

31. The situation in Georgia

Decision of 30 January 2004 (4906th meeting): resolution 1524 (2004)

At its 4906th meeting, on 30 January 2004,¹ the Security Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 14 January 2004 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.² In his report, the Secretary-General welcomed the momentum that the United Nations-led peace process had gained in the course of 2003, as well as the increased involvement of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General and the renewed willingness of the sides to engage constructively on practical matters in areas of key concern: economic cooperation, return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and political and security matters. He noted, however, that progress had remained painfully slow and that sustained efforts by the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), supported by the Group of Friends, had been required to keep the sides focused on moving forward.

The Secretary-General observed that the increasingly complex political situation on both sides of the ceasefire line and the events that had led to the resignation of the President of Georgia in November 2003 had put the peace process temporarily on hold. He encouraged both sides to continue with the implementation of outstanding recommendations of the 2000 joint assessment mission³ and the 2002 security assessment mission.⁴ Two years after the finalization of the document entitled “Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competences between Tbilisi and

Sukhumi,” negotiations on the future political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia had not yet started. The Secretary-General had appealed to the Abkhaz side to abandon its uncompromising position and take advantage of the change of leadership in Tbilisi to negotiate a mutually acceptable and lasting settlement. The Secretary-General recommended the further extension of the mandate of UNOMIG for six months, owing to his conviction that the presence of UNOMIG continued to remain critical for maintaining stability in the zone of conflict and enhancing the peace process towards a comprehensive political settlement.

The President (Chile) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution;⁵ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1524 (2004), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Stressed its strong support for the document entitled “Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competences between Tbilisi and Sukhumi”;

Urged the parties to participate in a more active, regular and structured manner in the task forces established at the first Geneva meeting and stressed that results-oriented activities in priority areas remained key to building common ground between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides and ultimately for concluding meaningful negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement;

Called upon the parties to spare no effort to overcome their ongoing mutual mistrust;

Called again upon the parties to ensure the necessary revitalization of the peace process in all its major aspects, including their work in the Coordinating Council and its relevant mechanisms;

Stressed the urgent need for progress on the question of the refugees and internally displaced persons;

Recalled that the Abkhaz side bore a particular responsibility to protect the returnees and to facilitate the return of the remaining displaced population;

Called upon both parties to publicly dissociate themselves from any militant rhetoric and demonstrations of support for military options or for the activities of illegal armed groups;

Urged the parties, once again, to take all necessary steps to identify those responsible for the shooting down of a UNOMIG helicopter on 8 October 2001, to bring them to justice, and to inform the Special Representative of the steps taken;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 31 July 2004, subject to a review as

¹ At its 4904th meeting, held in private on 27 January 2004, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission for Georgia, and had a constructive exchange of views. During this period, in addition to the meetings covered in this section, the Council held a number of meetings in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B. The meetings were held on 23 January 2004 (4900th), 26 July 2004 (5010th), 25 July 2005 (5234th), 26 January 2006 (5357th), 28 March 2006 (5398th), 6 October 2006 (5544th), 10 April 2007 (5657th), 11 October 2007 (5756th) and 23 January 2004 (4900th).

² S/2004/26.

³ See S/2001/59, annex II.

⁴ See S/2003/412, para. 16.

⁵ S/2004/77.

appropriate of its mandate by the Council in the event of changes in the mandate of the collective peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

**Decision of 29 July 2004 (5013th meeting):
resolution 1554 (2004)**

At its 4916th meeting, on 26 February 2004, at which no statements were made, the Council was briefed by the President of Georgia.

In his briefing, the President of Georgia expressed his unwavering commitment to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia. He called upon the people of Abkhazia to rise above the confrontation and seize the unique window of opportunity due to the recent developments and changes in Georgia. He expressed his readiness to guarantee the highest possible degree of autonomy to Abkhazia within the State of Georgia. With regard to relations with the Russian Federation, the President of Georgia stated, *inter alia*, that the policy of the Russian Federation of providing citizenship to the population of the conflict regions would have to end. Additionally, the visa-free regime in place in Abkhazia and the former South Ossetia would have to end, or be introduced for every individual inhabitant and citizen of Georgia in conjunction with the Georgian Central Government and the Georgian authorities — not unilaterally with unrecognized local authorities. The President stressed that the Geneva process, initiated in Sochi by the President of the Russian Federation, also had to advance, specifically the deployment of a civilian police unit in the Gali region as a necessary instrument for the return of the internally displaced persons and refugees.⁶

