

### Appendix 3: Ninety-one NATO–Russian actions–reactions, 22 November 2002 to 2 April 2008

Georgia–NATO Relations Timeline	Russia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia (SO) response
22 November 2002 Georgia officially applied for NATO membership	25 December 2002 Russia opened railway line with Abkhazia  3 February 2003 Deployment of heavy armaments in SO
23 November 2003 Rose Revolution brought reformist Western-minded government to power with the clear aspiration of NATO membership	29 November 2003 Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov met with the leaders of secessionist regions and pro-Russian Aslan Abashidze, head of the semi-autonomous Georgian region of Adjara. Moscow sped up process of passportization and offered visa simplification for the residents of these regions
23–24 April 2004 NATO Deputy Secretary General Gunter Altenburg discussed NATO–Georgia relations and further assistance programs in Tbilisi	25 May 2004 Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) began distributing passports to the residents of SO
7 June 2004 At NATO headquarters in Brussels, within the 26+1 format, NATO reviewed the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) of Georgia	7 June 2004 SO parliament asked for the Russian Duma to recognize its independence
28 June 2004 NATO Istanbul summit communiqué called on Russia to implement the remaining Istanbul commitments and withdraw its military forces and hardware from Georgia. NATO welcomed Georgia to develop the IPAP and closer partnership relations with the Alliance	28 June 2004 The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) confirmed a Georgian village in SO was bombed by barrel grenades  7 July 2004 Russia sent peacekeepers with trucks, armaments, and ammunition to SO  8 July 2004 Fifty Georgian peacekeepers were detained and humiliated by SO militias  9 July 2004 The Russian MFA issued a statement that Russia would protect its citizens' interests and security in SO  5 August 2004 Mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov arrived in Sukhumi to hold talks on humanitarian aid without notifying Tbilisi  6 September 2004 Putin publicly supported SO in creating more distance from Tbilisi. "Ossetians believe that they have been subjected to some exploitation by Georgia. And, they believe that the nationality of Georgians was imposed on them both"  11 September 2004 Moscow resumed the railway link with Abkhazia closed by agreement of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) heads of states in 1996 as a response to the conflict in Georgia

<p>15 September 2004 NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoof Scheffer announced the appointment of Robert F. Simmons, Jr, as Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. His role was to assist the Georgian government in reform processes and furthering NATO cooperation programs</p>	<p>15 September 2004 Russia banned bus trips between Georgia and Russia, citing the fact that bus traffic is not carried out on the “basis of parity.” The Russian Transport Ministry declared that it would ban Georgian airlines from entering Russian airspace from 1 October 2004 for unpaid debts</p> <p>20 September 2004 Around forty Georgian air passengers were not permitted to enter Russia territory by Russian border guard officials, citing “visa irregularities”</p>
<p>14 October 2004 The Alliance hailed the draft IPAP and expressed readiness to assist Georgia in its reform agenda</p> <p>29 October 2004 NATO approved Georgia’s IPAP</p>	<p>During October, Russia was involved actively in the Abkhazian crisis, followed by the highly disputed Abkhazian presidential election (3 October)</p>
<p>4 November 2004 Secretary General Scheffer, during an official visit to Georgia, called on Russia to pull out its remaining military bases from Georgia. Also, he praised Georgia for its commitment to reforms and said “NATO has an open door for any nation, including Georgia”</p>	<p>15 November 2004 Russia closed the Abkhaz section of the Russian–Georgian border</p> <p>19 November 2004 SO forces opened fire near the Georgian village of Tseriakho; two Georgian peacekeepers were injured</p> <p>30 November 2004 An official Russian delegation, led by First Deputy Interior Minister Alexander Chekalin, arrived in Sokhumi to clarify the results of the Abkhazian presidential elections and to propose a deal between the presidential candidates</p>
<p>2 March 2005 NATO and Georgia signed a transit agreement that provided for transit through Georgia for NATO supplies for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan.</p> <p>10 March 2005 A state commission was established, chaired by the prime minister, to supervise the implementation of domestic reforms envisaged in the NATO IPAP</p>	<p>11 March 2005 A draft law was presented in the Russian Duma outlining the simplification of procedures to allow Abkhazia and SO to join the Russian Federation</p>
