

DIPLOMATIC MEMORANDA OF KAHARAGIA

# **Diplomatic Memorandum on the Status of South Ossetia**

DM-2026-003





# Diplomatic Memorandum on the Status of South Ossetia

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*Ossetian self-determination, Russian absorption and the conditions for a free  
status decision*

SECRETARIAT OF STATE, SECTION II — FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PUBLISHED BY

THE SOVEREIGN'S PRINTER

ROYAL CHANCELLERY, KAHARAGIA

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Issued by the Secretariat of State, Section II — Foreign Affairs. A Diplomatic Memorandum states the position of the State of Kaharagia on a question of recognition or contested sovereignty, the grounds on which that position rests, and the reservations to which it is subject. Recognition, accreditation, immunity and privilege are conferred by the appropriate Sovereign instrument; this publication records the position those instruments give effect to.

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# The Determination

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## POSITION OF THE STATE

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Kaharagia recognises the Ossetian claim to self-determination; Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Republic of South Ossetia as a sovereign state

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|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SELF-DETERMINATION   | Recognised. The Ossetian people hold a legitimate claim that is not reducible to Georgian territorial integrity.                             |
| FAMILY OF CLAIM      | Separation from a settled state, the heaviest burden under DM-2026-001.                                                                      |
| EXTERNAL CONTROL     | Absorption. Effective control was found by the Strasbourg Court and is being converted into incorporation.                                   |
| PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE   | Russian effective control and a treaty-driven merger of state functions prevent the present order from proving independent sovereign choice. |
| STATE RECOGNITION    | Withheld pending a free and internationally credible status process. Disposition: deferral.                                                  |
| GOVERNMENT           | No de jure recognition. Humanitarian and practical contact may occur and decides nothing about status.                                       |
| DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS | Not established.                                                                                                                             |

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## COMMON DOCTRINAL BASIS

*A people's right to self-determination is not extinguished by an inherited border. Nor is it fulfilled by foreign occupation, coerced integration, ethnic cleansing, demographic engineering, or a nominal independence maintained under another state's effective control. Recognition of a state is separate from endorsement of its government and from the establishment of diplomatic relations.*



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## 1. Executive Position

Kaharagia recognises that South Ossetians hold a genuine right to determine their political status, and that their future is not settled by the restoration of Georgia's internationally recognised borders alone. Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Republic of South Ossetia as a sovereign state. The institutional order in the territory is being merged into that of the Russian Federation by treaty, and the ethnic Georgian communities displaced in 2008 are still refused return.

The merger is documented by the parties conducting it. Russia and South Ossetia signed a Treaty on Deepening Allied Interaction in Moscow on 9 May 2026. The State Duma ratified it on 13 May and the Russian President signed the federal law of ratification on 25 May 2026. The Kremlin's own notice of the ratification states that the parties will take further steps towards the creation of a single economic space, the improvement of citizens' well-being and living standards, and a gradual transition to a unified framework for external borrowing and foreign investment. On 22 June 2026 the President of South Ossetia met the Russian President at the Kremlin; the published record of that meeting identifies him by a Russian office, Adviser to the President. He resigned in Tskhinvali the following day.

Deferral is not a denial. Kaharagia does not find that sovereign title vests in Georgia, and it does not find that South Ossetians would refuse independence if they were asked freely. It finds that under present conditions they cannot be asked.

The choices open to the Ossetian people include independence, a guaranteed settlement with Georgia, free association with Russia, and union with North Ossetia inside the Russian Federation. Kaharagia supports a process in which that choice is made without foreign troops, coercion or demographic exclusion. Until such a process exists, no act of the present authorities can be read as the choice.

## 2. A Claim Recognised and a State Deferred

The Ossetian file separates cleanly along the doctrine's lines, and each answer is given here on its own:

- **The right of self-determination.** Recognised. South Ossetians hold a legitimate claim to determine their political status, and Georgian territorial integrity does not answer it.
- **Statehood.** Withheld. Kaharagia does not at present recognise the Republic of South Ossetia as a sovereign state.
- **Government.** No de jure recognition. The authorities in control may be dealt with for humanitarian and practical purposes, and such dealings decide nothing about status.
- **Diplomatic relations.** Not established.

The doctrine also requires each case to be placed in a family of claim before any further test is applied, and provides that classification is a question of history which neither party may choose. No earlier South Ossetian external sovereignty is asserted in the material before the Secretariat, and the claim as pressed is not the restoration of one.

The case therefore falls in the third family, separation from a settled state, which carries the heaviest burden. Classification raises the bar. It does not decide the case, and this deferral does not rest on the remedy test that family imposes.

On the doctrine's scale of dependency, effective control and absorption, the degree found is absorption. The European Court of Human Rights found Russian effective control. What has been built on top of that control since is incorporation: by treaty, by the merger of state functions, by the mass conferral of the patron's citizenship, and by the movement of personnel between the two administrations. The disposition is deferral, and the conditions on which it falls to be reviewed are stated below.

## **2.1 The Ossetian People and the Territorial Question**

South Ossetians form part of the wider Ossetian people, whose communities lie on both sides of the Caucasus range. North Ossetia-Alania is a republic of the Russian Federation, named in Article 65 of its Constitution. The cross-border character of the people is not a Kaharagian construction. On leaving office the outgoing president described the task as overcoming the fate of a divided people and reuniting with North Ossetia and with Great Russia.

The southern community's separate administration is older than the present dispute. The South Ossetian Autonomous Region was constituted inside the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1922. Fighting between Georgian and South Ossetian forces ended with the Sochi Agreement of 24 June 1992, which established a ceasefire and created a Joint Control Commission and a joint peacekeeping force. Freedom House records that large parts of the territory held de facto independence from the close of that conflict.

South Ossetians are therefore not merely residents of a Georgian administrative district. Their political aspirations and their security fears have a history independent of the 2008 war, and the violence of the final Soviet years and the years after Georgian independence produced a durable rejection of unqualified rule from Tbilisi.

A settlement that restored Georgian administration without consent or guarantees would risk reproducing the conflict. Georgia's territorial integrity is a rule of peace between states, not a title deed over the political future of a people. It therefore does not answer the status question.

A claim to self-determination does not validate every boundary claimed by the de facto authorities, and here the line is contested among Ossetians themselves. Russia recognised the entity in 2008 within its 1990 administrative limits, which enclose slightly less than the 1922 ones, and in 2024 three opposition deputies proposed restoring the 1922 line. Mixed communities, displaced Georgian residents and localities affected by wartime expulsion retain rights whichever line is drawn. The territorial scope of any future state or autonomous entity is to be settled peacefully and with meaningful local participation.

## **2.2 More Than One Ossetian Future**

Ossetian political aspirations have not always pointed to the same destination. A status process must allow independence, union with Russia, free association, and a

guaranteed settlement within Georgia to be argued, and must not treat the present administration as the only authentic voice.

The record of the one occasion on which the question nearly reached a ballot shows why the present administration cannot serve as that voice. On 13 May 2022 the outgoing president signed a decree setting a referendum on joining Russia for 17 July, days after losing the election and before his successor took office. Both the Central Election Commission and the Supreme Court had upheld the validity of the proposal. The Kremlin's spokesman said that no steps had been taken or were planned on the Russian side to admit South Ossetia, and called the initiative legally underdeveloped. The successor suspended the decree before the month was out, citing the inadmissibility of a unilateral decision on a matter affecting the legitimate rights and interests of the Russian Federation, and the uncertainty of the legal consequences.

The same decree recorded that he fully supported the citizens' initiative on further integration, and sent a delegation to Moscow for consultations headed by himself and including the heads of the Central Election Commission and the Supreme Court, the foreign minister and the chair of parliament. The local authority did not decline union. It declined to decide without Moscow.

