

GEORGIA UPDATE

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TOP STORIES

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- **Egypt's Fresh Starts \$1.2 Billion Georgia Project**
- **Transparency International: Georgians Give High Marks to Government for Routing Corruption**



Security in and near Georgia's occupied territories was struck another blow on Monday when Russia vetoed the continuation of the United Nations Mission in Georgia. The 10-1 vote in the Security Council put an end to the 16-year presence of the Mission, and now puts Georgian residents at even greater risk of human rights violations. Said the Council of Europe after the vote: "Without a UN Mission, Abkhazia is in danger of slipping into a human rights black hole." The EU, US, and others also condemned the move by Moscow.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

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LE MONDE: Is Nicolas Sarkozy a Peacemaker?

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR: A wake-up call for Georgia, Ukraine—and the West

AFP: Russia says 8,500 troops to take part in exercises near Georgia

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"Russia has used its presence on the Security Council to pursue its own narrow interests. Russia has turned its back on previous resolutions, one as recent as February, in which it affirmed its commitment to uphold Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty."

— UK Foreign Minister David Miliband

"We will continue our struggle. We have a long road ahead, but we will travel along this road to the complete de-occupation and liberation of Georgia."

— President Saakashvili

UPCOMING MILESTONES

Jun. 22: FM Vashadze visits Washington

Jun. 24-25: President Saakashvili visits Armenia

Jun. 24-25: UK Europe Minister, Baroness Kinnock, visits Georgia

Jun. 24-27: Interior Minister Merabashvili visits Washington

Jun. 29-Jul. 6: Russian military exercises in the North Caucasus

Jun. 30: OSCE's monitoring mandate in Georgia expires

Jul. 1: Sweden takes over EU Presidency

Jul. 1: Next round of Geneva peace talks

Jul.6-8: President Obama visits Russia

TOP STORIES

Russia Kills United Nations Mission in Georgia; EU, US Condemn Moscow

Russia vetoed a resolution to extend the UN's mission in Georgia after 16 years, effectively ending the UN's ability to ensure peace and security near and in Georgia's fragile occupied regions. The cynical move was immediately condemned by EU, US, and UN officials. "It is important to keep in mind that Russia's rejection of this Mission is not an isolated act, but part of a larger strategy—one that began even before Russia's invasion of Georgia last summer," Georgia's UN ambassador said. "It seems determined to roll back the international community's presence in the region." President Saakashvili sought to lift Georgian spirits: "We have a long road ahead, but we will travel along this road to the complete de-occupation and liberation of Georgia."

[GUARDIAN: Russia vetoes plan to extend UN mission in Georgia](#)

[CIVIL GEORGIA: Russia vetoes UN Georgia mission](#)

EU War Commission Contends With Propaganda Campaign, As Anniversary of Sarkozy Ceasefire Nears

Facing a late-July deadline for delivering its report on the Russian invasion of Georgia last summer, the independent investigative Commission headed by Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini faces an unexpected challenge: Apparent leaks that are feeding a propaganda campaign. Tagliavini on Monday was forced to denounce a report in *Der Spiegel* that relied on leaks from her Commission and that sought to spread blatant disinformation about the report. "The article's contents on the findings of the Mission are entirely fictitious," Tagliavini said in a statement. The Commission already faces the herculean task of explaining how the international community failed to prevent the Russian invasion and why the ceasefire agreement negotiated by French President Sarkozy has been largely ignored by Russia.

New Survey: Georgians Say Government Is Fair, Country on Way to True Democracy

A new public opinion poll reveals that Georgians believe their government is fair and that their country is becoming a true democracy. According to a Caucasus Resource Center (CRC) survey, 70% of Georgians believe they are treated fairly by their government and a vast majority believes the country is "well on its way" to achieving its democratic aims. The CRC conducted over 80 focus groups and surveyed over 40,000 households throughout Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

