

GEORGIA UPDATE

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TOP STORIES

- US Secretary of State Clinton: “We will help the Georgian people to feel like they can protect themselves”
- Government Proposes 2010 Budget That Creates Leaner Government, Forecasts 2% GDP Growth
- US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership: Security Issues to Be Focus of First Working Group Meeting
- New US Aid of \$50 Million to Help Build Schools in Gori, Support Agricultural Projects, Municipal Infrastructure
- Joint "Open Skies" Overflights Allow for Cooperation Between Georgia & Russia
- Czech Parliament Calls for Russia to Abide By Ceasefire Agreement



Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze, on a four-day visit to the UK and Northern Ireland this week, met with counterpart David Miliband, Secretary of State for Europe Chris Bryant, and senior politicians. Milliband underscored the UK's steadfast commitment to Georgia's territorial integrity and to the advancement of its integration with European and Euro-Atlantic structures. Vashadze also visited the House of Lords to meet Lord Wallace of the all-party Parliamentary group for Georgia.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

- WALL STREET JOURNAL:** Europe exposes Russia's guilt in Georgia
- THE ATLANTIC:** Who caused the Russian-Georgian war?
- WASHINGTON POST:** Georgia sees vindication in war report
- MOSCOW TIMES:** A murder with no killer
- BBC HARDTALK:** Saakashvili—Georgia must avoid military confrontation
- THE NEW REPUBLIC:** Ironed curtain
- NEWSWEEK:** An interview with Vaclav Havel—'We Have to Be Awake'
- EURASIANET:** Using tea to promote peace in the South Caucasus
- BOSTON GLOBE:** Black Sea echoes
- GLOBAL ATLANTA:** Atlanta Hawk's rookie season in the restaurant business
- EURASIA DAILY MONITOR:** Declarative tenets or proactive allied policy in Europe's east

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

“We will help the Georgian people to feel like they can protect themselves.”

—US Secretary of State Clinton

“We have to be awake. Russia's current policy has greatly raised our attention, and I think there are some signs that Russia is trying to expand its influence in much more sophisticated ways than before.”

—Former Czech President Vaclav Havel

“In sum, the official EU inquiry found that none of Russia's various justifications for its invasion of Georgia held water, and faults Russia's behavior following the conflict, as it continues to be in material breach of the EU-negotiated ceasefire agreement.”

—Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Research Director Svante Cornell

UPCOMING MILESTONES

- Oct.13-15:** Minister of Euro-Integration Baramidze attends NATO Parliamentary Seminar on Ukraine and Regional Security issues in Kiev
- Oct.15-17:** NSC Secretary Tkeshelashvili attends Int. Conference on “European Ideas Network” in Vienna
- Oct. 16-18:** State Minister Yakobashvili visits Sweden
- Oct.19-20:** US Assistant Secretary of Defense Alexander Vershbow leads delegation visit to Tbilisi for US-Georgia Strategic Partnership working group
- Oct.23-24:** NSC Secretary Tkeshelashvili attends Riga Conference 2009, “Economic Recovery in a Changing Security Environment: Transatlantic Agenda 2010”
- Oct. 27:** FM Vashadze visits Brussels
- Oct. 27:** CoE Georgia Cooperation Council meeting in France
- Oct.:** Vice Premier Baramidze visits France.
- Nov. 11:** Eighth-round of Geneva peace-talks

TOP STORIES

US Secretary of State Clinton: "We will help the Georgian people to feel like they can protect themselves"

The United States will continue to support and train Georgia's military despite Russian objections, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in an interview Wednesday. Later, in a separate speech, she made the case for more monitors in Georgia.

"Georgia is providing troops in Afghanistan and we are training troops to be able to go to Afghanistan," Clinton told the Echo of Moscow radio. "We will help the Georgian people to feel like they can protect themselves," she added, without giving further details. Despite a thaw in Russian-US relations, Clinton admitted that Georgia was a policy area on which Washington and Moscow did not see eye-to-eye. But Clinton added that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had not raised Russian objections to United States' support for the Georgian army in their talks on Tuesday.

In a later speech at Moscow University, Clinton argued for an increased international presence in Georgia. "It is a very difficult set of relationships at work in Georgia. But the first and most important goal must be to make sure there's no more conflict. If there are problems to be resolved, they should be put within the diplomatic political arena and to avoid any further military action whatsoever." "Therefore, we believe that it's important to have a constant presence of observers and peacekeepers so that there is no basis or no room for something that would lead to further bloodshed to occur," she said.