The question has not since been retired. In its resolution of 8 October 2025, adopted without a vote, the Human Rights Council condemned statements about the intention to hold a referendum in the territory on joining the Russian Federation.

### **3. What the 2008 War Left in South Ossetia**

The war cannot be reduced to a slogan about who fired first. The Strasbourg Court's account, in its Grand Chamber judgment of 21 January 2021, records that on the night of 7 to 8 August 2008, after an extended period of mounting tensions, provocations and incidents, Georgian forces launched an artillery attack on Tskhinvali, and that from 8 August Russian ground forces entered Georgia through Abkhazia and South Ossetia before going on into undisputed Georgian territory. A ceasefire was concluded on 12 August 2008 under European Union auspices, an implementing agreement followed on 8 September, and Russian troops completed their withdrawal from the buffer zone on 10 October 2008, except at Perevi, from which they withdrew on 18 October 2010.

The judgment divides at the ceasefire, and the division governs what it may be quoted for. The Court held by eleven votes to six that events during the active phase of hostilities from 8 to 12 August 2008 did not fall within Russian jurisdiction, because in the chaos of armed confrontation between enemy forces there is no effective control over an area, and it declared that part of the application inadmissible. It held by sixteen votes to one that events after the cessation of hostilities did fall within Russian jurisdiction. Neither holding decides who began the war.

For the period after the ceasefire the Court found an administrative practice contrary to Articles 2, 3 and 8 of the Convention and Article 1 of Protocol No. 1, covering the killing of civilians and the burning and looting of houses in Georgian villages in South Ossetia and the buffer zone, and it found that the victims had been targeted as an ethnic group. It found unanimously an administrative practice contrary to Article 3 as to the conditions in which some 160 Georgian civilians, most of them elderly and

a third of them women, were held in the basement of the internal affairs building in Tskhinvali between about 10 and 27 August 2008, and contrary to Article 5 as to their arbitrary detention. It found by sixteen votes to one an administrative practice contrary to Article 3 as regards acts of torture inflicted on Georgian prisoners of war.

On return the Court was equally exact. It found by sixteen votes to one an administrative practice contrary to Article 2 of Protocol No. 4 as regards the inability of Georgian nationals to return to their homes, a violation still running on 23 May 2018. It found a violation of Article 2 in its procedural aspect, the Russian investigations having failed the standard. It found that Russia had fallen short of its obligation under Article 38 to furnish the Court with the facilities needed to establish the facts, having refused to produce combat reports on grounds of state secrecy. On the complaint about the looting and destruction of schools and libraries it found no violation of the right to education, holding that it lacked sufficient evidence.

The Grand Chamber reserved the question of compensation and answered it on 28 April 2023. It held unanimously that it kept jurisdiction under Article 58 of the Convention although Russia had ceased to be a member of the Council of Europe on 16 March 2022 and a Party to the Convention on 16 September 2022, because a state which ceases to be a Party is not released from its obligations for acts performed before that date. Of the five heads it allowed, the largest was 115,000,000 euros for the non-pecuniary damage of a group of at least 23,000 victims of the practice of preventing the return of Georgian nationals to their homes in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The refusal of return is not only documented. It has been priced.

A separate case addresses what the boundary lines have done since. In *Georgia v. Russia (IV)* the Court found on 9 April 2024 a pattern or system of violations arising from the hardening of the lines, a process that began in 2009. On 14 October 2025 it awarded 253,018,000 euros for at least 29,746 victims. That second decision was a Chamber judgment on just satisfaction rather than a Grand Chamber judgment, and under Articles 43 and 44 of the Convention a Chamber judgment is not final when it is delivered.

One route closed without any decision on the merits. Georgia instituted proceedings against Russia at the International Court of Justice on 12 August 2008 under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and on 15 October 2008 the Court indicated provisional measures requiring both parties to refrain from racial discrimination within South Ossetia, Abkhazia and adjacent areas and to protect the property of displaced persons and refugees. On 1 April 2011 the Court upheld Russia's second preliminary objection, holding that the procedural conditions in Article 22 of that Convention had not been satisfied, and the case could not proceed to the merits. The provisional measures ceased to be operative that day. No international court has ruled on the merits of the racial discrimination alleged.

Criminal accountability is separately in train and separately characterised. A Pre-Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court authorised an investigation on the Prosecutor's own motion on 27 January 2016, into crimes committed in and around South Ossetia in the context of an international armed conflict between 1 July and 10 October 2008, noting that representations received on behalf of 6,335 victims spoke overwhelmingly in favour of opening it. On 24 June 2022 the Chamber issued warrants

of arrest against Mikhail Mindzaev, Gamlet Guchmazov and David Sanakoev, who at the time of the charged conduct held, respectively, the internal affairs portfolio, the headship of a detention facility and the office of representative for human rights in the de facto administration. The Court announced the warrants on 30 June 2022.

The alleged war crimes are unlawful confinement, torture and inhuman treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, hostage-taking and the unlawful transfer of civilians. The Prosecutor's application concerned the confinement of at least 171 actual or perceived Georgian civilians in August 2008, their mistreatment in captivity, and their transfer out of occupied territory in what was called an exchange for persons held by the Georgian authorities. The Prosecutor closed the investigation phase on 16 December 2022 and undertook to open no new lines of inquiry absent a significant change of circumstances. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reported in April 2026 that the warrants remain active and that the three remain at large.

A warrant records that a chamber found reasonable grounds to believe. It is not a conviction, the Court holds no trial in the absence of the accused, and Kaharagia expresses no view on the guilt of any person. A judgment of the Strasbourg Court is not a criminal verdict either; it decides which state answers under the Convention for acts within a territory. Recognition policy preserves both, and no settlement of status retires the question of who is answerable.

Russia's own account of the war is on its own record, and it is a party's account. On 26 August 2008 the Russian President signed decrees recognising the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and establishing diplomatic relations with them, and stated that Russia had until then been invariably guided by the recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity. The same statement alleged that the Georgian leadership had opted for genocide. That is an allegation by a government. No court has found it, the International Court of Justice never reached the merits of the discrimination claim before it, and the Strasbourg Court held that the active phase of the fighting fell outside Russian jurisdiction and did not examine it. Kaharagia records the allegation and does not adopt it.

### **3.1 Effective Control, Integration and the Course Toward Absorption**

The Court held that Russia exercised effective control over South Ossetia, Abkhazia and the buffer zone from 12 August to 10 October 2008, and that after that date the strong Russian presence and the dependency of the South Ossetian and Abkhazian authorities on the Russian Federation indicated continued effective control. Effective control allocates responsibility for human rights within a territory. It confers no sovereign title, and it rules out no local political will.

Under DM-2026-001 a finding of effective control shifts the burden rather than answering the question. What decides this case is what has been built on top of that control. The Agreement on Alliance and Integration, signed on 18 March 2015 for twenty-five years with ten-year extensions and in force from 30 July 2015, established a common defence and security space, opened the boundary with Russia to free movement, integrated the customs services, tied the interior ministries together, simplified the acquisition of Russian citizenship and reached pensions. The Kremlin described

that instrument as acting to preserve South Ossetia's state sovereignty, and it was reported at the time as securing the territory without its joining Russia.

The 2026 treaty states a different object. Beyond the single economic space and the unified framework for external borrowing and foreign investment recorded in the ratification notice, the explanatory note accompanying the bill gives the aims as coordinated foreign, defence and security policy, the gradual unification of energy, gas transport, transport, communications and telecommunications, and conditions favourable to the free movement of capital, goods, services and labour. A Georgian research institute reading the text records that the parties may not assume international commitments contradicting the agreement, that citizens of each may hold posts in the state and municipal bodies of the other, and that residency requirements are in effect abolished for the ownership and disposal of private property.

