

# **Report of a UNPO Coordinated Human Rights Mission to Abkhazia and Georgia**

November/December 1992

Human Rights Advocates  
Pax Christi International  
International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious,  
Linguistic and other Minorities  
Covcas Centre for Law and Conflict Resolution  
And  
The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

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In cooperation with the members of the mission

**The Hague**

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## I. UNPO COORDINATED HUMAN RIGHTS MISSION: INTRODUCTION

### a. Background to the UNPO Coordinated Mission

During and following the Abkhazian<sup>1</sup> military offensive to retake control of the Abkhazian capital city of Sukhum and the eastern part of Abkhazia from Georgian troops in September 1993, the Georgian Government, the UN Security Council and a number of press reports accused Abkhazia of large scale human rights violations and violations of humanitarian law. Abkhazia denied these accusations, but admitted individual cases of violations. At the same time, the Abkhazian Government reiterated its earlier charges of human rights violations and humanitarian law violations allegedly committed by Georgian authorities and armed forces in Abkhazia in areas that had been under Georgian control during the 14 months of the war. In the weeks and months that followed, the Georgian Government accused Abkhazian authorities of ethnic cleansing and also genocide against the Georgian population of Abkhazia. By this time, a large number of refugees had fled the region to Georgia and Russia, and also to Greece and Israel.

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) decided in October 1993 to organize a fact finding human rights mission to Abkhazia and Georgia in order to investigate the serious charges made by both sides. In the past, UNPO sent fact finding missions only at the initiative and request of UNPO Members. In this case, however, the General Secretary felt the seriousness of the accusations against a Member (Abkhazia) and against a Supporting Member (Georgia)<sup>2</sup>, and the lack of reliable information available from the region required an initiative from UNPO. UNPO therefore invited a number of reputable international human rights organizations to take part in a fact finding human rights mission to Abkhazia and Georgia, in order to objectively assess the situation and inform the international community. Although UNPO would coordinate the mission, the participating human rights organizations would take part under their own names and independently of each other. They would be free to choose whether to present a joint report or separate reports at the conclusion of the visit.

Also in October 1993, the United Nations Secretary General announced his decision to send a three-person fact finding mission to the region to investigate the accusations of ethnic cleansing made by the Georgian Government against Abkhazians. Georgia had made the sending of such a mission and the publication of its findings a pre-condition for agreeing to UN sponsored negotiations with the Abkhazian side in Geneva.

Preceding the UN mission, however, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution (S/RES/876 (1993)), on 19 October 1993, expressing deep concern

"at the human suffering caused by conflict in the region and at reports of "ethnic cleansing" and other serious violations of international humanitarian law."

At the same time, the Security Council welcomed the Secretary General's decision to send the UN mission. The UN Mission, which took place from 22 to 30 October 1993, reported to the Security Council in a report published on November 17, 1993 (UN Security Council Document S/26795) that it had found both sides to the conflict responsible for serious human rights violations, but the mission stated that there was no convincing evidence of "ethnic cleansing".

"On the basis of the information collected the mission was not in the position to ascertain whether it had been an actively pursued policy of the authorities on either side, at any time, to clear the areas under their control of either the Abkhazian or the Georgian population." (UN Security Council Document S/26795, 17 November 1993, page 12).

This important report was only published in summary form, and, unfortunately, provided little detail of the UN Mission's findings.

Immediately following the completion of their Mission, on December 10, 1994, the members of the UNPO Coordinated Mission released a brief report and recommendations. That report was distributed to the press at a press conference in Moscow, and was distributed to governments. It was also handed to all the parties to the UN sponsored negotiations between Georgia and Abkhazia during their session in Geneva in February 1994.

Completing the full report took considerable time. Therefore, much has happened since the Mission left the Caucasus region. UNPO Secretary General and members of the staff have visited the region since then, and UNPO has taken, and continues to take part in the UN sponsored negotiations between Georgia and Abkhazia, facilitated by Russia. UNPO's General Secretary has been asked by Abkhazia to be on the negotiating team in the capacity of adviser.