docs.rferl.org

Egypt's Fresh Starts \$1.2 Billion Georgia Project

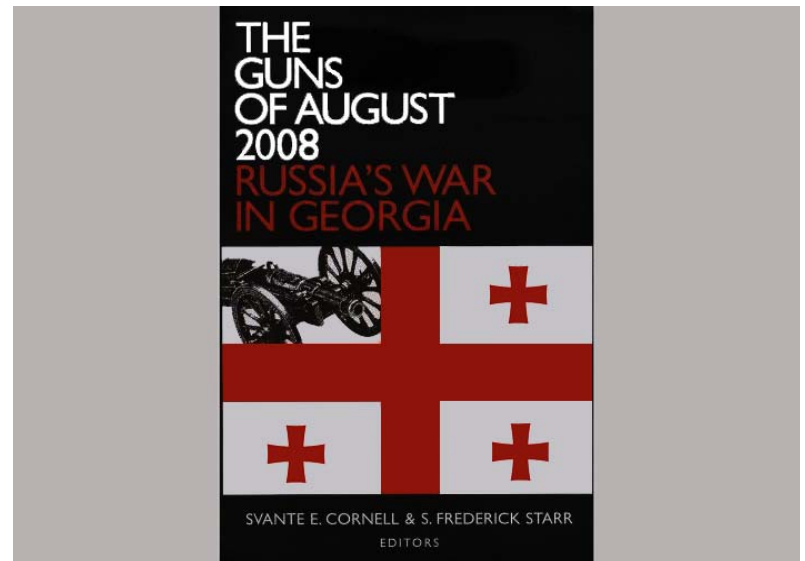
Egyptian textile producer Fresh launched a \$1.2 billion investment project in Georgia's Kutaisi industrial zone. "We chose Georgia because of its investment-friendly environment, lack of corruption, and experienced technical staff," said Fresh VP Rafat, adding that current political tensions will not affect the company's plans. According to Economy Minister Zhvania, foreign direct investment could exceed \$2 billion in 2009, helping the economy to recover in the wake of Russia's invasion.

[BLOOMBERG: Egypt's Fresh starts \\$1.2 billion Georgia project](#)

Transparency International: Georgians Give High Marks to Government for Routing Corruption

A new report by Transparency International applauds Georgia's effort in routing corruption. According to TI's Global Corruption Barometer, 57% of Georgians positively assessed the government's efforts to eradicate corruption. Meanwhile, despite initial progress, Georgians believe more effort must be made toward reforming the country's judicial system.

[CIVIL GEORGIA: Georgia in 'Global Corruption Barometer' report](#)



In the summer of 2008, a conflict that appeared to have begun in the breakaway Georgian territory of South Ossetia rapidly escalated to become the most significant crisis in European security in a decade. The implications of the Russian-Georgian war will be understood differently depending on one's narrative of what transpired and perspective on the broader context. "The Guns of August 2008"—edited by the directors of the Central Asia & Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University—is designed to present the facts about the events of August 2008 along with comprehensive coverage of the background to those events. It brings together a wealth of expertise on the South Caucasus and Russian foreign policy, with contributions by Russian, Georgian, European, and American experts on the region.

Writes esteemed Oxford historian Neil MacFarlane: "The book is essential reading for those who want an easy way to get a clear and balanced understanding of the Georgian crisis of 2008 and its legacies." Peter Semneby, the EU's Special Representative for the South Caucasus, offers similarly effusive praise: "This volume is an important contribution to the understanding of one of the most dangerous episodes of the protracted ending of the Cold War. The analyses by some of the foremost Western and Russian experts hold lessons for policymakers everywhere. The contributions will be useful for the European Union in meeting the multiple challenges of overcoming the consequences of the war, preventing confrontation in the future, and building closer ties with the region."

The book is available on Amazon.com and many other booksellers: www.amazon.com

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

FRANFURTER ALGEMEINE ZEITUNG: Article by Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze

The existential problem for Georgia is the security deficit, which after the August war has become particularly noticeable. This vacuum should not be separated from global security problems. The UN Mission is of great value in stabilizing and preventing potential conflict in our country's fragile occupied regions; a fortified and extended UN monitoring mandate is essential.

www.faz.net

LE MONDE: Is Nicolas Sarkozy a Peacemaker?