That provision on office has already been used. On 23 June 2026 the President of South Ossetia resigned to take a post in the Russian presidential administration, the day after his meeting at the Kremlin. The Prime Minister of one week's standing became acting president. He is a Russian citizen who worked in the Russian government and held leadership positions at the Kurchatov Institute National Research Centre from 2014 until 2026, was nominated on 8 June and was confirmed by the local parliament on 16 June. On 10 August 2026 he was at Government House in Moscow, discussing the state programme for South Ossetia's socioeconomic development, the social gasification of its districts and the reliability of its electricity grid with a Russian deputy prime minister. That programme, running from 2026 to 2030, was drafted through an intergovernmental commission whose twenty-third meeting the same deputy prime minister co-chaired in May 2025, and which then also reviewed the integration process in the customs and taxation spheres.

The election called to fill the vacancy tests the same point. The local constitution requires a candidate for president to be a citizen of South Ossetia over the age of thirty-five, fluent in Ossetian and Russian, and permanently resident in the territory for the ten years preceding registration. Five people submitted documents by 13 August 2026 for the poll of 18 September, among them the acting president, and the Central Election Commission has ten days to verify that each package complies with the electoral law. Kaharagia draws no conclusion from a question a local commission has yet to answer. It records that who may stand is being settled inside the arrangement whose freedom is in issue.

The European Union reads the same record the same way. Its statement of 29 April 2026 condemns continued steps aimed at the incorporation of the territory into Russia's political, military, economic, judicial and social spheres, including through dual citizenship arrangements and the transfer of strategic assets, and it condemns the Russian military presence and the continuing process of boundary hardening.

Citizenship is the instrument that carries the rest. A Russian decree of 17 July 2025 permits internal Russian passports to be issued on the territory itself until 1 August 2028, excluding those who acquired Russian citizenship after 26 August 2008, the date of recognition. The Human Rights Council condemned the decisions simplifying the grant of Russian citizenship to residents and the issue of Russian passports directly in the regions. The European Union has drawn the consequence in its own law: un-

der Decision (EU) 2022/2512 of 14 December 2022, no travel document of the Russian Federation issued in, or to a person resident in, the breakaway territories in Georgia is accepted as valid for a visa or for crossing the external borders.

DM-2026-001 asks whether a people and its institutions retain a meaningful freedom to refuse, renegotiate or terminate the relationship with a patron. Assistance alone is not the measure, and many recognised states depend heavily on allies. A ratified treaty deepening the relationship shows its content, not consent to it. This is the third degree on the doctrine's scale. An entity travelling toward absorption cannot demonstrate a free choice of independence, because the choice is being taken out of its hands.

A population may freely choose close alliance, or even lawful integration with another state. That choice must be measured under conditions in which the favoured state does not already control the territory's security environment, its budget and its political survival. A declaration of independence followed by progressive incorporation is not conclusive evidence of sovereign self-determination.

### **3.2 Where Refusal Is Permitted and Where It Is Not**

The territory is not politically silent, and this publication does not pretend otherwise. At the parliamentary election of June 2024 the opposition party United Ossetia took 31.5 per cent of the proportional vote against 30.6 for the president's party, Nykhas, and won one of the seventeen single-member constituencies against Nykhas's four. Almost twenty-two thousand people voted. United Ossetia disputed the count, boycotted the chamber and took its seats in October.

The dispute was partly vindicated and went nowhere. The prosecutor's office opened a criminal case on 6 August 2024 for falsifying results by tampering with ballots, and confirmed that at two polling stations the pens issued to voters had been loaded with disappearing ink, invalidating 695 papers. It then identified the ruling party as the aggrieved party, on the view that most of the spoiled ballots had been cast for it.

The limit appears where the argument turns toward Moscow. In February 2024 three members of the local assembly were stripped of their Russian citizenship by the Federal Security Service and barred from entering Russia until 18 March 2049, after they proposed restoring the boundary with Georgia to its 1922 form. The stated ground was conduct aggravating the military and political situation near the Russian state border. Their challenges in the Russian courts were rejected. The three led the For Justice party, which was among the parties refused registration for the election four months later.

The same limit reaches people who hold no office. Tamar Mearakishvili, an ethnic Georgian civil society activist in the Akhalkgori district who had been reporting allegations of human rights violations to the international community, was detained by the authorities in control on 22 December 2025 on a charge of espionage. She went on hunger strike, was hospitalised on 30 December as her health deteriorated, was subjected to forced feeding, and was released and expelled to Tbilisi-controlled territory on 31 December 2025.

That is the answer to the doctrine's fourth indicator, and it is not the answer a claimant would want. Freedom House rates the territory Not Free at twelve points of a hundred, assesses it as almost entirely dependent on Moscow, which exerts a decisive influ-

ence over its politics and governance, and scores at zero both the freedom of political choices from domination by external forces and the capacity of the elected executive and legislature to determine policy. A politics may be lively and still be fenced. Where the patron can withdraw the citizenship on which travel and ordinary life depend, from legislators who advanced a proposal it disliked, and their party is then kept off the next ballot, the case against the relationship cannot be made and survived on the same terms as the case for it.

### 3.3 Displacement and the Definition of the Electorate

The General Assembly returned to the question on 4 June 2026. By resolution 80/264, adopted by 107 votes to 8 with 55 abstentions, it recognised the right of return of all internally displaced persons and refugees and their descendants, regardless of ethnicity, to their homes throughout Georgia, including in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region and South Ossetia; stressed the need to respect their property rights and to refrain from obtaining property in violation of them; reaffirmed the unacceptability of forced demographic changes; and underlined the need for a timetable for return. The Russian Federation was among the eight states voting against.

The refusal of return is documented rather than alleged. The Secretary-General reported on 4 May 2026 that the authorities in control in South Ossetia continue to deny the return of ethnic Georgians displaced by the conflict, that there was no sustainable return in the year to 31 March 2026, and that no timetable has been developed because some participants in the Geneva International Discussions will not discuss the matter and walk out of the agenda item. Sixty-six rounds of those discussions have been held since they were launched on 15 October 2008, three of them in the reporting year. Georgia's own agency registered 300,439 internally displaced people as at January 2026, a total that rose by 1,267 across 2025, mainly through births.

The Strasbourg Court has attached a figure to the same refusal, and Kaharagia does not treat the figure as the measure of the wrong. Its award of 115,000,000 euros in April 2023 was made for a group of at least 23,000 victims of the practice of preventing return to South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Human Rights Watch, which found that South Ossetian forces had attempted to cleanse Georgian villages of their inhabitants after Georgian forces withdrew on 10 August 2008, put the number driven from their homes at nearly twenty thousand.

Nor can the position be independently checked. Apart from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations and other international organisations were unable to enter South Ossetia during 2025, and the United Nations has had no operational access since August 2008 beyond a single humanitarian assessment mission in August 2016. The Office of the High Commissioner wrote to the authorities in control on 21 October 2025 seeking access and received no reply within the reporting period. The European Union's monitoring mission, deployed on 15 September 2008 with a mandate covering the whole territory of Georgia, has been refused entry to the territory throughout. The Red Cross reports that as at December 2025 the remains of 323 people had been recovered, identified and returned to their families, and that 1,848 remain unaccounted for.

Conditions for those who stayed run in the same direction. Georgia reports the ad-

ministrative boundary closed since September 2019, following the opening of a police post at Chorchana on the territory it controls, and the Office of the High Commissioner records that since August 2022 the crossings open only during the last eleven days of each month. In 2025 the Georgian government recorded fifty-five instances of fencing, boundary signs, trenches and dividing lines on the South Ossetian line, against three on the Abkhaz line. Thirty-four people were detained in South Ossetia during 2025 on the Georgian government's count, and eleven were still held at the end of the year on the count of Georgia's Public Defender.