Negotiations in Geneva and Moscow have progressed well under the able chairmanship of Ambassador and Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General, Mr Edouard Brunner. Although some might have expected a settlement to be reached faster, the complexity of the situation does not lend itself to a "quick fix" solution. Progress, in carefully planned steps, has taken place with respect to the exchange of Prisoners of War (POWs); the agreement and implementation of a formal cease fire; the creation of a buffer zone (a corridor) along the Inguri river separating the two sides; the deployment of CIS peacekeeping troops and increase of UN military observers; the agreement to repatriate refugees and the establishment of a quadrupartite commission (including UNHCR) to screen refugees and oversee the implementation of the agreement; the establishment of a standing Commission to regulate questions of mutual Georgian-Abkhazian interests, such as energy, environment, transport, etc.; and the commitment to intensify negotiations on a comprehensive political solution.

This negotiation process clearly does not take place without obstacles and difficulties. But it must be recognized that considerable progress has and continues to be made. Credit must go to all parties for this; but most credit must go to Special Envoy Edouard Brunner for his skill and understanding. This report, which will once again be distributed to all relevant parties and observers of the situation, may contribute to the process of obtaining greater understanding and having a more complete picture of the situation in Abkhazia.

## **b. Previous Missions**

### ***The UNPO General Secretary's mission - July 1992***

UNPO General Secretary first travelled to Abkhazia on a fact-finding mission in July 1992. He met with Vladislav Ardzinba, Chairman of the Abkhazian Parliament, and with Abkhaz, Georgian, Greek, Russian, and Armenian Deputies, Mayors and other officials. The object of the visit was to assess the tense situation in Abkhazia.

In letters to Chairman Ardzinba and Chairman of the State Council of Georgia, Mr. Shevardnadze, sent immediately following the visit, the UNPO General Secretary concluded,

"The dispute that has arisen between mostly Georgian Deputies in the Abkhazian Supreme Council and the Government in Tbilisi, on the one hand, and Abkhaz Deputies and Deputies representing a number of minority constituencies in Abkhazia, such as Greeks, Russians, and Armenians, on the other, is a purely political dispute.(...) Persons on all sides of the dispute whom I met believe the problem is not based on ethnic animosity or other popular feelings. All agree, however, that if a resolution is not found and open fighting breaks out ethnic conflict will result."

UNPO warned a number of governments and international organizations, including the United Nations and the CSCE, of the danger of violent conflict erupting unless the parties sat down to serious negotiations, and invited both parties to enter into exploratory talks.

Responses to these efforts were negligible. Only Chairman Ardzinba responded, agreeing to start talks. In fact, some bilateral discussions did take place, but on the date the Abkhazian Parliament was to have a debate on an Abkhazian proposal for the establishment of federal relations between Georgia and Abkhazia, Georgian troops entered Abkhazia and marched to the capital Sukhum. Thus the war started.

#### ***Pax Cristi International Mission - July-August 1992***

Egbert Wesselink of Pax Christi Netherlands conducted a one-man fact finding mission to Georgia in July and August, 1992, the findings of which were published in a report "Minorities in the Republic of Georgia", dated September 1992. Egbert Wesselink travelled extensively in Georgia, including Abkhazia, and authored the said report.

One of the points of focus of this report concerns the Georgian misrepresentation of the political situation in Abkhazia:

"The Georgian leaders claim that Georgians in Abkhazia were systematically discriminated against. A closer look at the ethnic distribution of leading functions though, shows that not the Georgian population but the Armenians, Greeks and Russians were underrepresented in leading positions."(page 29).

Egbert Wesselink summarized his findings as follows:

"Both Georgians and Abkhazian politicians have followed confrontational policies on the issue of Abkhazian autonomy. The Georgian National Guard has provoked conflict by occupying Sukhum and by then attacking the Abkhazian Parliament."(page 7).

"Because of the extraordinary mix of the different groups in Abkhazia, the present conflict could turn into a particularly bloody form of ethnic cleansing."(page 7).

Egbert Wesselink stressed in his report the need for an independent institute to promote human rights in the region.

"The protection of Human Rights in Georgia would benefit greatly by from the founding of an independent western-style Institute of Human Rights. It should focus on:

- setting up a human rights centre for Transcaucasia;
- organizing training courses;
- promoting exchanges between Georgian and Western NGO's;
- building a national network of partners for fact-finding purposes;
- making its findings on the human rights situation available to the Georgian public and to the international community."(page 8).