At its 4958th meeting, on 29 April 2004, at which the Prime Minister of Georgia made a statement, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, dated 20 April 2004.⁷ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that his Special Representative and UNOMIG had continued efforts to promote stability in a complex political environment and to assist the sides in renewing their dialogue and building common ground as a means of advancing the peace process. However, progress had remained painfully slow and no movement had been

made by the Abkhaz side on the core political question and negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement had not yet begun. Cautious optimism was however expressed in view of the change of leadership in Tbilisi and the renewed efforts of the Government of Georgia to resolve the country's internal conflicts. The Secretary-General urged the Abkhaz side to permit the deployment of UNOMIG civilian police in the Gali sector, in line with its earlier commitments, to facilitate improved police practices and better cooperation between local law enforcement agencies and thereby to improve the overall security situation for all inhabitants of the area.

In his briefing to the Council, the Prime Minister of Georgia reiterated the position that his country remained committed to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia. With regard to the establishment of the civilian police component in the Gali region, the Prime Minister noted that the Abkhaz authorities had continued to obstruct the full formation and deployment of the units, which continued to create significant problems for the population in the Gali district. Regret was expressed over the fact that the Abkhaz side had refused to participate in the third meeting of the Geneva process in February 2004 and that the Council should thus pay more attention to the unconstructive position of the "separatists". He noted that three years had elapsed since the Group of Friends had agreed on and supported the Boden document on the distribution of constitutional competencies between Tbilisi and Sukhumi, and that the Russian Federation, as facilitator, had been trying to transmit the paper to the Abkhaz side, to little avail. Finally, the Prime Minister requested the international community, and in particular the Council, to reinvigorate their efforts to reach a comprehensive, peaceful resolution to the conflict.⁸

At its 5013th meeting, on 29 July 2004, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 14 July 2004 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.⁹ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that, on the political front, while the Georgian and Abkhaz sides had continued with practical cooperation, particularly in the security domain, a substantive dialogue on the key issues of the conflict had still been lacking. He

⁶ S/PV.4916, pp. 3-5.

⁷ S/2004/315.

⁸ S/PV.4958, pp. 2-4.

⁹ S/2004/570.

noted the widely held belief that the existing complex political situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, on the eve of the “presidential elections” scheduled for October 2004, had been one of the main factors negatively affecting the positions of the Abkhaz side in the Georgian-Abkhaz peace process and the pace of the peace process in general. He expressed his strong hope that, with time, the leadership in Sukhumi would reconsider its stance and respond constructively to the offer by the new Georgian leadership for a renewed and direct meaningful dialogue on all substantive issues of the conflict.

The Secretary-General noted that UNOMIG continued its efforts on the three issues identified as priority areas for advancing the peace process: political and security matters, return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and economic cooperation. The Group of Friends had continued to provide invaluable support to those efforts. However, it had remained clear that without a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, there would be neither lasting security nor economic prosperity.

The Secretary-General welcomed the discussions that had taken place between the parties on security guarantees and the return of refugees. With regard to the security of UNOMIG personnel, he stated that the readiness of both sides to provide meaningful assurances towards that end should be followed up with resolute action to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of criminal acts against Mission personnel. The Secretary-General stated that the role played by UNOMIG with regard to preventing the resumption of hostilities and pursuing a lasting solution of the conflict remained relevant and important and recommended that the mandate of UNOMIG should be extended for a further period of six months.

The President (Romania) drew the attention of the Council to a letter dated 26 July 2004 from the representative of Georgia.¹⁰ The President then drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution;¹¹ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and

¹⁰ S/2004/595, concerning recent developments in the conflict resolution process in Abkhazia, Georgia, and highlighting some of the changes and achievements that had taken place in Georgia under the new Government, particularly as they related to the peace process.