<p>19 May 2005 Secretary General Scheffer hailed Georgia’s IPAP implementation and praised its ambition for Euro-Atlantic integration. He called on Russia to respect Georgia’s territorial integrity and withdraw its military bases</p>	<p>30 May 2005 South Ossetians attacked a police checkpoint near the village of Kurta; casualties resulted</p> <p>26 July 2005 Secessionists signed a communiqué on economic and military cooperation and proposed that the Georgian side sign a document that would guarantee the presence of Russian peacekeeping troops until final resolution of the conflict</p>

<p>14 February 2006 In his annual state of the nation address, President Saakashvili declared, “Georgia has a real chance to become a NATO member in 2008. This year we will become a NATO membership candidate country”</p>	<p>22 March 2006 An aide to Russia’s prime minister said the Russian leadership had made “a principled decision” on unification of SO with the Russian Federation</p> <p>27 March 2006 Russia bans Georgian wine because of health risks</p>
<p>13 April 2006 State Minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration Issues Giorgi Baramidze, after meeting with NATO Secretary General Scheffer, said, “So we hope to gain NATO MAP [Membership Action Plan] by the end of 2006 – plus or minus several months”</p> <p>27 April 2006 Foreign ministers of NATO member states discussed at an informal meeting what kind of signal they wanted to give Ukraine and Georgia at the Riga summit in November</p> <p>30 April 2006 A “NATO standard” military base was opened in Senaki, close to Abkhazia</p>	<p>27 April 2006 Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mikhail Kaminin commented on NATO’s open door policy: “It is ‘a sensitive issue’ for Moscow, especially in respect of Ukraine and Georgia ... Russia will have to ‘re-orientate’ its military potential if NATO expands”</p> <p>4 May 2006 Russia banned Georgian Borjomi mineral water</p> <p>5 May 2006 Russia banned another mineral water, Nabeglavi</p>
<p>30 May 2006 The NATO Parliamentary Assembly hailed Georgia’s progress in implementing the IPAP and urged the Alliance “to begin an Intensified Dialogue with Georgia as soon as possible and preferably by summer 2006.” Also, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly called on Russia to play a more constructive role in the resolution of conflicts</p>	<p>1 June 2006 A Russian Foreign Ministry statement says that the principle of the right to self-determination should also be respected in the process of SO conflict resolution</p> <p>6 June 2006 Secessionist leaders met to boost economic cooperation and to open embassies in secessionist regions</p>
<p>14 June 2006 Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga called on NATO member states to “formulate concrete and enhanced forms of cooperation between NATO and Georgia and Ukraine”</p>	<p>14 June 2006 Secessionist leaders of Abkhazia, SO and Transnistria signed documents expressing gratitude and support for Russian efforts to preserve stability and security in the region and excluded the changing of current peacekeeping formats as requested by Georgia and Moldova. One of the key goals of the signed declaration was international recognition of the republics of Abkhazia, Transnistria, and SO</p> <p>14 June 2006 In the OSCE-led donor conference for the economic rehabilitation of SO, Russia announced it would allocate separate funding of 100 million rubles (EUR 3 million), bypassing Tbilisi and donor countries</p>
<p>5 July 2006 US President Bush pledged strong support for Georgia’s aspiration to NATO membership: “I believe that NATO would benefit with Georgia being a member of NATO, and I think Georgia would benefit. And there’s a way forward through the Membership Action Plan. And we will work with our partners in NATO to see if we can’t make the path a little smoother for Georgia”</p>	<p>7 July 2006 Russian President Vladimir Putin was given power to use forces abroad to fight terrorist threats against Russia or its citizens</p> <p>14 July 2006 The Russian MFA issued a statement blaming Georgia for escalating the situation in SO and warned that Russia would respond in SO to maintain stability and security on its borders</p>

	<p>20 July 2006 Mayor of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov, in Sokhumi, said that Moscow would “cooperate with the Abkhaz leadership without any hesitation and fear as with an independent state”</p>