#### ***UNPO Parliamentary mission - November 1992***

In November 1992, in new efforts to start a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, UNPO sent a mission to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus.

The mission was composed of members of parliament or their staff, from the United Kingdom, the USA, and The Netherlands and of senior representatives of UNPO. The delegation was headed by Lord Ennals, Member of the British House of Lords. The mission travelled to various parts of Abkhazia, to Tbilisi, Grozny, and Moscow. The delegation met with Chairman Vladislav Ardzinba, President Eduad Shevardnadze, exile President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and Chechen President Jokhar Dudaev. It also met with numerous officials in Gudauta, Gagra, Sukhum and Tbilisi, and spent time investigating the situation in Abkhazia.

The second UNPO parliamentary mission found considerable evidence of atrocities and persistent brutality committed by Georgian troops against Abkhaz and other non-Georgians in

Abkhazia, and was deeply disturbed by evidence of apparent deliberate destruction of Abkhazian cultural and historical institutions. It recommended active mediation to negotiate a cease-fire and the start of negotiations for a mutual disengagement of troops. The findings and recommendations of the mission were published in UNPO Document "Report of a UNPO Mission to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus", [UNPO]UAC/1992/FFM.1. The mission report was also published in Central Asian Survey (1993, 12(3), 325-345). The report stated

"The UNPO delegation gathered considerable evidence of persistent brutality of Georgian troops against Abkhazians and other non-Georgians, which, the delegation felt, could not be attributed solely to the lack of discipline in the armed forces. There was widespread looting and destruction of houses and cultural institutions of Abkhazians by the Georgian military and their supporters. The delegation spoke to victims of torture, beatings and killings of civilians, including pregnant women and children, by Georgian troops. Allegations of atrocities committed by Georgian troops were confirmed by responsible Georgian officials. The delegation found evidence of Abkhazian acts of destruction: many houses in and around Gagra were destroyed by Abkhazian troops after the take-over of that city by them in October. Apparently houses were also destroyed in villages north of Gagra. The delegation found no evidence, however, of any mass killings committed by Abkhazians as reported by Georgian authorities and by the press. In fact, local residents of the places where such acts were said to have occurred, including Georgians and Russians, insist that those allegations were propaganda."(Central Asian Survey (1993, 12(3), page 343-344).

"There have been a series of enquiry teams from the UN and the CSCE. They appear to have paid insufficient attention to the Abkhazian case. What is needed now is active and effective mediation."(page 344).

### **c. Mandate of the UNPO Coordinated Human Rights Mission, November-December 1993**

The mandate of the UNPO Coordinated Human Rights Mission was to investigate and report on the human rights situation in Abkhazia. The mission looked into accusations of human rights abuses and violations of humanitarian law allegedly committed by both Georgia and Abkhazia since the outbreak of the armed conflict on August 14, 1992. As part of its mandate the mission looked into allegations of "ethnic cleansing" and genocide made by the Abkhazian and Georgian authorities and examined reports of extra judicial executions. The mission investigated measures taken by Abkhazian and Georgian authorities to protect civilians, to prevent atrocities and to promote respect for human rights and humanitarian law. The mission also looked at the situation of refugees, displaced persons and prisoners of war (POWs) and paid special attention to the position of minorities in Abkhazia.

### **d. Participants to the UNDO Coordinated Human Rights Mission**

The following human rights organizations took part in the UNPO Coordinated Human Rights Mission:

*UNREPRESENTED NATIONS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATION (UNPO)*

represented by:

Menelaos Tzelios, Assistant General Secretary for United Nations Affairs, leader of the delegation;  
Pauline Overeem, Director Urgent Action Unit;  
Michael van Walt van Praag, General Secretary, was present for part of the mission's itinerary.

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) was founded by representatives of occupied nations, indigenous peoples, minorities and other disenfranchised peoples who currently struggle to preserve their cultural identities, protect their basic human and economic rights, safeguard the environment or to regain their lost countries. These peoples are not represented in established international forums such as the United Nations. UNPO is an organization set up and run by the member peoples, in order to empower themselves and to participate in the international community.