¹¹ S/2004/600.

without debate as resolution 1554 (2004), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Called upon the parties to spare no effort to overcome their ongoing mutual mistrust, and underlined that the process of negotiation leading to a lasting political settlement acceptable to both sides would require concessions from both sides;

Urged the parties to participate in a more active, regular and structured manner in the task forces established at the first Geneva meeting (to address issues in the priority areas of economic cooperation, the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, and political and security matters);

Urged the parties to abide by the provisions of the protocols on security issues in the Gali sector signed on 8 October 2003 and 19 January 2004, to continue their regular meetings and to cooperate more closely with each other to improve security in the sector;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 31 January 2005, subject to a review as appropriate of its mandate by the Council in the event of changes in the mandate of the collective peacekeeping force;

Requested the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Council regularly informed and to report three months from the date of the adoption of the resolution on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.

**Decision of 28 January 2005 (5116th meeting):
resolution 1582 (2005)**

At its 5116th meeting, on 28 January 2005, in which the representative of Georgia was invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 17 January 2005 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.¹² In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that particularly the second half of 2004 had not been easy for the Georgian-Abkhaz peace process. While the parties had come together during the course of the year on some substantive issues, efforts to advance a dialogue had encountered serious challenges. Renewed tensions in the zone of conflict had led to a chain of events that had brought all contacts between the sides to a halt by mid-year, so that the Mission’s main efforts had focused on finding ways to re-establish the dialogue and avoid regression. The political uncertainty in Sukhumi had also seriously limited the possibility of continued dialogue. However, the Secretary-General noted that the high-level meeting of the Group of Friends, held on 13 and 14 December 2004 in Geneva, had been a timely opportunity to reflect on the overall

¹² S/2005/32.

state of the peace process and to discuss how best to address the challenges to the pursuit of a lasting and comprehensive solution to the conflict. The support of the Group of Friends had remained invaluable for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative. Convinced that UNOMIG had continued to play a key role in preventing instability on the ground and in promoting a political settlement of the conflict, the Secretary-General, in his report, recommended that the mandate of UNOMIG be extended for a further six months.

The President (Argentina) drew the attention of the Council to a letter dated 26 January 2005 from the representative of Georgia,¹³ and to a draft resolution;¹⁴ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1582 (2005), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Commended and strongly supported the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, with the assistance of the Russian Federation in its capacity as facilitator as well as of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to promote the stabilization of the situation and the achievement of a comprehensive political settlement, which must include a settlement of the political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia;

Urged the parties once again to implement the recommendations of the joint assessment mission of November 2000 to the Gali sector, regretted that there had been no progress to that effect despite the positive consideration by the parties given to those recommendations at the first Geneva meeting, and called again upon the Abkhaz side to agree to the opening as soon as possible of the Gali branch of the human rights office in Sukhumi and to provide security conditions for its unhindered functioning;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 31 July 2005, subject to a review as appropriate of its mandate by the Council in the event of changes in the mandate of the collective peacekeeping force.

**Decision of 29 July 2005 (5242nd meeting):
resolution 1615 (2005)**

At its 5242nd meeting, on 29 July 2005,¹⁵ in which the representative of Georgia was invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 July 2005 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.¹⁶ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that resumed participation of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides in the United Nations-chaired Geneva meetings of the Group of Friends¹⁷ and in meetings addressing various practical aspects of the peace process after a prolonged suspension of direct contacts had been an encouraging development. He appealed to both sides to seize the new opportunities for dialogue, given the improving regional environment, to achieve concrete progress in priority areas and related confidence-building measures so that, as a starting point, negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict could take place using the document entitled “Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competencies between Tbilisi and Sukhumi” and its transmittal letter.

The Secretary-General urged the Georgian side to be forthcoming in meeting Abkhaz security concerns and the Abkhaz side to effectively address practical and security concerns of the local population and returnees and honour previous commitments of accepting the deployment of UNOMIG police officers in the Gali district. He also urged the Abkhaz side to allow the opening of a human rights sub-office in Gali and the teaching of the local youth in their native Georgian language. As UNOMIG had continued to play an important role in preventing a destabilization of the situation on the ground in pursuing both practical activities and a lasting solution to the conflict, the Secretary-General recommended that the mandate of UNOMIG be extended for a further period of six months.

