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| <b>Country/entity</b>      | Georgia<br>Russia<br>Abkhazia  |
| <b>Region</b>              | Europe and Eurasia   |
| <b>Agreement name</b>      | Statement of the State Commissions of Abkhazia and Georgia on Search for the Persons Missing without Trace |
| <b>Date</b>                | 19 Jan 2000  |
| <b>Agreement status</b>    | Multiparty signed/agreed   |
| <b>Interim arrangement</b> | Yes  |

### **Georgian Separatist Conflicts (1989 - )**

#### **The Abkhazia-Georgia Conflict (1992 - )**

Much like other conflicts that sprung up in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Abkhazia conflict emerged as an ethnic conflict following heightened nationalist awareness among Abkhaz and other minorities residing in the region. In 1978, protests against the Georgianization of Abkhazia emerged from Abkhaz intellectuals. Towards the end of the 1980s, both Georgian and Abkhaz nationalists demanded independence from the Soviet Union. Tensions began following clashes at Sukhumi University between pro-Unity protestors and Abkhaz nationalists in April-July 1989. However, the conflict remained a legal conflict up until August 1992 following the 1991 elections, wherein Abkhazians felt they were under-represented. War broke out between Abkhaz separatists, supported by Russian forces and hired fighters from the North Caucasus. Within Abkhazia, Abkhaz separatists were generally supported by ethnically Armenian and Russian residents. Within Georgia the conflict was exacerbated following conflict in South Ossetia from 1989 onwards in addition to political strife between the supporters of the ousted president, Zviad Gamsakurdia, and the post-coup government led by Eduard Shevardnadze.

Significant human rights abuses occurred, particularly after the capture of Sukhumi in September 1993, after which Georgian residents, which consisted of 45 per cent of the population in 1989, were faced with mass expulsion and ethnic cleansing. Russian Peacekeepers acting under the umbrella of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), were deployed on the Abkhazia-Georgia line following a ceasefire in 1994. Atrocities towards ethnic Georgian's continued with over 1,500 deaths post-conflict. In 1998 fighting re-erupted following a flare up of fighting in South Ossetia. Again it was resolved with a ceasefire agreement. However, as of 2016 the conflict remains unresolved.

#### **The Russo-Georgian War (South Ossetia) (1989 - )**

Following heightened nationalist awareness among Ossetians and policies undertaken at the expense of ethnic minorities by the Georgian government led by President Gamsakurdia, calls for Ossetian Independence increased. After clashes broke out in Tskhinvali during a pro-Georgia protest, the conflict began to militarize. When President Gamsakurdia maintained his position after elections in 1990, which were boycotted by South Ossetia, Ossetians organised elections for their own parliament. The central Georgian government reacted by abolishing the autonomous status previously held by South Ossetia. The formation of ethnic militias and increased attacks on civilians escalated on both sides and in December 1990 a state of emergency and an economic blockade were declared. Fighting was haphazard as fighters on both sides were poorly equipped and disciplined. The Georgian National Guard was primarily formed of volunteers due to a lack of resources and as a result fighters often acted out of self-interest. Assaults on Tskhinvali by Georgian forces were repulsed on several occasions, and Georgian forces were also noted to expel Ossetian residents and destroy villages out of revenge and as a means to re-claim territory.

The Sochi agreement (1992) established a ceasefire and security corridor, as well as divided the territory between Georgian and Ossetian administration. Relations deteriorated drastically in April 2008, and following shelling of Georgian villages on August 1, the Georgian military responded in force retaking most of Tskhinvali by August 7. Russian forces intervened on behalf of Ossetian separatists and after retaking Tskhinvali, opened another front in the Kodori Gorge. A ceasefire was brokered on August

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| <b>Stage</b>           | Pre-negotiation/process  |
| <b>Conflict nature</b> | Government/territory   |
| <b>Peace process</b>   | Abkhazia peace process   |
| <b>Parties</b>         | On behalf of the Abkhaz Side Mr. Otar Kakalia;<br><div></div> On behalf of the Georgian Side Mr. Avtandil Ioseliani   |
| <b>Third parties</b>   | -  |
| <b>Description</b>     | Agreement deals with victims, including the burial of the deceased; the exchange of burial locations of missing persons; the identification of the buried - with aid from the international community - and the issue of hostages. |

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**Agreement document** [GE\\_000119\\_STATEMENT OF THE STATE COMMISSIONS OF ABKHAZIA AND GEORGIA on Search for those Persons Missing without Trace.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

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## Women, girls and gender

**Participation** No specific mention.

**Equality** No specific mention.

**Particular groups of women** No specific mention.

**International law** No specific mention.

**New institutions** No specific mention.

**Violence against women** No specific mention.

**Transitional justice** Transitional justice→Past and gender  
Page 1, ... agreed upon the following:  
... 4. With regard to the huge problems facing the Parties in identification of remains of those perished, the State Commissions appeal to the Coordination Council, to the group of friends of the UN Secretary General, as well as to the International Committee of Red Cross, to other international humanitarian organizations to render technical assistance. Solution of this extremely difficult issue would contribute to easing the pain and suffering of hundreds of mothers waiting for their sons.

**Institutional reform** No specific mention.

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| <b>Development</b>    | No specific mention. |
| <b>Implementation</b> | No specific mention. |
| <b>Other</b>          | No specific mention. |

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