One of the principal objectives of UNPO is the promotion of non-violent methods for the resolution of disputes involving nations and peoples and the advancement of their legitimate rights and aspirations by peaceful, diplomatic methods. In this regard UNPO has the potential to contribute to the prevention of violent conflict. The organization is in a favourable position to detect early signs of tensions and potential conflict, since it deals with the people and the movements who are often at the centre of controversial issues involving political, cultural or economic rights of minorities and peoples. Equally important, UNPO is one of the very few organizations many of the leaders of these populations trust, because it is *their* organization.

UNPO constitutes a legitimate international forum for unrepresented nations and peoples. It also provides many services, including assistance in obtaining access to UN bodies, training programs in diplomacy, legal advice, training and assistance with respect to human rights, democracy, media relations and non-violence strategies, research, conflict prevention and conflict resolution services, assistance in strategic planning, election and referendum monitoring, educational internships and assistance in cultural preservation and promotion.

UNPO is for many of its member nations and peoples the principal channel of communication to the international community. The UNPO Secretariat provides means to its members to keep governments, international organizations, NGOs and the media informed of their situations as they see them. At the same time, UNPO gives governments, the UN and others a rare opportunity to meet with or hear the views of legitimate representatives of peoples and minorities they might otherwise not have access to. Founded in 1991, UNPO experienced a rapid growth. From the original 15 founding members, UNPO currently has over 40 members.

*THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, LINGUISTIC AND OTHER MINORITIES,*

represented by:

Menelaos Tzelios, General Secretary.

The International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and other Minorities (hereafter the Federation) is a human rights organization with consultative status with the United Nations (Ecosoc). The Federation has been invited to monitor elections in different parts of the world, including Rumania, Kosova and Kurdistan. It has repeatedly brought to the attention of the international organizations and the United Nations the human rights situation of the Kurds; the Greek minority in Constantinople, the Armenian people, and the continuous occupation of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkish forces. Through the efforts of the Federation, the Commission and Sub-Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations have condemned the former communist Albanian regime for its policies of genocide against the Greek minority in Albania.

Members of the Federation have participated and are participating in major conferences around the world where human rights or the environment are discussed. Among the reports presented to the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities was a report on the effects of population transfer by force, which has been recognized as an important contribution in that field and as a basis for a resolution condemning the transfer of populations by that UN body.

*HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES,*

represented by:

Hrair Balian, Representation at UN in Geneva.

Human Rights Advocates (HRA) is an NGO in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (Category II). HRA, with offices in the US and Geneva, promotes and protects fundamental human rights through the use of the international human rights and humanitarian law.

Since 1978, HRA's innovative work in the law of armed conflicts is instrumental in directing needed emphasis to rights frequently neglected: the rights of civilian war victims and prisoners of war, and the interrelationship between armed conflict and human rights violations. HRA has helped draw attention to the issue of population transfer as a violation of human rights. It has examined nationalities-conflicts as a source of human rights abuse, and has co-ordinated the exploration of bilateral and multilateral responses to that problem. It has also sought to bring international attention to the growing problem of persons displaced as a result of environmental degradation, by widespread pollution of streams and lands. and by development projects.

On fact-finding missions, in court, in Congress or at the United Nations, HRA members stress the obligation of all countries to respect human rights, the rights of all victims to effective remedies when violations occur, and the relationship between human rights and peace.

*COVCAS CENTER FOR LAW AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION,*

also represented by:

Hrair Balian, Execution Director.

The Covcas Center for Law and Conflict Resolution (hereafter Covcas Center) was established in 1991. Covcas Center is an NGO with offices in Geneva and Moscow. Covcas Center focuses on human rights developments in the Caucasus republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In particular, Covcas Center examines the link between nationalities-conflicts, human rights abuses, and armed conflicts. Covcas Center is engaged in the development of conflict resolution mechanisms and the promotion of law as a tool of conflict resolution. To this end, Covcas Center promotes the building of democratic institutions in the region through consultations and the organization of seminars as well as work shops to encourage respect for human rights and the rule of law. Covcas Center also documents human rights conditions in the region. Covcas Center publishes "Covcas Bulletin" (approximately 25 issues per year) which provides information about nationalities-conflicts in the Caucasus republics of the CIS and human rights consequences of those conflicts.

*PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL,*

represented by Egbert Wesselink, member of the Commission on International Affairs of Pax Christi Netherlands.

Pax Christi International is an international Catholic peace movement, with national sections in four continents. Its activities are mainly related to the issues of security and disarmament; human rights; East-West contacts; North-South relations; peace education; peace spirituality; non violence; the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

**e. Itinerary of the UNPO Coordinated Human Rights Mission**

The mission took place from November 29 to December 10, 1993. The mission travelled to Moscow (Russia), Gagra, Gudauta, Sukhum, Ochamchira, Tkvarchal, Labra, Konstantinovka, Ordjonikdza, Adzubia (in Abkhazia) and Tbilisi (in Georgia).

In Moscow members of the mission met with:

the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. Pastukhov; the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia, Mr. I. Sergegia; the Vice-Consul of the Republic of Georgia in the Russian Federation, Dr. J. Nemstveridze, and the Chairman of the Georgian Refugee Support Committee, Mr. C. Vladimirovitch; the Permanent Representative of Kabardino-Balkaria, Mr. V. Mastafov; the Permanent Envoy in Moscow and Vice Premier of the Republic of Adighe, Mr. P. Shevotzuko; a representative of the Republic of Adighe, Mr. B. Akbashev; Mr. Dimitri Leonov, Council member of the Memorial Human Rights Centre.

In Abkhazia members of the mission met with:

Chairman of the Supreme Council, Mr. V. Ardzinba; Vice-Chairman Mr. S. Djindjolia; the Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council, Mr. A. Topalian, who is also President of the Armenian Cultural Society Grung; the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr. E. Kapba; the Minister of Interior Affairs and Head of Police, Mr. G. Agrba; the Minister of Social Welfare, Mr. N. Mistakopoulos; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. S. Tarkil; members of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Abkhazia; representatives of the Committee for Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Abkhazia, Mr. Y. Voronov (Chairman) and Mrs. N. Akaba (Vice-Chair); the mayors of Gagra, Ochamchira and Sukhum; a number of Deputies of the Supreme Council, including Mr. A. Mamagulashvili, representing Gagra region in the Supreme Council; the Chairman of the State Committees for Prisoners of War and Protection of Human Rights Among the Peaceful Population and for Supervision of State Property and Privatization, Mr. B. Kobakhiya, Mr. Z. Achma and Mr. Loginov; the Chief of Security, Mr. A. Otrba; the Prosecutor-General, Mr. Sergei DuguzovitchBganba; and civilian and military authorities of Tkvarchal; several representatives of the Georgian, Greek, Armenian and Cossack communities in Abkhazia; representatives of the Abkhaz intelligentsia and Abkhaz NGO's; the Deputy Commander of the United Nations Observer Units in Abkhazia; the Medical Coordinator of Medecins Sans Frontières, Ms. M. Olivier and the Coordinator of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. J.P. Sharer.

In Tbilisi members of the mission met with:

the Vice-Premier of the Georgian Government, personal representative of Chairman E. Shevardnadze and Chairman of the State Committee for Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Republic of Georgia, Mr. A. Kavsadze; the Deputy Prosecutor-General, Mr. A. Baluashvili and a former employee of the Prosecutor-General of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia; the advisor of the President of Georgia and Rector of the University of Tbilisi, Mr. L. Alexidze; representatives of the Committee on Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Mrs. E. Astemirova (Chair) and Ms. I. Tchomaya; the first Vice Premier of the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Mr. L. Marshanya; a number of Georgian refugees from Abkhazia and relatives of Georgian Government employees and soldiers that had not returned from the war in Abkhazia; Mr. S. Ksovreli and Mr. A. Russetski, working for the UNHCR in Tbilisi and the Georgian branch of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly respectively.

## **II. FINDINGS**

### **a. Introduction**

The war in Abkhazia started on August 14, 1992, when Georgian troops marched into Abkhazia and towards Sukhum. This followed months of rising tensions over relations between the Supreme Council of Abkhazia and the Georgian State Council in Tbilisi, which had replaced the elected President of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and his Government in a violent coup in January 1992. Tensions had already started under Gamsakhurdia's Government, when Georgian nationalism expressed itself in mounting conflicts with ethnic minorities in different parts of the country.