Georgian has been removed as a language of instruction. Georgia's Public Defender records five schools still open in the Akhalkgori district, none of them teaching in Georgian, with Georgian offered as a subject in the eleventh grade in four of them, thirty-eight pupils enrolled and eighty teachers employed in 2025. Schools in five depopulated villages have closed altogether. In October 2025 the Strasbourg Court awarded twenty million euros for the denial of education in Georgian to a group of at least 4,000 ethnic Georgians along the two boundary lines, part of a total award of 253,018,000 euros for a pattern of violations affecting at least 29,746 people.

Two further measures bear on whether return remains possible at all. The authorities in control in both territories have adopted instruments providing for the issue of documents to the population, and in particular to ethnic Georgians, who are thereby defined as foreign or stateless. The Human Rights Council has recorded the continued demolition of the ruins of houses belonging to displaced people in the territory. Nobody returns to a house that has been levelled, and a returnee registered as a foreigner is not a member of any electorate.

This is not only a humanitarian reservation. It decides whether a future vote could count. DM-2026-001 forbids the use of forced displacement to manufacture the electorate whose vote is then invoked as self-determination, and it requires eligibility and the framing of the question to be settled before a process begins, by a body no interested party controls. Freedom House records that the ethnic Georgians who remain have been denied the ability to take part in elections, and applies to the territory its penalty for the deliberate alteration of ethnic composition. A ballot held among the population left by expulsion, from which the Georgians still living there are also excluded, is evidence of the war and not of consent.

The relevant electorate is to include habitual residents and displaced persons with a demonstrable connection to the territory, under agreed registration and security rules. Participation must not be conditioned upon acceptance of Russian citizenship, of the present administration or of a predetermined outcome. Nor may the citizenship a resident already holds be used to strike that resident from the roll.

Security guarantees must protect both Ossetians who fear renewed Georgian rule and Georgians who were expelled or remain vulnerable. International peacekeeping acceptable to the communities, demilitarised zones, local police recruitment, language rights and constitutional guarantees may be required before a credible vote can occur.

## 4. The Objections to Deferring South Ossetia

The sharpest objection comes from within the series. DM-2026-002 recognises Abkhazia as a state, subject to express reservations, and withholds diplomatic relations. The two territories emerged from wars against the same parent state, depend on the same patron, and fall under the same judicial finding of effective control. A reader may fairly ask why the answers differ.

They differ on the second question the doctrine asks and on the evidence for it. Effective control shifts the burden onto the entity to show that the will it expresses is its own. DM-2026-002 finds that burden discharged far enough to support recognition of a state, on a claim that predates the patron, on institutions that have endured for more than three decades, and on refusal of the patron demonstrated on the record. In December 2024 the Abkhaz assembly voted twenty-one to nil, with two abstentions, to reject an investment agreement signed with Russia on 30 October that year, which would have given preferential treatment to investments of two billion roubles and above and which the opposition argued would let wealthy Russians buy up local property. Protests had preceded the vote and the Abkhaz leader had stepped down during them. Refusal of that kind is what a distinct external will looks like while a patron is present.

The comparison is exact rather than approximate. What the Abkhaz assembly threw out, South Ossetia has conceded by treaty. The 2026 agreement is read as abolishing residency requirements for the ownership and disposal of private property. It was signed on 9 May 2026, ratified by the State Duma on 13 May and confirmed by federal law on 25 May, and nothing before the Secretariat records a local assembly standing in its way.

The South Ossetian record runs the other way on each count. A referendum on joining Russia was suspended because a unilateral decision would affect the legitimate rights and interests of the Russian Federation. Legislators who proposed a boundary initiative Moscow disliked lost the patron's citizenship and their access to its territory for twenty-five years, and the party they led was kept off the next ballot. The head of the executive left for a post in the patron's presidential administration and was replaced by a citizen of the patron state.

The cases differ again in what recognition would accomplish. Recognising Abkhazia asserts a state against both capitals. Recognising South Ossetia, where union within the Russian Federation is one of the destinations in play and is the one its outgoing president named, could supply the intermediate legal step by which a territory passes from one sovereign to another. Article 65 of the Russian Constitution provides that the admission of a new subject is carried out under a federal constitutional law, so the last act of a union would be Russia's own; what such an act would want first is a state to admit. DM-2026-001 forbids Kaharagia to lend recognition to acquisition by force. A recognition capable of being spent that way is worth withholding until the choice can be measured.

The distinction rests on evidence and on consequence, not on the comparative worth of two peoples. If the evidence changes the answer changes, and the conditions below state when.

#### 4.1 Occupation, Patronage and the Neighbouring Cases

A second objection runs the other way. DM-2026-010 recognises the State of Palestine in full and holds that sovereignty is not suspended by occupation. If foreign control does not defeat statehood there, why should it defeat it here? Because control by an adverse power and control by a sponsoring power do different work. Where the controlling state denies the entity's independence, its control suppresses a choice and cannot be allowed to decide the question. Where it is the author and beneficiary of the claimed independence, its control is the reason the choice cannot yet be read.

The other neighbouring cases turn on features absent here. Kosovo, in DM-2026-005, rests on an extended United Nations administration, on status negotiations that failed, and on an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice addressed to its declaration of independence. An advisory opinion is not a judgment, and DM-2026-005 does not treat it as one. That case sits at the first degree of external control, dependency. Somaliland, in DM-2026-007, is placed in the second family of claim, restored statehood, and rests on a separate international personality held before a union and on institutions sustained for more than three decades. Northern Cyprus, in DM-2026-008, closes on non-recognition required, a duty engaged by Security Council resolutions addressed to the declaration itself. No comparable call is addressed to this case, and this deferral is not a duty of non-recognition. It rests on the conditions under which a choice could be made.

Transnistria, in DM-2026-004, reaches the same disposition on the same ground. Deferral there rests on the conditions in which a choice would be made and not on the entitlement of the people who would make it, and that publication leaves the remedial question expressly undecided. Neither case treats the parent state's border as the endpoint. DM-2026-004 supports a settlement within Moldova's recognised borders as the immediate lawful basis for negotiation while declining to declare that no other outcome could ever be legitimate, and Kaharagia does not accept that reintegration into Georgia is the only lawful endpoint here.

The records differ, and DM-2026-004 states where. No instrument merging that territory into the Russian Federation is before the Secretariat, and the mechanism of incorporation identified there operates through the distribution of passports rather than the transfer of state functions by treaty. Here the transfer is on the face of a ratified treaty, and the degree found is absorption rather than effective control. The claims also differ in character. The Transnistrian claim is civic and rests on the attachment of the people living in the territory now; the Ossetian claim is that of a people. That difference affects how each claim can be proved and not what either deferral rests on.

#### 4.2 The Objection That Deferral Is Refusal

A third objection is practical. Deferral, it may be said, is non-recognition with better manners, and its immediate effect is the one Tbilisi wants. But the denials run in both directions. To Georgia it denies that territorial integrity settles the matter, that an inherited administrative boundary carries consent, and that there is any warrant for reincorporation by force. To Russia it denies that the outcome of 2008 or any treaty concluded since creates title, that ratification proves consent, and that annexation would be recognised.

Kaharagia also records what runs against its own first limb. On 8 October 2025 the Human Rights Council reaffirmed, without a vote, its commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. The General Assembly's resolution of 4 June 2026 carried 107 votes. Recognition of the Ossetian claim to self-determination is a minority position, and this publication states it as one rather than as the settled view of the international community.

