

GEORGIA UPDATE

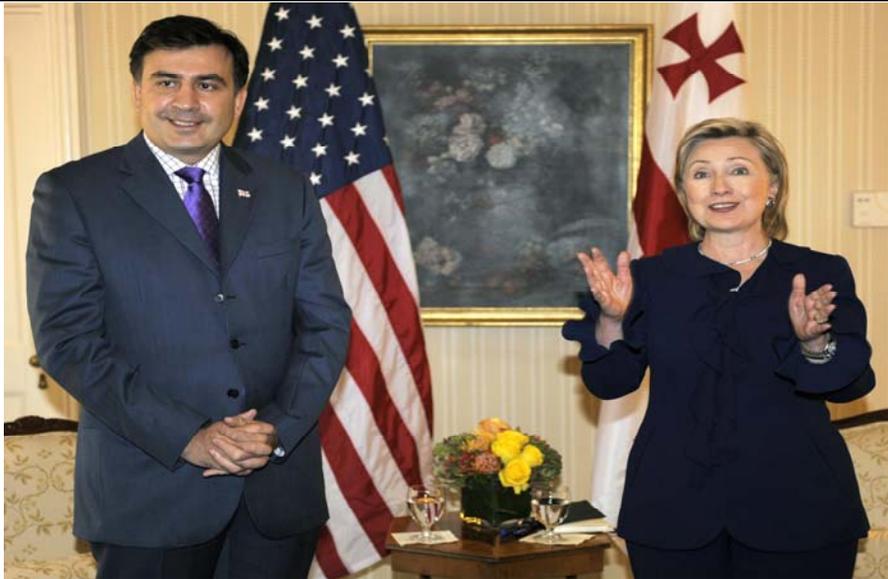
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www.georgiaupdate.gov.ge

TOP STORIES

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- Georgia Begins Massive Expansion of Hydroelectric Exports by Building Power Line to Turkey



President Saakashvili met in New York City this week with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as well as with NATO Secretary General Rasmussen, EU foreign policy chief Solana, and other leaders. After the meeting, Clinton said the United States is “working hard to try to ensure that Russia abides by the 2008 ceasefire, and hopefully eventually reintegrate your country as it should be.” She added: “We also know that working toward democracy and the changes that you’re attempting to achieve are challenging, but we want to support and encourage the steps that need to be taken. And the United States supports Georgia, and we want to make that very clear and unequivocal statement here today.” The President was scheduled to address the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday evening.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

WASHINGTON POST: Ron Asmus on "Shattered Confidence In Europe"

AP: Analysis—Advantage to Russia in US missile move

EURASIANET: New US anti-missile vision has heavy emphasis on the Caucasus

EURASIA DAILY MONITOR: Naval security deficit growing in the Black Sea

MOSCOW TIMES: The Caucasus is real citadel of Russian power

RIA NOVOSTI: PACE could deprive Russia of voting rights over South Ossetia

EURASIANET: NATO supply routes through the South Caucasus

RFE/RL: EU ministers review South Caucasus strategy, mull Afghan future

THE GUARDIAN: Fossil find in Georgia challenges theories on early humans

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

“I think it is clear that Georgia has come an awful long way since the Rose Revolution in terms of becoming, strong, prosperous, and democratic....”

“President Saakashvili explained how much progress they had made. Indeed, when you look at factors of economic development and foreign direct investment and corruption, Georgia has really made remarkable strides. And that is important to recognize and we do recognize it, especially given where Georgia was, not just at the end of the Soviet Union, but even at the time of the Rose Revolution, on scores of foreign direct investment, corruption, and media freedom was well behind.”

—US Assistant Secretary of State Phil Gordon commenting on the Sep. 21 meeting between President Saakashvili and Secretary of State Clinton.

UPCOMING MILESTONES

Sep. 23: Georgian delegation and EU officials to discuss free trade agreement in Brussels

Sep. 24: President Saakashvili addresses UN General Assembly

Oct 1-3: FM of Lithuania visits Georgia

Oct. 5-7: Danish FM Møller visits Georgia

Oct. 12-14: Minister of Foreign Affairs Vashadze visits Great Britain

Oct. 16-17: State Minister Yakobashvili visits Sweden

Oct. 27: FM Vashadze visits Brussels

Oct.: Vice Premier Baramidze visits UK

Nov.: Next meeting of US-Georgia Commission

Nov. 11: 8th round of Geneva peace-talks

Nov. 23: 6th anniversary of Rose Revolution

TOP STORIES

Vaclav Havel & Former European Leaders Luminaries Urge EU to Support Georgia, Resist a New Wall in Europe

The EU must define a strategy to help Georgia regain its pro-Russian breakaway regions or face betraying the project of a united Europe that brought down the Berlin Wall, a group of European intellectuals and former political leaders said on Tuesday.

In an open letter, the authors—including former Czech President Vaclav Havel and French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy—said Western failure to respond to “the dismemberment of a friendly nation” would have serious global consequences. “Twenty years after the emancipation of half of the continent, a new wall is being built in Europe—this time across the sovereign territory of Georgia,” they wrote.