Following the declaration of independence of Georgia on March 9, 1990, the Georgian Government promulgated a series of decrees by which the country returned to the 1921 Constitution. In that constitution, which is still in force in Georgia, there is no reference to Abkhazia. Abkhazia was consequently left without an effective constitution and without any legal ties to Georgia. In response, the Abkhazian parliament decreed Abkhazia's return to its constitution of 1925 when Abkhazia was a sovereign republic within the Soviet Union. This was misinterpreted by Western media and observers as a declaration of "independence." The misunderstanding stems from the specific meanings the terms *sovereignty* and *independence* have in the former Soviet Union. Soviet republics, even autonomous ones, were sovereign, but were not independent states as defined by international law.

The legal relations between Georgia and Abkhazia having thus formally ceased to exist, Abkhazian leaders proposed negotiations to establish relations with Georgia in a new federal state, under conditions of equality. The Georgian authorities and Parliament, ignoring these overtures as they were shocked and afraid of Abkhazian secessionism, passed legislation and took unilateral measures to create a unitary Georgian state. Thus ignoring Abkhazian fears for ethnic, political and national absorption. The gap between the positions widened.

In Abkhazia, Georgian (mostly Megrelian) deputies of the Abkhazian Parliament walked out as a sign of protest, and continued to meet separately in a heavily guarded building in a military compound. Abkhaz, Greek, Russian, Armenian and other deputies, meanwhile, continued to pass legislation and conduct business of parliament. for which they still had the required quorum.

For a detailed discussion of the background to the war, the history of Abkhazia and the first four months of the war, see Report of a UNPO Mission to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus ([UNPO]UAC/1992/FFM.1)

The Georgian military intervention in Abkhazia in August 1992, was resisted with great determination by Abkhazian forces, supported by volunteers from Abkhazia and from the Northern Caucasus. The destruction and atrocities committed by Georgian troops against Abkhaz, Armenian, Russian, Greek, Jewish and other non-Georgian inhabitants of Abkhazia in the first months of the war instilled a sense of revenge among many Abkhazians, especially among victims of Georgian attacks. Whereas in the first period of the war it was primarily the Abkhaz and other non-Georgians who were the victims of gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law, at the end of the war, when Abkhazian forces took back the Abkhazian territory from Georgian troops, the sense of revenge among many Abkhazians resulted in Georgians being victimized.

Abkhazians complain bitterly that when Georgian troops entered Abkhazia and destroyed their land, raped their women, and killed innocent civilians, the international community, including the United Nations, remained silent, despite repeated appeals by the Abkhazian leaders. The plight of tens of thousands of refugees fleeing areas controlled by Georgian troops were not even acknowledged. It was only when the Georgian troops were forced to withdraw from all of Abkhazia that the international community displayed interest in the situation, calling for help to refugees and repeatedly condemning Abkhazia for human rights violations and for using force "to change borders".

### **b. War Damage and Suffering**

The 14-month war in Abkhazia caused tremendous suffering to all sectors of the population of Abkhazia. Losses were high, especially among the civilian population. Destruction of private houses, public buildings, cultural and economic institutions was enormous. Today, the economy is still virtually at a standstill, the infrastructure is in shambles, and people in Abkhazia and refugees in Georgia and Russia continue to suffer from the consequences of the war.

The city Tkvarchal, for example, was heavily bombed by Georgian troops with incendiary bombs, artillery shells, cluster bombs and more than 800 Grad missiles. Throughout Abkhazia, orchards of mandarin trees, which need 30-40 years to bear fruit, were destroyed. The population of Abkhazia still suffers from lack of fuel, food and medicine.

The economic blockade imposed upon Abkhazia by the Russian Federation has further aggravated the situation. (Meanwhile the blockade has been partly lifted). Inflation is rampant and the Georgian coupons, that were used as means of payment since Georgia's independence, were devalued considerably. In Abkhazia, pensioners have not received stipends from Georgia since the beginning of the war. Humanitarian aid provided by the UNHCR and other UN agencies to Georgia has not reached Abkhazia. However, some humanitarian aid from the Northern Caucasus has reached Abkhazia.