<p>23 October 2006 NATO Secretary General Scheffer linked the peaceful resolution of internal and external disputes with the success of Georgia’s NATO membership. He also explained that Georgia’s aspiration was not an “anti-Russian” alliance. “If [Russian] President Putin and the Russian leadership believe that NATO is an indispensable strategic partner, I don’t think it should be an ‘irritant’ when Russia’s neighbors come to this same conclusion”</p>	<p>12 November 2006 Russia supported the results of the second independence referendum in SO, which were rejected by the international community, including the NATO Secretary General</p>
<p>29 November 2006 NATO reiterated its open door policy at the Riga summit and reaffirmed its continued engagement with Georgia in its Intensified Dialogue. The Alliance hailed Georgia for its progress and called for continued reforms. The declaration also noted that the Alliance “regrets the persistence of regional conflicts in the South Caucasus” and supports “continued efforts to achieve peaceful settlements to the conflicts”</p>	<p>6 December 2006 Russia’s lower house of parliament unanimously passed statements calling for the recognition of Abkhazia and SO</p>
<p>23 January 2007 NATO experts assessed the country’s airbase infrastructure, as Georgia planned to host a multinational military exercise under the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) program in July</p>	<p>6 February 2007 Russia's ambassador to Georgia, Vyacheslav Kovalenko, delivered Moscow’s conditions for normalizing ties, one of which was neutrality – a condition that conflicted with Tbilisi’s NATO aspirations</p>
<p>11 February 2007 NATO Secretary General Scheffer said, “In 2009 I would like to see more countries in NATO. I would like to see a NATO of 26 plus. I would like to see Serbia firmly on the road to NATO. And I would like to see us coming closer to honoring the ambitions of Ukraine and Georgia”</p> <p>19 February 2007 German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, while visiting Georgia, said Georgia had a real chance of becoming a NATO member</p>	<p>11 February 2007 Putin commented on NATO intentions to receive Georgia and Ukraine as members, saying NATO’s expansion to the Russia’s borders was “a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust”</p> <p>27 February 2007 Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said, “We have strictly warned both Georgia and those who are actively inviting Georgia to NATO that we will not permit it. We have stressed that besides common security in this neighboring region, which is so important for the stability of the southern part of Russia, there is another aspect – that is the presence of tens of thousands of Russian citizens in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. We are responsible for them”</p>

<p>5 March 2007 NATO Secretary General Scheffer rejected the parliamentary and local elections in Abkhazia held on 4 March and 11 February, saying that the Alliance did not recognize the “so-called elections” in Abkhazia. “The NATO allies are strongly committed to the territorial integrity of Georgia”</p>	<p>6 March 2007 Mikhail Kaminin, the Russian MFA spokesperson, stated that Russia respects elections as they represent “the highest expression of the people’s will regardless of status of the territory on which they [polls] are held”</p> <p>11 March 2007 The Tbilisi-controlled Upper Kodori Gorge was shelled by Russian army helicopters, damaging a local administrative building</p>
<p>13 March 2007 The Georgian parliament voted on Georgia’s accession to NATO by 160 votes to 0</p>	<p>13 March 2007 Russian Ambassador Kovalenko denounced Georgia’s accession to NATO, saying it would “immensely complicate and make very remote the resolution of the South Ossetian and Abkhaz conflicts”</p>
<p>15 March 2007 The US Senate approved a bill supporting Georgia and Ukraine in NATO by allocating funds to these countries to prepare for their entry into the Alliance</p>	<p>18 March 2007 The Abkhaz Foreign Minister called for Russia to recognize the independence of Abkhazia before Georgia entered NATO. Otherwise, Georgia's potential membership of NATO would “make a task of recognition of Abkhazian independence more difficult”</p>
<p>21 March 2007 At the NATO–Georgia meeting in the 26+1 format the Alliance condemned the shelling that took place in the Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia, on 11 March 2007, backed by Russia, and hailed Georgia’s moderate reaction to this incident</p>	<p>26 March 2007 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gregory Karasin met with Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh to discuss the Georgia–Abkhazia conflict</p>