Seventy years after the start of World War Two, the authors of the letter—published in London's Guardian and other European newspapers—said attention should focus on which country invaded the other, “rather than which soldier shot the first bullet.”

They added: “... a big power will always find or engineer a pretext to invade a neighbor whose independence it resents,” referring to Adolf Hitler's claim Poland started hostilities in 1939 and the blame placed on Finland by Stalin for the Soviet invasion in 1940. Ahead of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in November, the authors urged the 27-member EU to define a “proactive strategy to help Georgia peacefully regain its territorial integrity and obtain the withdrawal of Russian forces illegally stationed on Georgian soil.”

[REUTERS: EU must stand up to Russia in Georgia –intellectuals](#)

EU Moves Forward With Plans for Association Agreement, Closer Ties With Georgia

The EU will draw up terms for talks on closer ties with the southern Caucasus states in November, which could lead to agreements on issues such as trade and security. The move will open the way for the countries to negotiate association agreements, in which states commit to political, economic, trade, and human rights reforms in return for tariff-free access to some or all EU markets and financial or technical assistance.

[REUTERS: EU moves toward closer ties with Southern Caucasus](#)

Geneva Talks Inch Ahead With Discussions to Prevent the Use of Force

Representatives of Georgia, Russia, occupied Abkhazia and S. Ossetia, together with mediators from the EU, OSCE, US, and UN, met for a 7th round of talks in Geneva to discuss a potential non-use of force agreement. “The key element of this round of the discussions was that there was a practical, detailed exchange of views on elements for a potential agreement on the non-use of force and international security arrangements,” said OSCE special envoy Christophoulos. Overall, “the discussions were a constructive, forward-looking contribution to stability and security in troubled region,” he added. The sides will reconvene on Nov. 11th.

[CIVIL GEORGIA: Non-use of force treaty discussed at Geneva talks](#)

Russian Orthodox Church Affirms Georgian Church Authority Over Abkhazia, S. Ossetia

The Russian Orthodox Church underscored that it “respects the canonical borders of the Georgian Patriarchate,” after a group in Abkhazia requested the Moscow Patriarchate to accept the eparchy under its authority. Meanwhile, Georgian Patriarch Ilia II said the “self-proclaimed group and eparchy has nothing to do with any of canonical churches... we should not take that announcement seriously.”

[CIVIL GEORGIA: Russian Orthodox Church 'respects' Georgian Church authority over Abkhazia, S. Ossetia](#)



Former Czech President Vaclav Havel joined a group of European intellectuals and former leaders in urging the EU to support Georgia. “Looking at Europe today, it is abundantly clear that history has not come to an end and that it remains tragic,” they wrote. “Twenty years after the emancipation of half of the continent, a new wall is being built in Europe – this time across the sovereign territory of Georgia.” In addition to Havel, the signatories were: Valdas Adamkus, Mart Laar, Vytautas Landsbergis, Otto de Habsbourg, Daniel Cohn Bendit, Timothy Garton Ash, André Glucksmann, Mark Leonard, Bernard-Henri Lévy, Adam Michnik, Josep Ramoneda

Russia Adopts Aggressive Posture in Black Sea, Strikes Military Treaties with Abkhazia, S. Ossetia

In further violation of the French-brokered, EU-endorsed ceasefire—which requires the withdrawal of forces to positions they held prior to the outbreak of the war—Russia continues to increase its forces in the occupied territories and last week signed military cooperation agreements with Abkhazia and S. Ossetia that will run for 49 years. Moscow also heightened tensions with Georgia last week by warning that it will detain Georgian ships entering the territorial waters of Abkhazia, one of the two territories that have been occupied by Russia since last August. “From the perspective of international maritime law, the Russian guards are pirates and this is plain and simple occupation,” said Georgian MP Kandelaki. Adding to tensions, an explosion damaged a passenger train in Zugdidi, near Abkhazia, last week. Interior Ministry spokesman Utiashvili said no casualties were reported in the blast, which he called terrorism.

[ASSOCIATED PRESS: Russia to detain Georgian ships off Abkhazia](#)

Georgia Begins Massive Expansion of Hydroelectric Exports by Building Power Line to Turkey

Georgia last week began construction of a high-voltage electricity line to Turkey with the aim of increasing the country's export capacity tenfold. “This line will allow Georgia to export electricity worth \$800 million per year,” Georgian Energy Minister Khetaguri said. The \$395 million project is being financed by the German state development bank KfW, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Investment Bank; it is due to be completed by May 2012. Georgia earlier this month announced a deal with a Turkish-Korean consortium to invest \$1 billion in the building of three 450-megawatt hydroelectric power stations in western Georgia.