The two available errors are also not symmetrical. Recognition, once given, is withdrawn only in the exceptional circumstances DM-2026-001 identifies, and others may use it while it stands. Deferral is built to be revisited. Where a choice cannot yet be read, the reversible error is the one to prefer.

The cost of that preference falls on South Ossetians. It leaves them in a marginal position they did not design and cannot end by themselves. The conditions below are therefore written as a route out, and the part of them addressed to the people of the territory is small by design.

### 4.3 Nauru's 2026 Reversal

On 30 July 2026 the Government of the Republic of Naoero announced that it had withdrawn its recognition of the Republic of South Ossetia and the Republic of Abkhazia as independent States, that diplomatic relations with both were terminated with immediate effect, and that the countries concerned would be formally notified through diplomatic channels. Its cabinet took the decision on 21 July. It had established those relations in 2009. Four United Nations member states are reported to recognise South Ossetia after the decision: the Russian Federation, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Syria.

A withdrawal of recognition is a decision about one government's own relations. It is not an adjudication, and it neither creates nor extinguishes the facts on the ground. This deferral rests on the present inability to demonstrate independent sovereign choice, not on the number or wealth of states extending recognition.

Calls not to recognise have been made in this case and are not the same thing as a duty. The extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008 strongly condemned Russia's unilateral decision to recognise the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and urged other countries not to recognise their independence. That is a political call by a regional body. No instrument of the Security Council is addressed to this declaration, and nothing in this publication rests on a duty of non-recognition.

#### OSSETIAN PRINCIPLE

*The Ossetian people have a right to choose among genuine political futures. A choice made while the territory's state functions are being merged into Russia's is not yet a sufficiently free basis for Kaharagian recognition.*

## 5. Conditions for a Future Recognition Decision

Kaharagia reconsiders recognition when the following conditions are substantially met. They are also the standard by which it judges any status process:

- Russian forces and security institutions no longer determine the political environment. During the decisive phase of the process the foreign military presence is verifiably withdrawn or substantially neutralised, or operates only under a genuinely consensual and internationally supervised mandate, with an international security guarantee.
- Political parties, media and civic organisations may advocate independence, union or association with Russia, autonomy or association within Georgia, confederation, or another peaceful status, without intimidation and without the loss of citizenship, residence, registration or livelihood.
- Displaced persons receive a credible route to return, to property remedy and to participation, with safeguards against renewed violence and enforceable remedies for property loss, unlawful detention and forced transfer. The destruction of the dwellings of displaced people ceases.
- International and regional human rights bodies and humanitarian organisations obtain access to the territory, the European Union's monitoring mission is admitted to the ground its mandate already covers, and the boundary crossings operate without seasonal or discretionary closure.
- An internationally supervised process presents clear status options and a defined electorate that does not reward forced displacement, with independent electoral administration, international observation, unrestricted media and no compulsory Russian or Georgian political loyalty.
- Any choice involving integration with another state is implemented through lawful agreement and not by unilateral annexation.
- A negotiated transition governs borders, pensions, currency, citizenship, public debt, military service and cross-border family life.

DM-2026-001 forbids conditions that no addressee could meet. Kaharagia therefore records to whom each is addressed. The withdrawal or consensual regulation of foreign forces, the restoration of access, and the end of citizenship as an instrument of discipline are addressed to the Russian Federation. The renunciation of force and the terms of any guaranteed settlement are addressed to Georgia. The supervised process is addressed to the states and organisations capable of convening one. What the people of South Ossetia can reach by their own conduct is none of this, and the engagement offered below is owed to them regardless.

A forum in which several of these already sit on the agenda exists, and Kaharagia does not ask for one to be invented. The Human Rights Council recognises the Geneva International Discussions, established on the basis of the Ceasefire Agreement of 12 August 2008, as the instrument for addressing that agreement's implementation, the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgian territories, international security arrangements and the return of displaced people. What is missing is not the table but movement at it.

## 6. Kaharagian Policy Until the Choice Can Be Read

Kaharagia recognises the Ossetian people's self-determination claim and withholds recognition from the present Republic of South Ossetia. Humanitarian, cultural and unofficial contact may occur without treating the administration as a sovereign government. Kaharagia opposes both forcible reincorporation by Georgia and annexation by Russia. This position carries the following consequences:

- No instrument of recognition issues, the authorities are not recognised as a sovereign government, and no diplomatic relations are established.
- No accreditation, immunity or privilege arises from any contact that does occur, and such contact is recorded as without prejudice to recognition.
- Kaharagia states publicly that Georgia's territorial integrity does not by itself determine the status of South Ossetia.
- Kaharagia recognises no title derived from forcible reincorporation or from annexation, including an incorporation implemented through treaty, the transfer of state functions or the appointment of the patron's citizens to local office.
- Documents issued by or for the authorities in control, and travel documents of the Russian Federation issued in the territory or to its residents, are not accepted as evidence of status. That rule does not deny any person's identity; it does not apply to a person who was already a Russian citizen when such documents began to be issued there, or to that person's descendants, or to a person who was a minor when the document was issued; and it does not affect any application for international protection.
- Organs of State conform their terminology, publications, procurement, entry decisions and official contact to the determinations recorded here.
- The position is reviewed on the conditions stated above and on any material change in control, legal proceedings, or the formally expressed position of the people concerned. The extraordinary presidential election called for 18 September 2026 is an occasion for review and not, by itself, a status process.

### 6.1 The Rights That Survive This Deferral

A deferral is a refusal to conclude. It confers no permission:

- It does not authorise treating South Ossetians as a population without rights, or as agents of a foreign state.
- It does not authorise coercion, blockade or collective punishment directed by any state at the residents of the territory.
- It does not make any person's rights conditional on the citizenship held, the documents accepted, or the political preference expressed.
- It does not diminish the claims of displaced Georgians, which stand whatever status the territory eventually holds.
- It does not affect accountability for the conduct addressed in the proceedings at the International Criminal Court, or the execution of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, which the Russian Federation remains bound under

Article 46 of the Convention to implement in respect of facts occurring before 16 September 2022.

- It does not permit the withholding of humanitarian access, family contact, work on missing persons or the technical business of ordinary life as pressure upon any authority.

## 7. Operative Declaration

The State of Kaharagia recognises the Ossetian people's right freely to determine their political status and rejects any settlement imposed solely by Georgia or the Russian Federation. It withholds recognition of the present Republic of South Ossetia as a sovereign state, because conditions of foreign effective control, the treaty-driven merger of state functions and unresolved displacement do not permit a conclusive free determination. Kaharagia recognises no title arising from annexation, whether declared or achieved by incorporation in stages. This position is reviewed following demilitarisation, political opening, rights guarantees, restored access and an internationally credible status process.

## 8. Publication and Legal Effect

This memorandum is a public statement of the foreign policy of the State of Kaharagia, adopted by the Sovereign and issued through the Secretariat of State, Section II. Under Kaharagian constitutional practice, the recognition or non-recognition of a state, the recognition of a government, the establishment of a diplomatic mission, the imposition of sanctions and the entry into formal diplomatic relations are decisions reserved to the Sovereign and implemented through the appropriate instrument. A Diplomatic Memorandum states the grounds, scope, reservations and consequences of a policy; it does not by itself confer accreditation, immunity or privilege.

This memorandum is published in the Diplomatic Memorandum Series by the Office of the Sovereign's Printer. Its serial reference is preserved in every separate or electronic edition. Material changes in facts, control, legal proceedings or the formally expressed position of the people concerned trigger review. Every authority listed below was retrieved and read when this edition was prepared. Where an address previously held by the Secretariat refused retrieval, the entry gives the address at which the same material was obtained and says why the earlier one failed.