[AFP: US will support Georgian military: Clinton](#)

Government Proposes 2010 Budget That Creates Leaner Government, Forecasts 2% GDP Growth

The Georgian government submitted its 2010 draft budget to the parliament for consideration last week, creating a leaner government in the new fiscal year. The draft budget forecasts 2% GDP growth and projects 3% inflation next year. Most ministries, except education, will face funding cuts. The new budget proposal underlines President Saakashvili's commitment to limiting government spending through the newly proposed "Liberty Act," aiming to advance liberal economic reform and freedom. "It is our principle that the only way out is tightening of belts by the government, instead of choking off people and businessmen through introducing additional controllers and regulators," Saakashvili said.

[CIVIL GEORGIA: 2010 Draft budget](#)

US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership: Security Issues to Be Focus of First Working Group Meeting

The US and Georgia next week will launch the first round of security cooperation talks under the auspices of the US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership. Mutual security issues, Georgian defense reform, the country's contribution to NATO operations in Afghanistan, and regional security will be the focus of the inaugural discussions. US Assistant Secretary of State Alexander Vershbow will lead the US delegation.

[AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE: US, Georgia to hold security talks](#)

New US Aid of \$50 Million to Help Build Schools in Gori, Support Agricultural Projects, Municipal Infrastructure

The US allocated an additional \$50 million last week as part of its \$1 billion assistance pledge made to Georgia after Russia's August 2008 invasion. The aid will be apportioned to different funds, helping to support municipal infrastructure development programs, build schools in Georgia's war-torn towns, and promote agricultural production projects. The US will continue to provide assistance to Georgia and fulfill its \$1 billion reconstruction pledge over the next two years, said USAID.

[CIVIL GEORGIA: US allocates USD 50 mln assistance for Georgia](#)

Czech Parliament Calls for Russia to Abide By Ceasefire Agreement

The Czech parliament last week passed a five-point resolution on Russia's illegal occupation and militarization of Georgia, calling on Moscow to abide by the six-point ceasefire agreement. The resolution also demanded that international observers be given access to Georgia's Russian-occupied territories and called for the free movement of ethnic Georgians across the administrative boundaries of Abkhazia and S. Ossetia. The parliament also denounced Russia's near-unilateral recognition of Georgia's separatist territories.

[RUSTAVI: Parliament of the Czech Republic passes resolution on Georgia](#)

Joint "Open Skies" Overflights Allow for Cooperation Between Georgia & Russia Overflights

Two joint Russia-UK-Georgia over-flight missions were completed last month under the auspices of the Open Skies Treaty, drawing praise from UK foreign secretary Milliband. "I applaud the success of a package of joint Russia-UK-Georgia over-flight missions. These flights showed that progress can be made on arms control treaties even amidst the most trying circumstances," he said. "It is testament to the professionalism not just of British forces, but of their Georgian and Russian counterparts, that the missions went so smoothly." The military treaty aims at enhancing mutual understanding and confidence by giving its participants a direct role in gathering military information of concern via aerial surveillance flights.

[RUSTAVI: Joint Russia-UK-Georgia over-flight mission completed](#)
[CIVIL GEORGIA: Georgia-UK-Russia joint surveillance flights.](#)



Centuries-old artifacts and precious Georgian antiques are now on display at the National Museum of Georgia, recovered from France and Russia by eminent art historian Shalva Amiranshvili. The exhibition is dedicated to the memory and work of Amiranshvili, who used his diplomatic skill to retrieve ancient Georgian artefacts that were previously held in foreign museums and archives. The exhibition includes collections of the Georgian National Museum's archives, the Georgian National Archives, and the Memorial Fund of the Manuscript Museum; it will stay open until November 10.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ON GEORGIA

WALL STREET JOURNAL: Svante Cornell on "Europe Exposes Russia's Guilt in Georgia"

Last week's much anticipated EU-commissioned report into the causes of the Russian-Georgian war of August 2008 predictably spread the blame for the conflict around. Yet anyone who bothers to read the document will find that the Tagliavini Commission apportions the overwhelming part of the responsibility for the conflict on Moscow. In fact, it rejects practically every item in Russia's version of what supposedly happened last year. The report finds that because Russia's distribution of passports to Abkhazians and Ossetians in the years prior to the war was illegal, its rationale of rescuing its "citizens" is invalid as they were not legally Russian. It also concludes that Moscow's claim of humanitarian intervention cannot be recognized "at all."

online.wsj.com

THE ATLANTIC: Who caused the Russian-Georgian war?