¹³ S/2005/45, concerning recent presidential elections in Abkhazia, Georgia, and stating that they needed to be considered illegal; concerning also the role of the Russian Federation in alleged assistance to the Abkhaz separatists; and expressing the readiness of Georgia to negotiate a solution to the conflict with Abkhazia.

¹⁴ S/2005/48.

¹⁵ At its 5144th, 5174th, 5238th and 5358th meetings held in private on 21 March, 4 May and 27 July 2005 and 26 January 2006, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative and Head of UNOMIG, and heard statements by the representative of Georgia, the Special Envoy of the President of Georgia and the representative of the Russian Federation.

¹⁶ S/2005/453.

¹⁷ See S/2005/269, paras. 10-12.

The President (Greece) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Romania, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States;¹⁸ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1615 (2005), by which the Council, inter alia:

Commended and strongly supported the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, with the assistance of the Russian Federation in its capacity as facilitator as well as of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to promote the stabilization of the situation and the achievement of a comprehensive political settlement, which must include a settlement of the political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia;

Deeply regretted the continuing refusal of the Abkhaz side to agree to a discussion on the substance of the document entitled “Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competencies between Tblisi and Sukhumi”, again strongly urged the Abkhaz side to receive the document and its letter of transmittal, urged both parties thereafter to give them full and open consideration and to engage in constructive negotiations on their substance, and urged those having influence with the parties to promote that outcome;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 31 January 2006, subject to a review as appropriate of its mandate by the Council in the event of changes in the mandate of the collective peacekeeping force.

**Decision of 31 January 2006 (5363rd meeting):
resolution 1656 (2006)**

At its 5363rd meeting, on 31 January 2006, in which the representatives of Georgia and Germany were invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 January 2006 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.¹⁹ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, inter alia, that the United Nations had remained committed to assisting the Georgian and Abkhaz sides in the search for a peaceful and comprehensive settlement. In an encouraging development, both sides had engaged constructively with the mediation of the Special Representative in exchanges on joint draft documents on the non-resumption of hostilities, as well as the safe and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons. He called upon both sides to refrain from actions or statements that could damage emerging opportunities in the peace process. The Georgian side

¹⁸ S/2005/492.

¹⁹ S/2006/19.

was urged to take into due account the Abkhaz security concerns, and the Abkhaz side effectively to meet the security and human rights concerns of the local population and returnees to the Gali district. The Secretary-General noted that the reluctance of the Abkhaz side to implement the recommendations of the 2000 joint assessment mission²⁰ and the 2002 security assessment mission²¹ had not been conducive to progress. Stressing that the free movement of UNOMIG personnel had been of continuing concern, both sides were reminded of their obligation to ensure the safety of UNOMIG personnel at all times. Stating that UNOMIG had continued to play a key role in maintaining stability in the conflict zone and facilitating progress towards a sustainable political solution of the conflict, the Secretary-General recommended that the UNOMIG mandate be extended for a further six-month period.

The President (United Republic of Tanzania) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and the United States;²² it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1656 (2006), by which the Council, inter alia: decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG until 31 March 2006; and decided to remain actively seized of the matter.

**Decision of 31 March 2006 (5405th meeting):
resolution 1666 (2006)**

At its 5405th meeting, on 31 March 2006, in which the representatives of Georgia and Germany were invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 17 March 2006 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.²³ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, inter alia, that on 2 and 3 February 2006, senior representatives of the Group of Friends had met in Geneva, under the chairmanship of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The Group of Friends had underlined the need for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the framework of the relevant Council resolutions, and had reaffirmed their commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. They had agreed on the need to address the core

²⁰ S/2001/59, annex II.

²¹ S/2003/412, para. 16.

²² S/2006/58.

²³ S/2006/173.

political issues of the conflict, in addition to continuing work on confidence-building measures. The Secretary-General stated that was essential that the Georgian and Abkhaz sides actively follow up on the understandings reached at the Geneva meeting of the Group of Friends. In particular, early finalization of the documents on the non-use of force and on the return of internally displaced persons and refugees would be a strong indication of their commitment to make tangible progress in the peace process. As UNOMIG had continued to play a key role in maintaining stability in the conflict zone and in facilitating progress towards a sustainable political solution of the conflict, the Secretary-General recommended that the UNOMIG mandate be extended for a further six-month period.