[REUTERS: Georgia starts work on new power line to Turkey](#)

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

WASHINGTON POST: Ron Asmus on "Shattered Confidence In Europe"

The alliance has also decayed in its role as the key crisis manager in Europe. Central and Eastern Europeans have watched as one ally after another has prevented NATO from acting over the past decade. NATO was AWOL during the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia. When Georgian leaders quietly approached the alliance several months before hostilities, NATO demurred. When war broke out, the secretary general interrupted his vacation for one day to hold a meeting and issue a statement. NATO's supreme allied commander did not even do that much. The NATO Military Committee met only after the war was over. Hardly an inspiring performance. Given this record, we should not be surprised that Central and Eastern Europeans doubt what NATO would do to help them in a pinch. We must take real steps toward solving this problem by providing strategic reassurance to Central and Eastern Europe through the front door of NATO and not the back door of missile defense.

www.washingtonpost.com

ASSOCIATED PRESS: Analysis—Advantage to Russia in US missile move

A fear of being left behind may be even more acute in Ukraine and Georgia. Georgia, in particular, has staked its future on the US countering Russia's dominance in the strategic South Caucasus. Many had hoped the US would have done more to help Georgia in its war last year with Russia, which resulted in the loss of the now Russian-occupied territories of S. Ossetia and Abkhazia.

www.google.com

EURASIANET: New US anti-missile vision has heavy emphasis on the Caucasus

President Obama announced last week that Washington would not move ahead with plans to place an anti missile system in the Czech Republic and Poland. Later the same day, the vice-chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff said the Pentagon was considering whether to deploy an early-warning radar detection system in the Caucasus. "It's probably more likely to be in the Caucasus that we would base [the radar], because it's to get the early tracks," he said. Meanwhile, security analysts said that if the US is thinking about the South Caucasus, Georgia would be the best place for the radar deployment

www.eurasianet.org

EURASIA DAILY MONITOR: Naval security deficit growing in the Black Sea

Russia's warning and the construction of its coastal guard base in Abkhazia amount to changing the maritime border de facto through the use of force (since August 2008) and enforcing that change by threats of using force again. Unchecked, Russia can extend its frozen-conflict/protracted-conflict paradigm from Abkhazia to the eastern Black Sea. This move is a maritime equivalent of Moscow's methods on land in the South Caucasus.

www.jamestown.org

RIA NOVOSTI: PACE could deprive Russia of voting rights over South Ossetia

Saying that "not only has Russia refused to withdraw its unilateral recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but it has established military, legal, and diplomatic links with the de facto regimes," the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) next week will discuss depriving Russia of its voting rights over last year's invasion of Georgia. PACE adopted last autumn a resolution on the situation around S. Ossetia, calling on Russia to retract its August 26, 2008, recognition of S. Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russia has refused to comply.

en.rian.ru

EURASIANET: NATO supply routes through the South Caucasus

There are two main routes that are being considered for the shipment of goods to Afghanistan: the first is Poti, Georgia, to Baku, Azerbaijan, to Aktau, Kazakhstan, to Navoi/Termez, Uzbekistan; and the second is Baku, Azerbaijan, to Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan. The South Caucasus route has become a viable option because of the deteriorating security situation in Pakistan's Khyber Pass region. The route is also important because of the potential unreliability of the Russian position on supply routes on its territory.

www.eurasianet.org

MOSCOW TIMES: The Caucasus is real citadel of Russian power

Last year's war in Georgia is unfinished business for Russia because the Kremlin was not able to remove President Saakashvili and thereby gain control over Georgia. The real problem is that the international community seems unaware of mechanisms to prevent a future military confrontation. However, history has many examples of how a naval incident becomes a major war.

www.themoscowtimes.com

RFE/RL: EU ministers review South Caucasus strategy, mull Afghan future

EU foreign ministers reviewed the Swedish-prepared strategy on the South Caucasus at last week's council, offering open-ended association agreements. "These countries are sovereign nations and they have their right to choose their own destiny," current EU president and Swedish FM Bildt said. "They've expressed a [wish] for a closer relationship with the European Union." Bildt then went on to say, in a thinly veiled reference to Russia: "They also have the right not to be restricted by the wishes of anyone else."

www.rferl.org

THE GUARDIAN: Fossil find in Georgia challenges theories on early humans

Paleontologists in Georgia have unearthed remains of five primitive humans that date back 1.8 million years ago, suggesting that some of our oldest ancestors lived in the region at the time. The partial skeletons, which represent the earliest humans discovered outside Africa, challenge the theory that our ancestors evolved entirely on the continent and left the cradle of humanity only 60,000 years ago. "The Dmanisi fossils are extremely important in showing us a very primitive stage in the evolution of Homo erectus," said Chris Stringer, head of human origins at the Natural History Museum in London. "They raise important questions about where that species originated."

www.guardian.co.uk

WEBSITES @ GEORGIA

Civil Georgia: Leading independent English-language news website on Georgia: <http://www.civil.ge>

Georgia Update: Official government information service: <http://www.georgiaupdate.gov.ge>

Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies: Leading non-governmental organization that focuses on Georgian domestic and foreign policy: <http://www.gfsis.org>

Georgian Mission to NATO: <http://embassy.mfa.gov.ge>

Georgian Parliament: <http://www.parliament.ge/>

Government of Georgia: <http://www.government.gov.ge/eng/>

Local Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <http://www.mfa.gov.ge>

National Investment Agency: <http://www.investgeorgia.org>

City of Tbilisi: Official website of Georgia's capital, Tbilisi: http://www.tbilisi.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=1

Office of the President of Georgia: <http://www.president.gov.ge/?l=E&m=0&sm=0>