"The EU's moral equivalency and blatant disregard for the basic notions of international relations...is simply astounding," says The Atlantic Council's James Joyner. "If sovereignty means anything, it means that leaders of a state have license to take actions within the confines of their borders as they see fit, so long as they don't create adverse spillover effects for their neighbors. Saakashvili's actions against internal groups conducting illegal activities within the borders of his country, while unwise and perhaps even provocative, are simply no justification for an illegal invasion of its sovereign territory by another member of the UN. Period. End of story."

www.theatlanticwire.com

WASHINGTON POST: Georgia sees vindication in war report

Georgia sees vindication in the conclusions of the EU-funded report on the origins of war after Russia's invasion last year. Much of the Georgian public, especially those who support the president, concluded long ago that Russia was to blame, analysts said. "It is a great diplomatic victory for Georgia," said President Saakashvili. Said Georgian academic and expert Gia Nodia: "The Georgian opposition hoped to use the report to its advantage, but it won't work. The war as an issue has already been used up and the report is not strong enough to revitalize it."

www.washingtonpost.com

MOSCOW TIMES: A murder with no killer

How can a commission come to the unbelievable conclusion that a person was murdered as a result of collective responsibility? Who is correct? It might strike you as funny, but the Tagliavini Commission doesn't know. It couldn't confirm that Georgia's assertions "are well-founded," despite the significant number of "witnesses, including Russian" witnesses who confirmed it. It is clear from the findings of the commission that the EU thinks it is impossible for Europe to exist without Russia and that respect for Russia will bring more positive results than fruitlessly trying to isolate it. This may be true. But if you want to be a diplomat, you can't be a judge at the same time.

virtualcollector.blogspot.com

BBC HARDTALK: Saakashvili—Georgia must avoid military confrontation

"We are more than willing to engage with Russia, except Russia's regime has officially changed their policy towards Georgia, a democratically elected government." President Saakashvili said in a TV interview last week. "The situation today is best described by what Vaclav Havel, together with other European intellectuals, have said: that Russia has basically reenacted a new Berlin wall in a European country. The last thing Georgia needs is a military engagement," the President said.

news.bbc.co.uk

THE NEW REPUBLIC: Ironed curtain

Putin and Medvedev shouldn't be too eager for people to read the EU-funded war report closely, since the more closely one reads it, the worse it looks for Moscow. Georgia being invaded in slow motion. So we should have no illusions. The underlying conflict between Georgia and Russia has not been resolved. So we should have no illusions. The underlying conflict between Georgia and Russia has not been resolved. Tbilisi still wants to go West, and Moscow still wants to stop it. Having just returned from Georgia, I suspect some in the Kremlin wish they had finished off Saakashvili when they had the chance a year ago, since he seems as firmly in the saddle as ever. The conflict is not over; it has only been postponed. And while the "peacekeeping" mechanisms on the ground today may be different—over 200 unarmed E.U. observers—they remain inadequate.

www.tnr.com

NEWSWEEK: Interview with Vaclav Havel—'We Have to Be Awake'

Former Czech president Vaclav Havel urged the West not to ignore Russian belligerence toward Georgia and Ukraine. "We have to be awake," Havel tells Newsweek in an interview. "Russia's current policy has greatly raised our attention, and I think there are some signs that Russia is trying to expand its influence in much more sophisticated ways than before. I don't want to be alarmist, but we shouldn't be naive."

www.newsweek.com

EURASIANET: Using tea to promote peace in the South Caucasus

A new multi-national brand, Caucasus Tea, will offer tea leaves from five participating Caucasus countries and occupied territories, in an attempt to ease feelings of enmity in the region. Georgia and Azerbaijan will produce black and green tea; Armenia, the disputed region of Karabakh, and Russian-occupied South Ossetia will contribute herbal teas. "We're creating a unified tea brand to show Europe that we have another image apart from conflicts," said the project's Azerbaijani coordinator. "When professional businessmen talk, political issues are absent."

www.eurasianet.org

BOSTON GLOBE: Black Sea echoes

The pine woods in Wellfleet, a small town outside of Boston, reminded one Georgian expatriate whose family fled during the Bolshevik Revolution, of Russia. Marusya Chavchavadze's grandfather said that Wellfleet put him in mind of Tsinandali, his family's former east Georgian estate. "I've been there many times, and it does remind me of these woods," says Marusya, who reaches out to victims of the Georgia-Russia conflict through her work as executive director of the Truro-based American Friends of Georgia.

www.boston.com

GLOBAL ATLANTA: An Atlanta Hawk's rookie season in the restaurant business

Newly-signed Atlanta Hawks basketball player and Georgian native, Zaza Pachulia, tries his hand in Atlanta's restaurant business, purchasing the popular restaurant and wine bar Eno. "I really felt like this is my hometown and I can definitely live here for the rest of my life in this city," said 25-year-old Pachulia. While in Tbilisi last summer, Pachulia visited the Khanvanchkara winery to negotiate a private wine label to sell at his new restaurant.

globalatlanta.com

EDM: Declarative tenets or proactive allied policy in Europe's east

Another appeal to Western governments from renowned public figures, this time over Georgia, has appeared in European newspapers. Former European heads of state and intellectuals appeal to the EU member nations 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." In practice, however, these tenets operate with diminishing effectiveness in Europe's East recently. Non-acceptance, non-recognition, and support for principles do not seem to be accompanied by a proactive, remedial Western policy.

www.jamestown.org