The President (Argentina) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and the United States;²⁴ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1666 (2006), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Urged both parties to finalize without delay the package of documents on the non-use of violence and on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons for the Gali district and to take necessary steps to secure the protection and dignity of the civilian population, including the returnees;

Called upon both parties to follow up on their expressed readiness for a meeting of their highest authorities without preconditions; urged the Georgian side to address seriously legitimate Abkhaz security concerns;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 15 October 2006;

Strongly supported the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and called upon the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General to continue giving her their steadfast and unified support.

**Decision of 13 October 2006 (5549th meeting):
resolution 1716 (2006)**

At its 5549th meeting, on 13 October 2006,²⁵ in which the representatives of Georgia and Germany were invited to attend to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 28 September 2006 concerning the

²⁴ S/2006/201.

²⁵ At the 5483rd meeting, held in private on 11 July 2006, the Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia and the representative of the Russian Federation made statements.

situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.²⁶ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that after expectations of a new momentum in the negotiation process had been raised by the resumption of the Coordinating Council on 15 May 2006²⁷ and exchanges of proposals between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides, a new and tense situation had emerged, in particular as a result of the Georgian special operation in the upper Kodori Valley on 25 July 2006. That operation, under the direction of the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Defence of Georgia, had the stated objective of restoring law and order in the area. Following this event, the Abkhaz side had called into question the usefulness of attempting to reach further agreements in the framework of the settlement process, and the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities had insisted on the resolution of the situation in the upper Kodori Valley as a precondition for the resumption of dialogue. Based on the experience of, *inter alia*, the event in the Kodori Valley, the Secretary-General identified several issues of special relevance: the commitment by both sides to provide advance notification and full transparency in the movement of those pieces of military equipment and armed personnel that were permitted under the Moscow Agreement; maintaining open channels of communication and dialogue; and agreement on the modalities for the monitoring of the Kodori Valley. The Secretary-General noted that as the developments during the reporting period had highlighted once again that the presence of UNOMIG remained essential for maintaining stability in the zone of conflict, promoting practical cooperation among the sides and facilitating progress towards a negotiated peaceful settlement of the conflict, he recommended the extension of the UNOMIG mandate for a further period of six months.

The President (Japan) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and the United Kingdom;²⁸ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1716 (2006), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 15 April 2007;

Requested the Secretary-General to include detailed information on developments in the Kodori Valley and on the progress on efforts for the return of refugees and internally

²⁶ S/2006/771.

²⁷ S/2006/435, para. 5.

²⁸ S/2006/804.

displaced persons, particularly to the Gali district, in his next report on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia;

Strongly supported the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and called upon the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General to continue giving him their steadfast and unified support.

**Decision of 13 April 2007 (5661st meeting):
resolution 1752 (2007)**

At its 5661st meeting, on 13 April 2007,²⁹ in which the representatives of Georgia and Germany were invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 3 April 2007 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.³⁰ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that he welcomed the progress made by the two sides towards the implementation of resolution 1716 (2006). In particular, he welcomed the continuation of joint patrolling of the Kodori Valley by UNOMIG and the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping force. He noted with satisfaction that no heavy weapons had been observed in the valley and that, compared with the situation observed by the joint patrol in October 2006, the number of armed personnel had decreased. The expansion of UNOMIG assistance to the Gali district in terms of both activities of the United Nations police advisers and the full-time presence there of the Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia, was also welcomed. However, the events of 11 March 2007 in the upper Kodori Valley³¹ had been a major setback which demonstrated the continued volatile situation. Expressing the belief that the presence of UNOMIG had continued to contribute to security in the conflict zone and international efforts to promote political dialogue between the parties, the Secretary-General recommended that the mandate of UNOMIG be extended for a further six-month period.

The President (United Kingdom) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States;³² it was put to

the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1752 (2007), by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Condemned the attack on villages in the upper Kodori Valley on 11-12 March 2007, and urged all sides to extend full support to the ongoing investigation;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 15 October 2007;

Requested the Secretary-General to make use of the extended mandate to support the parties in implementing measures to build confidence and to establish and intensive dialogue, and to inform the Council of progress made in his next report on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia;

Strongly supported the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and called upon the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General to continue giving him their steadfast and unified support.