### Selected Authorities and Official Materials

*Every authority listed was retrieved and read by the Secretariat of State when this edition was prepared, each against the issuing body's own publication except where the entry states otherwise. Titles are followed by the issuing body, the date and a source link. Judgments, judgments on just satisfaction, rulings on jurisdiction, advisory proceedings, warrants of arrest, resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Human Rights Council, binding acts of Union law, treaties, governmental records and press reporting are identified according to their actual character, and none is described as more than it is. Where a source could not be retrieved at the address previously held, the entry gives the address at which the same material was obtained and records why the earlier address failed.*

1. *Grand Chamber judgment in the case concerning the armed conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008 and its consequences*. European Court of Human Rights, press release ECHR 028 (2021) issued by the Registrar, 21 January 2021; Georgia v. Russia (II), application no. 38263/08. Records the vote of eleven to six that the active phase of hostilities fell outside Russian jurisdiction and that this part of the application was inadmissible, the vote of sixteen to one on the occupation phase, effective control over South Ossetia, Abkhazia and the buffer zone from 12 August to 10 October 2008 and its continuation thereafter, the administrative practices found under Articles 2, 3, 5 and 8, Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 and Article 2 of Protocol No. 4, the finding of no violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1, and the Article 38 finding on the refusal to produce combat reports. A judgment, final under Article 44, not a criminal verdict.  
[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-6913071-9285190&filename=Grand+Chamber+judgment+in+the+case+Georgia+v.+Russia+\(II\).pdf](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-6913071-9285190&filename=Grand+Chamber+judgment+in+the+case+Georgia+v.+Russia+(II).pdf)
2. *Grand Chamber judgment in the case of Georgia v. Russia (II) concerning just satisfaction*. European Court of Human Rights, press release ECHR 125 (2023), 28 April 2023; application no. 38263/08. Records the unanimous holding that the Court kept jurisdiction under Article 58 although Russia ceased to be a member of the Council of Europe on 16 March 2022 and a Party to the Convention on 16 September 2022, and the award of 115,000,000 euros for at least 23,000 victims of the administrative practice of preventing the return of Georgian nationals to their homes in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, alongside four smaller heads and the dismissal of the remainder by nine votes to eight. A Grand Chamber judgment on just satisfaction, final under Article 44.  
[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-7635942-10515392&filename=Grand+Chamber+judgment+Georgia+v.+Russia+\(II\)+--+just+satisfaction.pdf](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-7635942-10515392&filename=Grand+Chamber+judgment+Georgia+v.+Russia+(II)+--+just+satisfaction.pdf)
3. *Russia must pay Georgia over 253 million euros for breaches of human rights caused by hardening of boundary lines after 2008 conflict*. European Court of Human Rights, press release ECHR 237 (2025), 14 October 2025; Georgia v. Russia (IV), application no. 39611/18. Chamber judgment on just satisfaction following the merits judgment of 9 April 2024 on the borderisation process begun in 2009; records the award of 253,018,000 euros for at least 29,746 ethnic Georgian victims, including 20,000,000 euros for the denial of education in Georgian to a group of at least 4,000, and records that under Articles 43 and 44 a Chamber judgment is not final on delivery. Also records that Russia remains bound under Article 46 to implement judgments concerning facts occurring before 16 September 2022.  
[https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-8355578-11797780&filename=Judgment+Georgia+v.+Russia+\(IV\)+--+Russia+must+pay+Georgia+over+253+million+euros+in+just+satisfaction.pdf](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=003-8355578-11797780&filename=Judgment+Georgia+v.+Russia+(IV)+--+Russia+must+pay+Georgia+over+253+million+euros+in+just+satisfaction.pdf)
4. *Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation)*. International Court of Justice, overview of the case; Application filed 12 August 2008, Order indicating provisional measures 15 October 2008, Judgment on preliminary objections 1 April 2011. Records that the Court upheld Russia's second preliminary objection because the procedural conditions in Article 22 of the Convention had not been satisfied, that the case could not proceed to the merits, and that the provisional measures ceased to be operative on delivery of the judgment. A judgment on jurisdiction, not a ruling on the merits of the racial discrimination alleged.  
<https://www.icj-cij.org/case/140>
5. *Situation in Georgia, ICC-01/15*. International Criminal Court, situation page. Records the authorisation of a proprio motu investigation by Pre-Trial Chamber I on 27 January 2016 covering an international armed conflict in and around South Ossetia between 1 July and 10 October 2008; the representations received on 4 December 2015 on behalf of 6,335 victims; the Prosecutor's application of 10 March 2022; the issue of warrants of arrest on 24 June 2022 against Mikhail Mindzaev, Gamlet Guchmazov and David Sanakoev and the offices they held; the alleged confinement of at least 171 actual or perceived Georgian civilians and their unlawful transfer in a so-called exchange; and the closure of the investigation phase on 16 December 2022, with the warrants pending execution. Warrants of arrest, not convictions. The Court's news release of 30 June 2022 at [icc-cpi.int/news](https://www.icc-cpi.int/news) refuses automated retrieval; this situation page, which the Office of the High Commissioner cites for the same facts, was retrieved in full.  
<https://www.icc-cpi.int/georgia>
6. *Georgia: First ICC Arrest Warrants*. Human Rights Watch, 30 June 2022. Non-governmental reporting; records the announcement of the warrants on 30 June 2022, the three suspects' positions in the de facto administration, the charges, the deceased Russian major general named in the Prosecutor's application, the bar on trials in absentia at the

Court, and the organisation's own finding that South Ossetian forces attempted to cleanse Georgian villages after Georgian forces withdrew on 10 August 2008, forcing nearly 20,000 ethnic Georgians from their homes.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/30/georgia-first-icc-arrest-warrants>

7. *Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia*. United Nations General Assembly resolution 80/264, adopted 4 June 2026 at the 88th plenary meeting on draft A/80/L.73, agenda item 32. Operative paragraph 1 recognises the right of return of all internally displaced persons and refugees and their descendants, regardless of ethnicity, to their homes throughout Georgia, including in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia; paragraph 2 stresses property rights; paragraph 3 reaffirms the unacceptability of forced demographic changes; paragraph 6 underlines the need for a timetable for return. A recommendation of the General Assembly. Official United Nations text retrieved from the document server; the docs.un.org reader page served no text to automated retrieval. <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/RES/80/264&l=E&t=pdf>
8. *General Assembly Adopts Text on Status of Internally Displaced Persons, Refugees from Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia, Georgia*. United Nations Meetings Coverage GA/12763, 4 June 2026. Records adoption by a recorded vote of 107 in favour to 8 against, with 55 abstentions, names the eight states voting against including the Russian Federation, and records the explanations given by Georgia and the Russian Federation. <https://press.un.org/en/2026/ga12763.doc.htm>
9. *Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia: report of the Secretary-General (A/80/729)*. United Nations, 4 May 2026, covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Records 300,439 registered internally displaced persons in Georgia as at January 2026 and an increase of 1,267 across 2025 mainly through births; the continued denial of return by the authorities in control in South Ossetia; the absence of sustainable return in the reporting period; the walkouts by some participants under the return agenda item; the sixty-six rounds of the Geneva International Discussions launched on 15 October 2008; the Sochi Agreement of 24 June 1992 and the bodies it created; the absence of United Nations operational access since August 2008 apart from a UNHCR assessment mission in August 2016; and the adoption in both territories of instruments issuing documents that define the population, in particular ethnic Georgians, as foreign or stateless. Official United Nations text retrieved from the document server. <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/80/729&l=E&t=pdf>
10. *Cooperation with Georgia: report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/62/58)*. United Nations, 27 April 2026, submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 60/29 and covering 1 January to 31 December 2025. Records the unanswered request for access of 21 October 2025; the inability of the United Nations and other international organisations, save the International Committee of the Red Cross, to enter South Ossetia; the closure of the administrative boundary line since September 2019 following the opening of a police post at Chorchana and the opening of crossings only during the last eleven days of each month since August 2022; 55 recorded instances of boundary hardening on the South Ossetian line in 2025 against 3 on the Abkhaz line; the 2025 detention figures; the five schools in Akhagori with 38 pupils and 80 teachers and no instruction in Georgian; the closure of schools in five depopulated villages; the detention, hunger strike, forced feeding and expulsion of Tamar Mearakishvili between 22 and 31 December 2025; the ICRC figures of 323 sets of remains returned and 1,848 people unaccounted for as at December 2025; and that the International Criminal Court warrants remain active with the suspects at large. Official United Nations text retrieved from the document server. <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/HRC/62/58&l=E&t=pdf>
11. *Cooperation with Georgia*. United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 60/29, adopted without a vote at the 45th meeting, 8 October 2025. Reaffirms the Council's commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders; condemns the decisions simplifying the grant of Russian citizenship to residents and the issue of Russian passports directly in the regions, and statements about the intention to hold a referendum in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia on joining the Russian Federation; records concern at the continued demolition of the ruins of houses belonging to internally displaced persons in that territory; recognises the Geneva International Discussions as the instrument for addressing implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement of 12 August 2008, the withdrawal of Russian forces and international security arrangements; and at operative

