



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



12 October 2006 No. 1

GEORGIA

The mandate of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) expires on 15 October (for the background on this issue, please see our *October Forecast*). However, in recent days, negotiations on the precise language of the draft resolution to extend the mandate have proved difficult. Council members, following a Russian request, will vote on the draft tomorrow, but disagreement persists.

The draft put in blue includes traditional language reaffirming commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity while expressing concern with Georgian actions in the Kodori Valley and urging Georgia to ensure that the situation in the area is in line with the 1994 Moscow ceasefire, *inter alia*.

During consultations this morning, the US and the UK expressed the perception that the draft needs to be more balanced and the desire to discuss brief amendments to the text. Russia, however, considered that the draft was ready for a vote and that no further amendments were needed. It is unclear whether the US and the UK and other members will support the text as drafted. Possible options include further consultations, formal amendments in open session or possibly abstentions in the vote tomorrow.

Russia had also proposed an "Arria formula" meeting under which Council members would meet informally with a representative from the Abkhaz side. It now seems that the meeting will not occur.

Russia had initially circulated to the Council a draft presidential statement in late September denouncing Georgia's initiatives vis-à-vis Abkhazia. However, some members—the US and the UK in particular—had concerns related to balance in the text and proposed alternative language. Ultimately the statement was not agreed.

Russia subsequently presented to the Group of Friends (comprising France, Germany, Russia, the UK, the US, and, in the Council, Slovakia) a draft resolution on UNOMIG's renewal using substantially similar language.

Group members were reluctant to use the Russian draft as a basis for negotiation. There was support from many members of the Group for a more balanced text, addressing the recent incidents but nevertheless supporting (as has traditionally been the Council position) Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity. There was also a perception that Georgia has a right to conduct operations in its

territory.

Nonetheless, a reference to the need to maintain restraint and avoid potentially destabilising actions was generally agreeable.

The recent Russian initiatives in the Group of Friends followed the marked souring of relations between Russia and Georgia in recent days. A further Georgian parliament's resolution, passed in July, called on the government to begin practical steps to ensure the withdrawal of Russian forces from the territory of Georgia and for the deployment of an international police presence.

More recently, the situation deteriorated especially since Tbilisi launched a special operation in the Georgian-controlled upper Kodori Valley—insisting that the operation was of a law enforcement nature—and announced the relocation of the Tbilisi-based Abkhaz government to that area. (The latest report of the Secretary-General notes that the mission issued 13 violation reports of the ceasefire agreement to the Georgian side and two to the Abkhaz side.) A further complicating factor is the proposed South Ossetian independence referendum to be organised by the de facto Ossetian government.

But perhaps the most important development in terms of Security Council consideration of the issue is the arrest by Georgian authorities of four Russian soldiers on charges of espionage. (Russia maintains military bases in Georgia in addition to the presence in Abkhazia.) The soldiers were eventually released to officials from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Moscow in response has taken steps to implement sanctions against Georgia, including severing transport and postal links.

UN Documents

Latest Security Council Resolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/RES/1666 (31 March 2006) extended UNOMIG's mandate until 15 October 2006.
Selected Letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/2006/739 (13 September 2006) was a letter from Georgia to the president of the Security Council on the situation in upper Abkhazia and the upper Kodori Gorge, urging the resumption of UN monitoring in the upper Kodori Gorge, suspended three years earlier.• S/2006/577 (26 July 2006) was a letter from Georgia explaining that its Kodori Gorge operation was not in violation of the ceasefire agreement.• S/2006/576 (26 July 2006) was a letter from Georgia explaining developments in the Kodori Gorge.• S/2006/555 (20 July 2006) was a letter detailing the Russian reaction to the Georgian parliament's decision on peacekeeping forces in conflict zones.
Selected Secretary-General's Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/2006/771 (28 September 2006) was the latest Secretary-General's report.

For the historical background, please see our January, March, July and October 2006 *Forecasts*.

Other Relevant Facts

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission
Jean Arnault (France)
UNOMIG: Size and Composition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised strength as of 26 September 2006: 121 military observers and 12 police • Key troop contributors: Germany, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea
Duration
August 1993 to present
Cost
1 July 2006 - 30 June 2007: \$34.83 million (gross)
Other Facts
Size of CIS troops: about 1,800 Russian troops