The effectiveness of the Sarkozy-Medvedev ceasefire in preserving peace between Russian and Georgia is questionable. If Georgia didn't disappear from the world map, Sarkozy proclaimed last month, it was because of France. Yet Georgia—as it used to exist before the August 2008 invasion—has disappeared from the world map. Its frontiers were unilaterally modified by Russia after the invasion. Meanwhile, the heralded Sarkozy-mediated ceasefire is little more than window-dressing, tacitly accepting Russia's "might is right."

www.lemonde.fr

THE ECONOMIST: Sarkozy—Europe's "peacemaker"? Or was it all spin?

When it comes to Georgia, Sarkozy's priority was to prevent a major rift between Russia and Europe. That explains the numerous concessions offered to the Russian authorities at different stages: such as the ceasefire documents partially dictated by the Kremlin and the acceptance of a partial retreat by Russian troops. For many pro-Europeans it was much easier to accept Sarkozy's boasting about EU heroics (especially when contrasted with American weakness) than to look too closely at what happened.

www.economist.com

REUTERS: UN says Georgia's Abkhazia less secure without monitors

The UN warned that a failure to extend its monitoring presence in Georgia's occupied Abkhazia region would undermine stability and leave ethnic Georgians there unprotected. UN special representative Verbeke cautioned that without a mission, "you end up having a situation where there is no longer the security regime, where there are no longer the monitors, and therefore intrinsically a situation where stability is less secured than it is currently."

www.reuters.com

WASHINGTON POST: False choices for Russia

How can we build a relationship based on "common interests" if Russia's leaders see NATO expansion as a primary threat or their national interest is in "constraining" U.S. influence in the region? Relations with Russia cannot be reduced to the false dichotomy of isolation or cooperation with an authoritarian regime. Such a choice is doomed either way. We hope that in his dealings with Russia, President Obama will show us the fresh thinking for which he is admired as well as his understanding of Russia's people, not just its leaders.

www.washingtonpost.com

REUTERS: Save Georgia's peace mission

Moscow has not only refused to withdraw several thousand additional troops it sent into S. Ossetia and Abkhazia, it has also flatly refused access to international monitors. Russia also announced a troop increase last April, as if to flaunt its noncompliance with the Medvedev-Sarkozy agreement of August. A vigorous diplomatic response, led by the EU and the US, should make clear to the Kremlin that its refusal to allow the OSCE to continue its valuable work in Georgia further damages Russia's credibility as an international partner.

blogs.reuters.com

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR: A wake-up call for Georgia, Ukraine—and the West

In the wake of a disastrous war with Russia last August and an economic downturn, fissures in Georgia have grown. Debate has helped Georgians come to grips with them. Mr. Saakashvili has wisely avoided a repeat of his 2007 crackdown on peaceful protests and the free media. The need now is for serious negotiations between sides, and democratic solutions.

www.csmonitor.com

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE: Russia says 8,500 troops to take part in exercises near Georgia

Nearly 8,500 Russian troops will take part in military exercises starting this month in the country's North Caucasus region, just north of Georgia. Dubbed "Caucasus 2009," the exercises come just weeks after the end of NATO's war games in Georgia that infuriated Moscow. The training will involve more troops than the "Caucasus 2008" when some 8,000 soldiers participated in exercises in the same region, just weeks before the Russia invaded Georgia.

georgiandaily.com

THINK TANKS/NGOs

HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Where is Obama on Georgia?

Although Congress continues to move rapidly to appropriate the final portion of its billion-dollar aid pledge to Georgia, the commitment of the Obama Administration toward Tbilisi remains unclear. Through its foreign aid and other programs, the US is sending the message that it wants Georgia to succeed. Therefore it needs to build momentum in favor of granting Georgia MAP status and maintain the political thrust for Tbilisi's Westward integration.

blog.heritage.org

WEBSITES @ GEORGIA

Civil Georgia: Independent English-language news site: www.civil.ge

Georgia Update: Official government information service:

www.georgiaupdate.gov.ge

Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies:

Leading NGO focusing on domestic, foreign policy: www.gfsis.org

Georgian Mission to NATO: embassy.mfa.gov.ge

Georgian Parliament: www.parliament.ge

Government of Georgia: www.government.gov.ge/eng

Tbilisi: Official website of Georgia's capital: www.tbilisi.gov.ge

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: www.mfa.gov.ge

National Investment Agency: www.investgeorgia.org

President Saakashvili's official website: www.president.gov.ge