**Decision of 15 October 2007 (5759th meeting)
resolution 1781 (2007)**

At its 5759th meeting, on 15 October 2007,³³ in which the representative of Germany was invited to participate, the Council included in its agenda the report of the Secretary-General dated 3 October 2007 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia.³⁴ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that while the relative calm observed in the zone of conflict during the previous reporting period had been in favourable contrast with previous periods, the deadly clash that had occurred on 20 September 2007 had been the most serious incident involving the Georgian and Abkhaz sides in many years. In the incident, which occurred outside the zone of conflict, seven Abkhaz personnel had been apprehended by the Georgian side, one had been wounded and two former Russian officers reportedly on contract with the Abkhaz forces had been killed. While the Abkhaz *de facto* authorities had claimed it had been a raid by Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs personnel on the Abkhaz training camp co-located with a *de facto* border guard post at Bokhundjara, within Abkhaz-controlled territory, the Georgian side claimed that a group of Abkhaz “saboteurs” had entered Georgian-controlled territory to disrupt work on the road to the upper Kodori Valley, which was under construction, in an attempt to isolate

²⁹ At its 5623rd and 5658th meetings, held in private on 24 January and 10 April 2007, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative and Head of UNOMIG and the Prime Minister of Georgia, respectively.

³⁰ S/2007/182.

³¹ See S/2007/182, para. 27.

³² S/2007/200.

³³ At its 5724th meeting, held in private on 26 July 2007, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, heard a statement by the representative of Georgia and had an exchange of views.

³⁴ S/2007/588.

the valley from the rest of Georgia. In the wake of this incident UNOMIG had, with the consent of both sides, initiated its own independent fact-finding efforts to clarify the circumstances of the incident.

The overall approach to the settlement of the conflict, remained that a successful dialogue on security, the return of internally displaced persons, refugees and economic rehabilitation and humanitarian issues would help to bring about a comprehensive political settlement, but the situation with regard to actual contact between the two sides remained disappointing and overshadowed by developments that had generated distrust. Observing that the presence of UNOMIG had continued to contribute to security in the conflict zone, and the international community had continued to promote a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the Secretary-General recommended the extension of the UNOMIG mandate for a further six-month period.

The President (Ghana) drew the attention of the Council to a draft resolution submitted by France,

Germany, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and the United States;³⁵ it was put to the vote and adopted unanimously and without debate as resolution 1781 (2007), by which the Council, inter alia:

Urged the continued active engagement of both sides within the Joint Fact-finding Group and expressed its support for the report of the Joint Fact-finding Group on the rocket firing incident in the upper Kodori Valley on 11 March 2007;

Decided to extend the mandate of UNOMIG for a new period terminating on 15 April 2008;

Requested the Secretary-General to make use of the extended mandate to support the parties in implementing measures to build confidence and to establish an intensive and meaningful dialogue, and to inform the Council of progress made in his next report on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia;

Strongly supported the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and called upon the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General to continue giving him their steadfast and unified support.

³⁵ S/2007/603.

32. Briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe¹

¹ As from the 4964th meeting, on 7 May 2004, the wording of the item “Briefing by His Excellency Mr. Mircea Geoana, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe” was revised to read “Briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe”.

Deliberations of 7 May 2004 to 28 September 2007 (4964th, 5134th, 5346th and 5751st meetings)

At its 4964th, 5134th, 5346th and 5751st meetings,² at which statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States, the Security Council was briefed by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In those annual briefings to the Council, the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE underlined the importance of OSCE as the primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict

rehabilitation, and outlined the priorities of the Organization within the politico-military, the economic and environmental and the human dimensions. Those priorities included counter-terrorism; control of the spread of small arms and light weapons; policing; border management and security; economic and environmental threats; election monitoring; democratization assistance; monitoring of the freedom of the media; promotion of tolerance and education; combating international crime; promotion of the rule of law; and conflict prevention with a special focus on Kosovo³ and unresolved conflicts such as those in

³ In this Supplement, the term “Kosovo” is used as the short form for “Kosovo, State Union of Serbia and Montenegro” and “Kosovo, Republic of Serbia”, without prejudice to issues of status.

² Held on 7 May 2004, 4 March 2005, 16 January 2006 and 28 September 2007.