

## Georgia

**Tensions between Georgia** and the break-away regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia remained high during 2010. The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) maintained its presence along the areas near the Abkhazian and South Ossetian administrative boundary lines.

---

### Background

Georgia has been the site of a series of peace operations after territorial conflicts over the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions erupted following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Georgia's independence. In 1992, a cease-fire ending war between Georgia and Russia over South Ossetia established the Joint Control Commission (JCC) to coordinate the actions of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)–South Ossetia Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF), a battalion of some 1,500 Russian-led troops. The same year, the OSCE created a mission to assist the government of Georgia in conflict settlement, democratization, human rights protection, and promoting the rule of law.

In 1993, following fighting over the Abkhazia region in northwest Georgia and three broken cease-fire agreements, the UN established the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) to verify cease-fire compliance between Abkhazia and Georgia. A 1994 brokered cease-fire created the CIS peacekeeping force (CISPKF).

Tensions grew with intermittent outbreaks of violence over the years. In 2004, Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili's reunification policies caused violence to flare up with South

Ossetia. In 2008 Georgian forces attacked South Ossetia. Russia intervened on South Ossetia's behalf and expelled Georgian forces that had moved in. The conflict broadened to include Abkhazia as Russian forces moved into Georgian territory to gain control of the Kodori Valley. Though lasting only five days, the conflict killed hundreds and displaced thousands.

The August 2008 conflict had major consequences for peacekeeping. The CIS peacekeeping force ceased to exist after the war, and UNOMIG ended its operations after its mandate was not renewed by the UN Security Council. EUMM began its operations in October 2008 to monitor the stabilization process and compliance with the six-point agreement that ended the fighting. The mission confirmed Russian withdrawal of its forces from Georgia, though some remained in disputed areas.

---

### Key Developments

The EUMM continued to be the only peacekeeping presence on the ground in 2010. It is mandated for operation in Georgian-controlled territories only and prevented access to border areas where the conflict remains most acute. (South Ossetia and Abkhazia continue to deny the mission authority to operate in their territories.) In addition to its reporting function, the mission is tasked to promote stabilization, normalization, and confidence building.

EUMM maintained good relations with the Georgian government and continued engaging with both Abkhazia and South Ossetian authorities through the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings, which also include representatives from the OSCE,

the Georgian government, and Russia. The IPRM continued to be the primary vehicle for both sides to exchange information on administrative boundary-line incidents, questions of boundary demarcation, crossing procedures, and detainees. Georgia released six detainees in late March 2010. In December, EUMM and the OSCE co-facilitated the eighth meeting of the IPRM, where the parties discussed a number of matters and agreed to continue their negotiations in early 2011.

A high level of mistrust between the parties persisted throughout 2010. According to Georgian authorities, on 6 August a Russian jet dropped a missile in a field, though it failed to explode. Russia denied the accusation, saying that the incident was entirely fabricated. On 11 August, Russia announced that it had deployed an advanced surface-to-air missile system, the S-300, in Abkhazia. The territory's leadership also indicated that it would sponsor a Russian military base on its territory and would not allow Georgian refugees to return without being granted full independence.

Despite these troubling developments, direct—albeit tense—talks between Georgia, Russia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia continued. On 8 June, in the eleventh round of talks since the 2008 war, the two sides discussed a range of security and humanitarian issues, but failed to reach an understanding on the need for a new agreement on the non-use of force, a key Georgian

#### EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM)

Authorization Date	15 September 2008 (CJA 2008/736/CFSP)
Start Date	October 2008
Head of Mission	Ambassador Hansjörg Haber (Germany)
Budget	\$36.3 million
Strength as of 30 September 2010	Civilian Police: 181 Civilian Staff: 128

demand. On 27 July, Abkhazia pulled out of the talks, which were convened by the UN, the EU, and the OSCE, alleging Western bias and lack of progress.

On 18 October, Russian forces withdrew from the Georgian village of Perevi near South Ossetia, moving to the other side of the border, outside of Georgian-controlled territory. A small contingent of Georgian forces moved into the village with EUMM observers.

#### Conclusion

While the mission no doubt contributes to preventing further violence and serves an important early warning function, its overall impact remains limited without the ability to observe all parties' (South Ossetia and Abkhazia) compliance to the six-point agreement.