<p>19 April 2007 President Saakashvili, while opening the NATO Parliamentary Assembly's 65th Rose-Roth, said Georgia expected to become a candidate for NATO membership “in the nearest months”</p>	<p>21 April 2007 Secessionist leaders held talks in Moscow about Georgia’s possible accession to NATO</p> <p>25 April 2007 A Russian delegation, led by prime ministerial aide Gennady Bukaev, visited SO to assess the effectiveness of funds allocated by Russia</p>
<p>11 July 2007 A ten-day air exercise under the NATO PfP program started in Tbilisi with the participation of NATO member and partner countries</p>	<p>13 July 2007 Russia unilaterally suspended its participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). One of the reasons Russia articulated to explain its suspension was its objection to NATO encroachment into certain areas that affected the security of the Russian Federation</p> <p>17 July 2007 The SO secessionist leader admitted the important stabilizing role of Russian peacekeeping troops in the conflict zone while meeting with the North Ossetian leader</p> <p>26 July 2007 Russian specialists visited SO to examine the construction of 163km-long gas pipeline, which will connect SO to Russia, funded by energy giant Gazprom</p>

<p>17 August 2007 A decision was made to speed up the integration of Georgia's radars into the NATO radar system. The system would allow the exchange of airtracking data with NATO partners</p>	<p>21 August 2007 Russian aircrafts violated Georgian airspace over the Georgian-controlled territory of Kodori</p> <p>25 August 2007 Large-scale military exercises were launched by secessionists near Kodori</p> <p>30 August 2007 The Russian MFA called for Georgian neutrality as a precondition to normalizing relations between Georgia and Russia</p>
<p>4 September 2007 The Georgian foreign minister met NATO Secretary-General Scheffer to discuss Georgia–Russia relations</p> <p>27 September 2007 The NATO Secretary General’s Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, Robert Simmons, while visiting Georgia, introduced NATO’s new liaison officer for the Caucasus, Zbigniew Rybacki, who would work with the government on achieving reform goals set out in the ongoing Intensified Dialogue</p>	<p>4 September 2007 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Karasin met with SO secessionist leader Eduard Kokoity in Moscow to discuss the Tbilisi-backed anti-Kokoity movement</p> <p>7 September 2007 Karasin met with Abkhazian leader Sergey Bagapsh, in Moscow, to discuss the preconditions for the resumption of dialogue with the Georgian side</p> <p>2 October 2007 Russia’s lower house of parliament condemned “the anti-democratic policy” of the Georgian authorities. Boris Gryzlov, chairman of the State Duma, stated that the current regime in Georgia was anti-democratic</p>

<p>2 October 2007 The Georgian leadership met with NATO members states in the 26+1 format within the Intensified Dialogue framework on the issues of conflict resolution</p> <p>4 October 2007 NATO Secretary General Scheffer, during his second visit to Tbilisi, hailed the Georgian government for successfully implementing reforms in many areas. Scheffer responded to Russia's fears about NATO enlargement and Georgia's fears about Russian influence over NATO: "The enlargement of NATO's membership is not directed against any country ... No country which is not a member of NATO has a veto or 'droit de regard' over NATO enlargement decisions." Scheffer also spoke about Georgia's secessionist conflicts as their resolution was perceived as "vital for the security of the entire Euro-Atlantic region." He appreciated Georgia's "constructive foreign policy and restraints Georgia has shown in its relations with Russia, and its determination to find constructive solutions"</p> <p>5 October 2007 Ten opposition parties appealed to NATO member states with a request to support Georgia's accession to NATO, as well as its European integration. The text of the appeal said that if Georgia's NATO integration were held up, it would be damaging to the vital interests of the Georgian state</p> <p>23 October 2007 Simmons, the NATO Secretary General's special representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, said in an interview with the Moscow-based Echo Moskvyy radio station that NATO had put Georgia on "a first stage towards membership," which is Intensified Dialogue. "In any case the next decision will only be to move on to the next stage which is Membership Action Plan and we do not know even if that decision will be taken"</p>	<p>3 October 2007 Secessionist leader Bagapsh warned that the Abkhaz Defense Ministry would undertake measures to prevent flights over Abkhaz airspace without Tbilisi's prior notification</p> <p>5 October 2007 The leaders of secessionist Abkhazia and SO, Bagapsh and Kokoity, warned while visiting Moscow that Tbilisi might launch hostilities against the secessionist regions by the end of 2007</p> <p>23 October 2007 Alexei Miller, chairman of Gazprom, met with SO secessionist leader Kokoity in Moscow to discuss gas supply in a newly constructed 163km-long gas pipeline linking SO with the neighboring Russian republic of North Ossetia, funded by Gazprom</p>
