapons in our arsenal...our commitment to ever-expanding freedoms within our own borders, a stronger democracy, broader rights of free expression, a fiercely independent judiciary, and more robust checks and balances among our democratic institutions.”

<http://www.civil.ge>

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA: SELECTIONS

AP: Merkel Says Georgian Borders Not Negotiable

After meeting Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, German Chancellor Angela Merkel criticized Russia for recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The German chancellor reaffirmed her support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

<http://www.jpost.com>

<http://online.wsj.com>

New York Times: War Left Georgia Economy Bruised, but Not Broken

Despite the Russian invasion's significant economic repercussions, the Georgian economy is "relatively resilient." The war caused over \$1 billion in infrastructure damage and Russia's subsequent military occupation discouraged foreign investment, a critical stimulant of economic growth. To bolster investor and consumer confidence and revitalize the economy, experts emphasize the imperative for Russia to observe the 10 October deadline for military withdrawal.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Christian Science Monitor: Who Started the War in Georgia?

New evidence from Russia fortifies Georgia's assertion that Russia's invasion was premeditated—and not a response to a Georgian offensive as Moscow claims. Russian investigative journalist Paul Felgenhauer says: "The decision to make war against Georgia in August was finalized by Russia's General Staff in April." Felgenhauer's uncovers new details of Moscow's war preparations.

<http://www.csmonitor.com>

The Economist: Georgia & Russia-Tense Times

Relations between Georgia and Russia have yet to stabilize, leading to regional insecurity. Mass reports of ethnic cleansing, a decline in GDP, an influx of thousands of refugees, and the deployment of nearly 300 EU observers to monitor Russia's military withdrawal from the separatist regions have intensified the precarious situation in post-conflict Georgia. Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili insists a NATO Membership Action Plan for Georgia would enhance stability.

<http://www.economist.com>

European Report: Visa Facilitation Talks Underway

In an effort to enhance relations with Tbilisi and address disparate visa measures with other nations, the European Commission agreed to explore a visa facilitation agreement with Georgia. As it stands, Georgian citizens have greater restrictions on traveling to European countries than do Russians and Russian-passport holders in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The Commission aims to liberalize the visa regime, allowing Georgians equal access to travel, live, work, and study in Europe.

<http://georgiandaily.com>

RFE/RL: Rights Groups Say South Ossetian Militias Burning Georgian Villages

Satellite imagery, eyewitness accounts, and meticulous documentation by Human Rights Watch depict the large-scale methodical destruction of ethnic Georgian villages. According to Alexander Lomaia, Secretary of Georgia's National Security Council, Russian-backed militias in South Ossetia are succeeding in a massive ethnic cleansing campaign to forcibly remove all ethnic Georgians. Russia has failed to maintain security in South Ossetia and the adjacent buffer zones.

<http://www.rferl.org>

Newsweek: Lech Kaczynski on "How the West Got It Wrong"

Polish President Lech Kaczynski condemned Russia's invasion and expressed concern with the West's response to resurgent Russian belligerence.

Kaczynski believes Russia's invasion represents imperial ambitions. Western governments, Kaczynski affirms, are stronger than Russia and should have acted more cohesively and firmly against Russia's disproportionate use of force against Georgia.

<http://www.newsweek.com>

Boston Globe: Russia's Bid to Control Caspian Energy

Russia's military provocation in Georgia is indicative of greater imperial ambitions to control lucrative Caspian energy markets in Central Asia. Georgia is of critical geostrategic importance in transporting oil Europe—a market already heavily dependent on Russian energy. EU and US policymakers should support alternative pipeline projects in Georgia and former Soviet states, demand Russian withdraw from all Georgia by 10 October, and back measures to enhance Georgia's security.

<http://www.boston.com>

THINK TANK, NGO & OTHER REPORTS OF NOTE:

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: The Human Cost of War

In the aftermath of the Russian-Georgian war, UNHCR estimates over 160,000 persons have been internally displaced. According to Amnesty International's diligent documentation process and eyewitness accounts, severe bombing campaigns targeting ethnic Georgian villages and artillery fired on both South Ossetian and Georgian villages caused extensive damage. Amnesty warns that pervasive security violations, particularly in ethnic Georgian communities, have impeded the repatriation of thousands of displaced Georgians.

<http://www.amnesty.org>

ATLANTIC COUNCIL: Post-Conflict Georgia

According to Post-Conflict Georgia, released Friday by the Atlantic Council, the international community has a vested interest in preserving Georgia's territorial integrity and ensuring Georgia's democratization. Russia's invasion of Georgia not only underscored Moscow's explicit disregard of international law and its resurgent aggression, but also has jeopardized critical energy projects—causing considerable alarm in the West. The report emphasizes what Georgia and its US and EU partners must do to help reconstruct, support, and ensure Georgia's transformation into a politically open and economically free country.

<http://www.acus.org>