paragraph 1 demands immediate and unimpeded access for the Office of the High Commissioner and other human rights mechanisms. A resolution of the Human Rights Council, adopted by consensus.

<https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/HRC/RES/60/29&l=E&t=pdf>

12. *President Dmitry Medvedev made a statement on recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.* Official website of the President of Russia, 26 August 2008. Records that the head of state signed decrees recognising the independence of South Ossetia and of Abkhazia and establishing diplomatic relations with them.  
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/1223>
13. *Statement by President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev.* Official website of the President of Russia, 26 August 2008, 15:43. The Russian account of the August 2008 war given on the day of recognition; records the assertion that Russia had until then been invariably guided by the recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity, and the allegation that the Georgian leadership opted for genocide. An allegation by a government, not a finding of any court.  
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1222>
14. *Meeting with President of South Ossetia Leonid Tibilov.* Official website of the President of Russia, 18 March 2015, the Kremlin, Moscow. Records the signature of the Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia on Alliance and Integration, concluded for twenty-five years with ten-year extensions, providing for a common defence and security space, free movement across the boundary, integrated customs services, cooperation between interior ministries, simplified acquisition of Russian citizenship and pension arrangements, and describing the instrument as acting to preserve South Ossetia's state sovereignty.  
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47873>
15. *Treaty on Deepening Allied Interaction between Russia and South Ossetia ratified.* Official website of the President of Russia, 25 May 2026. Records that the President signed the Federal Law on Ratification, that the Agreement was signed in Moscow on 9 May 2026, and that it provides for further steps towards the creation of a single economic space, the improvement of citizens' well-being and living standards, and a gradual transition to a unified framework for external borrowing and foreign investment.  
<http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/79846>
16. *Meeting with President of South Ossetia Alan Gagloyev.* Official website of the President of Russia, 22 June 2026, 14:30, the Kremlin, Moscow. The published record identifies Mr Gagloyev as Adviser to the President and refers to the bilateral agreement signed on 9 May.  
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/80079>
17. *Alexander Novak chairs a meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Socio-Economic Cooperation between Russia and South Ossetia.* Government of the Russian Federation, 26 May 2025. The twenty-third meeting of the commission, co-chaired by the Russian Deputy Prime Minister on the sidelines of the second Caucasus Investment Forum at Mineralnye Vody and attended by the President of South Ossetia; records the draft state programme for the socio-economic development of South Ossetia in 2026 to 2030, the volumes of financial support required, and review of the integration process in the customs and taxation spheres.  
<http://government.ru/en/news/55135/>
18. *Alexander Novak's meeting with Acting President of South Ossetia Marat Kambolov.* Government of the Russian Federation, 10 August 2026, 17:05, Government House, Moscow. Records discussion of the state programme for the socioeconomic development of South Ossetia, the social gasification of the republic's regions, the programme to improve the reliability of the electric grid and the plan for optimising its electricity supply.  
<http://government.ru/en/news/59566/>
19. *Constitution of the Russian Federation, Chapter 3, Articles 65 and 66.* Official text published at [constitution.ru](http://constitution.ru). Article 65, paragraph 1 lists the Republic of North Ossetia–Alania among the subjects of the Russian Federation; Article 65, paragraph 2 provides that the admission to the Russian Federation and the creation in it of a new subject are carried out according to the rules established by federal constitutional law.  
<http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-04.htm>
20. *EU Statement on the Secretary General's thirty-third consolidated report on the conflict in Georgia.* European External Action Service, Delegation to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 29 April 2026. Condemns the Russian military presence, the continuing

- process of borderisation, and steps aimed at the incorporation of the regions into Russia's political, military, economic, judicial and social spheres, including through dual citizenship arrangements and the transfer of strategic assets; notes the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and the arrest warrants of the International Criminal Court; and calls for immediate and unimpeded access for international and regional human rights mechanisms. A statement by a regional organisation.  
[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/council-europe/eu-statement-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-thirty-third-consolidated-report-conflict-georgia\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/council-europe/eu-statement-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-thirty-third-consolidated-report-conflict-georgia_en)
21. *Decision (EU) 2022/2512 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the non-acceptance of travel documents of the Russian Federation issued in Ukraine and Georgia.* Official Journal of the European Union L 326/1, 21 December 2022. Recital 4 records that the extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008 strongly condemned Russia's unilateral decision to recognise the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and urged other countries not to recognise their independence; recital 8 provides that no Russian travel document issued in, or to a person resident in, the breakaway territories in Georgia is to be accepted as valid for issuing a visa or crossing the external borders, with derogations for persons who were already Russian citizens when such documents began to be issued there, for their descendants and for minors; recital 13 preserves the right to apply for international protection. A binding act of Union law.  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022D2512>
  22. *About us and Our Mandate.* European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia. Records that the Mission is an unarmed civilian monitoring mission established by the European Union on 15 September 2008, that it began monitoring on 1 October 2008 with oversight of the withdrawal of Russian forces from areas adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, that its mandate covers the whole territory of Georgia within the country's internationally recognised borders, and that the de facto authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia have denied it access to the territories under their control.  
[https://eumm.eu/en/about\\_eumm](https://eumm.eu/en/about_eumm)
  23. *Government withdraws recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.* Government of the Republic of Naoero, Government Information Office media release, Thursday 30 July 2026. Announces withdrawal of recognition of both as independent States, the termination of diplomatic relations with immediate effect, and formal notification through the appropriate diplomatic channels.  
[https://naoero.gov.nr/government-information-office/media-release/media-release-government-withdraws-recognition-of-south-ossetia-and-abkhazia\\_30jul2026.aspx](https://naoero.gov.nr/government-information-office/media-release/media-release-government-withdraws-recognition-of-south-ossetia-and-abkhazia_30jul2026.aspx)
  24. *A nation of 10,000 people just shrank the list of countries recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia to four.* Meduza, 30 July 2026, page timestamped 29 July 2026, sourcing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. Reporting; records that the Naoero cabinet took the decision on 21 July 2026, that the relations had been established in 2009, and that the four United Nations member states still recognising the two entities are Russia, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Syria.  
<https://meduza.io/en/news/2026/07/30/a-nation-of-10-000-people-just-shrank-the-list-of-countries-recognizing-abkhazia-and-south-ossetia-to-four>
  25. *A draft law on ratifying a new treaty with South Ossetia has been submitted to the State Duma.* Caucasian Knot, 10 May 2026. Reporting; records that the 2015 alliance and integration treaty was signed on 18 March 2015 and entered into force on 30 July 2015 and was understood as securing South Ossetia without its joining Russia, and summarises the explanatory note to the 2026 bill on coordinated foreign, defence and security policy, the gradual unification of energy, gas transport, transport, communications and telecommunications systems, and conditions favourable to the free movement of capital, goods, services and labour.  
<https://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/75134>
  26. *The New Agreement Between Russia and the de facto South Ossetia is Assessed as Formalising Annexation.* Democracy Research Institute, Tbilisi, 21 May 2026. Non-governmental analysis of the treaty text; records the harmonisation of legal norms, the single economic space, free movement of capital, goods, services and labour, the entitlement of each party's citizens to hold posts in the other's state and municipal bodies, the effective abolition of residency requirements for the ownership and disposal of private property, the bar on international commitments contradicting the agreement, and ratification by the State Duma on 13 May 2026. Cited as an organisation whose submissions are relied on in A/HRC/62/58.  
<https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/1727/>