<p>8 November 2007 The NATO Secretary General made a statement about the imposition of emergency rule and the closure of media outlets as "not in line with Euro-Atlantic values" and called on all parties to "exercise restraint, avoid violence and act within the law"</p>	<p>8 November 2007 Russian MFA spokesperson Kaminin expressed concerns about the violation of human rights in Georgia and asked international organizations to urge Tbilisi to stop the violence</p> <p>12 November 2007 Russia increased troops and military hardware in Abkhazia</p>
<p>28 December 2007 President Saakashvili said if he were re-elected, Georgia would become a NATO member and Georgia would be reunited</p>	<p>29 December 2007 Abkhaz leader Bagapsh visited the predominantly ethnic Georgian-populated Gali district. The media reported that ethnic Georgians had been threatened not to participate in the upcoming presidential election on 5 January</p>

<p>6 January 2008 NATO called the 5 January Georgian presidential election “an important step in Georgia’s democratic development” and expressed readiness to “deepen its Intensified Dialogue with Georgia, and support further efforts to meet Euro-Atlantic standards”</p> <p>28 January 2008 NATO experts visited Georgia to assess the implementation of the country’s commitments undertaken under the IPAP with the Alliance. They discussed Georgian armed forces’ priorities for the short (2007–9), medium (2010–12) and long term (2013–15)</p> <p>31 January 2008 Introduction of a US Senate resolution asking the United States to take the lead in urging its allies in NATO to give the MAP to Georgia and Ukraine that spring</p>	<p>6 January 2008 The Russian MFA condemned the 5 January Georgian presidential election as neither free nor fair</p> <p>15 January 2008 If Georgia joined NATO, “Russia would have to rethink its security under new conditions,” said Lavrov. He stated that Georgia had committed itself not to allow other countries to establish military bases on its territory in exchange for a Russian pullout from its military bases</p> <p>28 January 2008 Abkhaz secessionist leaders visited Moscow to discuss economic cooperation</p> <p>29 January 2008 The Russian MFA issued a statement that Kosovo would set a precedent for many territories and not only for Abkhazia and SO</p> <p>4 February 2008 Konstantin Kosachev, head of the International Relations Committee of the Russian State Duma, said that if the West recognized Kosovo, Russia would review its policy towards unrecognized republics</p>
<p>1 February 2008 The presidents of Lithuania and Poland expressed support for Georgia’s aspirations for integration into Euro-Atlantic structures</p> <p>13 February 2008 Estonian, Latvian, Polish, Italian, and German ambassadors to NATO arrived in Georgia to discuss the possibility of a NATO MAP</p> <p>13 February 2008 The US Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved a resolution in favor of extending a NATO MAP to Georgia and Ukraine</p> <p>19 February 2008 Georgia hosted a seminar to exchange views on a wide range of security and defense issues with NATO member countries and other Euro-Atlantic partners within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)</p>	<p>5 February 2008 Sergey Mironov, chairman of the Council of Federation, Russia’s upper house of parliament, pointed out that “If Kosovo does it [declares independence], I, as a parliamentarian, will insist on Russia revising its position regarding Abkhazia, Transnistria and South Ossetia, Russia can and should do that”</p> <p>14 February 2008 Putin warned that Kosovo set a precedent for Abkhazia, SO, and Transnistria. He blamed Europeans for “taking a double-standard approach towards resolving similar problems in various parts of the world”</p> <p>14 February 2008 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Karasin and secessionist Abkhazia’s Foreign Minister Sergey Shamba discussed new realities emerging in light of the expected declaration of Kosovo’s independence and “directions of further interactions between Moscow and Sokhumi”</p> <p>15 February 2008 Lavrov met with secessionist leaders to discuss future steps as “recognition of Kosovo should definitely be taken into consideration in respect of the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia”</p> <p>22 February 2008 The Russian MFA demanded that Georgia adopt a law about “non-deployment of foreign troops on its soil” in the context of Georgia’s NATO aspirations</p> <p>23 February 2008 Secessionist leaders met to coordinate a joint policy after Kosovo’s independence. SO leader Kokoity said</p>



<p>26 February 2008 Saakashvili talked about the upcoming NATO summit in Bucharest: “On March 7, the NATO Council of Ministers will gather in Brussels to make preliminary decisions on the issue [of MAP]”</p>	<p>that they planned to appeal to Russia, the UN, and other international organizations for recognition</p> <p>26 February 2008 Chief of Staff of the Abkhaz armed forces, General Anatoly Zaytsev, declared upcoming large-scale military exercises on 1–5 March 2008</p>
<p>1 March 2008 Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, after meeting with President Bush, said NATO would send “a strong signal of support” to Georgia and Ukraine at its summit in Bucharest in April</p> <p>6 March 2008 NATO foreign ministers discussed how they should respond to Georgia and Ukraine’s bid to join the Alliance</p> <p>8 March 2008 Parliamentary Chairperson Nino Burjanadze said that Georgia was closer to gaining NATO MAP. She also admitted that Georgia’s NATO aspirations would further aggravate ties with Russia, “but eventually I still hope relations will improve later”</p> <p>9 March 2008 President Saakashvili said that Georgia was “a half-step closer” to joining the NATO MAP and “one step closer” to restoring the country’s territorial integrity</p> <p>12 March 2008 Batu Kutelia, Georgian Deputy Defense Minister, said that Georgia had intensified diplomatic efforts with NATO member states to convince them to extend the MAP to Georgia. “Most member states support Georgia’s invitation to MAP. We are working actively together with them to persuade the so-called skeptics [within NATO] to change their position. The remaining three weeks [ahead of the NATO summit] will be decisive, but, in my opinion, the final decision will not be made until the last day”</p> <p>12 March 2008 NATO shared radar data with Georgia to establish connections between Georgia’s radar pictures of its airspace and European airspace</p>	<p>2 March 2008 Polling stations were opened in secessionist Abkhazia and SO to vote in the Russian presidential election without the consent of the Georgian central authorities</p> <p>6 March 2008 The Russian MFA announced the country’s withdrawal from the 1996 CIS treaty on the imposition of economic, financial, transport, and other sanctions on Abkhazia due to changed circumstances. It also called on other CIS member states to abandon sanctions on Abkhazia</p> <p>7 March 2008 Abkhazia appealed to Russia’s lower and upper houses of Parliament, the UN Secretary General, the CIS, and other world leaders to recognize its independence</p> <p>8 March 2008 After meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Putin said that Russia would agree with the decision to join NATO made by the Ukrainian and Georgian peoples, and not their political elites</p> <p>11 March 2008 Dmitry Rogozin, the Russian ambassador to NATO, warned that “the real secession” of Abkhazia and SO would begin as soon as NATO indicated that Georgia could join the Alliance. He hinted also that Russian would recognize Abkhazia and SO</p> <p>12 March 2008 Abkhaz and SO delegations visited Moscow to attend Russian parliamentary discussions about the situation in the breakaway regions and the possibility of recognizing their independence</p> <p>13 March 2008 The Russian State Duma called on the Russian executive authorities to consider establishing diplomatic missions in Sokhumi and Tskhinvali</p>

<p>14 March 2008 Berlin was working on a compromise that would see NATO offering Ukraine and Georgia a newly created status below MAP, called the “Action Plan”</p> <p>19 March 2008 After meeting with Saakashvili, President Bush said, “I believe that NATO benefits with a Georgian membership. I believe Georgia benefits from being a part of NATO. And I told the President it's a message I'll be taking to Bucharest soon”</p> <p>20 March 2008 Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Canada called on NATO Secretary General Scheffer and other member states to invite Georgia and Ukraine to join MAP at the Bucharest summit on 2–4 April</p> <p>24 March 2008 Saakashvili explained what would happen if NATO refrained from extending MAP: “By refusing us, [NATO] will be sending a signal to Russia of, ‘Go and get them. We are not going to mind too much,’” he said. “Russia will be emboldened. They will conclude that they are on the right track when they stir up trouble with us.”