27. *Putin Allows Issuance of Russian Passports in Abkhazia and South Ossetia*. Caucasian Knot, 18 July 2025. Reporting; records the Russian decree of 17 July 2025 permitting internal Russian passports to be issued on the territory of both entities until 1 August 2028 inclusive, excluding persons who acquired Russian citizenship after 26 August 2008.  
<https://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/66613>
28. *South Ossetia's president resigns and joins Putin's presidential staff, reviving questions about Russian annexation*. Meduza, 23 June 2026. Reporting; records the resignation, the Kremlin decree appointing him adviser, the State Duma's ratification of the treaty in mid-May, the treaty provision allowing Russian citizens to hold government positions in the republic and the reverse, the nomination of Marat Kambolov on 8 June and his confirmation as prime minister on 16 June, that he is a Russian citizen who worked in the Russian government and held leadership positions at the Kurchatov Institute National Research Centre from 2014 to 2026, and that under local law the head of government becomes acting president on the president's resignation.  
<https://meduza.io/en/feature/2026/06/23/south-ossetia-s-president-resigns-and-joins-putin-s-presidential-staff-reviving-questions-about-russian-annexation>
29. *South Ossetian President Alan Gagloev resigns*. OC Media, June 2026. Reporting; records his statement on leaving office that the task is to overcome the fate of a divided people and reunite with North Ossetia and with Great Russia, his description of the 9 May agreement as the beginning of the reunification of the Ossetian people, the transfer of acting presidential duties to the prime minister appointed a week earlier, and his own arrival in office in 2022 as a moderate opposition candidate.  
<https://oc-media.org/south-ossetian-president-alan-gagloev-resigns/>
30. *South Ossetia cancels referendum on joining Russia*. OC Media, May 2022. Reporting; records the decree of 13 May 2022 setting a referendum for 17 July, the endorsement of its validity by the Central Election Commission and the Supreme Court, the Kremlin spokesman's statement that no steps had been taken or were planned to admit South Ossetia and that the initiative was legally underdeveloped, and the suspending decree citing the inadmissibility of a unilateral decision on a question affecting the legitimate rights and interests of the Russian Federation, supporting further integration and sending a delegation to Moscow.  
<https://oc-media.org/south-ossetia-cancels-referendum-on-joining-russia/>
31. *South Ossetian deputies blame 'Georgian lobby' for loss of Russian citizenship*. JAMnews, 30 March 2024. Reporting; records that three deputies were deprived of Russian citizenship in early February 2024 by decision of the Federal Security Service and barred from entering Russia until 18 March 2049 after proposing the restoration of the boundary with Georgia to its 1922 form, that their challenges in the Russian courts were rejected, that the South Ossetian Autonomous Region was established within the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1922, and that Russia recognised South Ossetia in 2008 within its 1990 lines, which enclose slightly less territory than the 1922 ones.  
<https://jam-news.net/south-ossetian-deputies-lose-russian-citizenship/>
32. *South Ossetia: Freedom in the World 2025*. Freedom House, 2025 edition. Non-governmental assessment; rates the territory Not Free at 12 of 100, with 3 of 40 for political rights and 9 of 60 for civil liberties; records that large parts held de facto independence after the civil conflict ended in 1992, that the 2008 war resulted in the expulsion of most ethnic Georgian civilians, that the territory is almost entirely dependant on Moscow, which exerts a decisive influence over its politics and governance, that local media and civil society are largely controlled or monitored; scores at zero both the freedom of political choices from external domination and the capacity of the elected executive and legislature to determine policy; applies its discretionary deduction for the deliberate alteration of ethnic composition; and records that remaining ethnic Georgian residents have been denied the ability to participate in elections.  
<https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-ossetia/freedom-world/2025>
33. *President's Nykhas party wins South Ossetia parliamentary election*. OC Media, June 2024. Reporting; records that United Ossetia took 31.5 per cent of the proportional vote against 30.6 for Nykhas, that United Ossetia won one of the seventeen single-member constituencies against Nykhas's four in a chamber of thirty-four, that almost twenty-two thousand people voted, that several parties and candidates were denied registration by the central election commission, and that the most prominent of them was For Justice, whose three leading members were the deputies stripped of Russian citizenship in February 2024.  
<https://oc-media.org/presidents-nykhas-party-wins-south-ossetia-parliamentary-election/>
34. *After a five-month boycott, the sole opposition party in South Ossetia returns to parliament*.

- JAMnews, 26 October 2024. Reporting; records the boycott by United Ossetia over alleged falsification, the criminal case opened by the prosecutor's office on 6 August 2024 for falsifying election results by tampering with ballots, the finding that disappearing ink at two polling stations invalidated 695 ballots, the identification of the ruling party as the aggrieved party, and the party's return to the chamber.  
<https://jam-news.net/after-a-five-month-boycott-the-sole-opposition-party-in-south-ossetia-returns-to-parliament/>
35. *Abkhazia Votes to Scrap Russian Investment Deal After Mass Protests*. The Moscow Times, 3 December 2024. Reporting; records the vote of 21 to nil with two abstentions to reject the investment agreement signed on 30 October 2024 by the Russian and Abkhazian economy ministers, the preferential treatment it would have given to investments of two billion roubles and above, the opposition's objection that it would allow wealthy Russians to buy up local property, the protests that preceded the vote, and the resignation of the Abkhaz leader during the unrest. Cited for the contrast drawn with DM-2026-002.  
<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/12/03/abkhazia-votes-to-scrap-russian-investment-deal-after-mass-protests-a87215>
36. *South Ossetia's de facto presidential election set for September 18*. Georgia Today, 1 July 2026. Reporting; records that the local legislature set an extraordinary presidential election for 18 September 2026 within the ninety-day constitutional period, that the acting president is a Russian citizen, and that the local constitution requires a presidential candidate to be a citizen of South Ossetia over thirty-five, fluent in Ossetian and Russian, and permanently resident in the territory for the ten years preceding registration.  
<https://georgiatoday.ge/south-ossetias-de-facto-presidential-election-set-for-september-18/>
37. *The acceptance of documents for the registration of candidates for the presidency of South Ossetia has been completed*. Caucasian Knot, 13 August 2026. Reporting; records that five candidates submitted documents for the election of 18 September 2026, among them the acting president, that the Central Election Commission has a ten-day statutory period in which to check compliance with the electoral legislation before deciding on registration or refusal, and that four candidates' authorised representatives had been registered on 3 August.  
<https://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/77713>







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