</p> <p>26 March 2008 A Georgian delegation visited NATO headquarters in Brussels to meet with NATO Secretary General Scheffer and members of the North Atlantic Council, to discuss the implementation of IPAP</p> <p>28 March 2008 After the talks in Brussels, the Georgian Foreign Minister said that “Georgia deserves MAP and the decision should be very simple: either there is MAP or there is no MAP. Any artificial mechanisms, which will be invented specifically for Georgia and Ukraine and which will be something between an Intensified Dialogue, where we are currently, and MAP, where we want to move to, are unacceptable for us”</p>	<p>14 March 2008 Sokhumi reiterates its ultimatum: Georgian troops must leave the Upper Kodori Gorge as a precondition to starting talks with Tbilisi</p> <p>17 March 2008 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Karasin says Tbilisi should consider Abkhaz and SO warnings that, by joining NATO, Georgia would lose the separatist territories “forever”</p> <p>20 March 2008 Russia’s lower house of parliament prepared a resolution calling on the Kremlin to consider recognizing SO and Abkhazia if Georgia joined NATO. It also said that “Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria, which, during the years of their de facto independence, have built democratic states with all necessary attributes of governance, have much more ground to strive for international recognition than Kosovo”. The resolution called for the Russian government to reinforce Russian peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia and SO, and “to take other measures to provide peace and security in these regions”</p> <p>Gryzlov, Speaker of the State Duma, said that “We understand that Georgia is involved in the process of integration into NATO. And this of course is a source of concern for us.” He added that it was Georgia’s right to decide its foreign policy priorities, but if Georgia joined NATO, “naturally we should take appropriate measures”</p> <p>24 March 2008 Dmitry Medvedev, Russia’s president-elect said, “No state can be pleased about having representatives of a military bloc to which it does not belong coming close to its borders”</p> <p>24 March 2008 Abkhazia started military exercises, including 4,000 servicemen</p> <p>26 March 2008 The Russian MFA blamed Georgia for two terrorist acts which left two persons dead in SO</p> <p>28 March 2008 Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov pointed out that Georgia might consider using NATO as a tool to settle conflicts by force and Russia would consider the interests of all people living in the region when it came to Georgia’s possible membership: “You all know that Abkhazia and South Ossetia do not even think that NATO will come to Georgia. I think that it is unacceptable to play with fire on such an issue and we should proceed keeping in mind the interests of all those people who reside in this region. If Georgia’s NATO hopes are linked to its wish to settle the Abkhaz and South Ossetian conflicts by force, this is ‘a very dangerous game’”</p>
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<p>1 April 2008 Saakasvili explained why Georgia should join the Alliance. “NATO membership will create a fundamental guarantee for Georgia’s territorial integrity and stability – a guarantee which will attract to Georgia great economic interests and huge investments that will help Georgia out of nightmarish unemployment and bring prosperity to our families”</p>	<p>2 April 2008 Secessionist Abkhaz leader Bagapsh sent a letter to the NATO secretary general, saying that “Georgia still considers NATO as a mechanism for the forceful resolution of conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.” He asked NATO to consider Abkhaz views in making a decision on Georgia’s membership of the Alliance</p> <p>2 April 2008 Lavrov said the government would consider the Russian State Duma’s resolution on Abkhazia and SO “thoroughly ... taking into consideration all factors. The unilateral recognition of Kosovo, which has set a precedent, is of course among those factors; the unacceptability of double standards is also among those factors.” He commented on Georgia’s aspiration to NATO and said it would defend its citizens: “Georgia’s possible attempt to use force for the resolution of conflicts and especially to use NATO membership for this purpose is absolutely unacceptable. It would thoroughly change the situation for the populations of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, most of whom are Russian citizens. Russia always supported and will still support its compatriots both in respect of the protection of their legitimate rights and socio-economic issues”</p>
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