As a result of the war, a high number of mines is left in Abkhazia. In the Ochamchira region alone, more than 200,000 mines have been left behind, says Battal Tabagua, the Mayor of Ochamchira. Most common are the anti-personnel mines and the "jumping mines", made in Russia and Israel. The clearance of the mines is a slow and arduous process. Anti-personnel mines can not be defused with the equipment currently available in Abkhazia. The ICRC coordinator stated that people are injured or killed by mines daily. As a result several villages are inaccessible. This impedes the regular supply of food to many areas.

In the eastern part of Abkhazia, Georgian ammunition dumps have been discovered with Israeli mines and grenades.

The figures for war casualties are incomplete and unreliable. Georgian authorities provided the mission with inconsistent figures for military casualties: varying from 4,000 to 20,000 dead and injured Georgian troops. Abkhazian sources stated that at least 10,000 Abkhazian troops and 20,000 Georgians troops were killed or injured in the war.

### **c. The Armed Forces**

#### *Georgian Army.*

During Zviad Gamsakhurdia's presidency, several para-military forces were formed, of which the most important were the *National Guard* under the command of Tengiz Kitovani, and the *Mkhedrioni* under Dzahba Ioseliani.

When Kitovani and Ioseliani succeeded in mounting a coup against President Gamsakhurdia, they invited Eduard Shevardnadze to head a new emergency council to replace the ousted government. Kitovani became Minister of Defence, while Ioseliani became Vice-Chairman of the emergency "State Council". The National Guard and the Mkhedrioni became Georgia's armed forces.

The Georgian army was ethnically monolithic. Many (young) men joined the army voluntarily. In fact there was a lack of weapons and too many volunteers. As a result of which general mobilization was not decreed in Georgia. According to Yuri Voronov, Chairman of the Committee for Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Abkhazia, the Georgian army was not a regular army. Many soldiers fighting on the Georgian side were criminals who had the choice, to serve their sentence in jail or to serve in the Georgian army.

According to several sources, both in Georgia and Abkhazia, the Georgian aim to try to resolve the Georgian-Abkhazian dispute by military means, would have been entirely unrealistic, were it not for the military and political support of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine. The Georgian army obtained 7 bomber planes from the Russian Federation, most probably with pilots, as it did not have any experienced pilots itself. In November 1992 Georgia requested Russia to send ten military advisors. Moreover, Georgia expected to obtain aircraft carriers from both the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, again according to Yuri Voronov.

There is convincing evidence that troops under Georgian command committed gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law when they first entered Abkhazia in August 1992 and during the 14 months that followed. The Georgian soldiers were not sufficiently checked by their commanding officers and committed crimes in captured cities and villages for which they were not asked to account (impunity). They were responsible for a large number of killings and cruel treatment of people, in particular of the Abkhaz, Armenian, Greek and Russian minorities and for extensive destruction and looting of property.

According to Abkhaz and Georgian villagers in Adzubja, in the Ochamchira region, in the months before the war the Georgian authorities had confiscated weapons, including hunting guns, from Abkhazian civilians. In the same period Georgians in the region became politically active. Meetings were convened and groups of young men were formed who attacked Abkhaz villagers. Young children were stimulated to harass Abkhaz villagers. During the war, centers of Abkhaz culture and learning, including the National Museum, the University, the Academy of Sciences and the library and archives in Sukhum and Gagra, were deliberately looted and/or destroyed. In the areas occupied by Georgian troops, Abkhaz cemeteries were demolished in an attempt to wipe out historical evidence of an Abkhaz culture in Abkhazia.

During the Georgian occupation, Abkhaz, Armenians, Greeks and Russians were harassed, imprisoned, subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment for the sole reason of belonging to those ethnic groups. Georgians interviewed by the mission in Abkhazia said that Georgian men were encouraged and pressured to take up arms against their fellow citizens of other nationalities. According to Albert Topalian, President of the Armenian Cultural Society Grung, Georgian authorities had shown a strong anti-Armenian bias long before the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict came to a head. During the war, this bias deteriorated; the Armenian population was systematically harassed. As a result, the majority of the Armenian community sided with the Abkhazian cause and many Armenians took up arms against Georgian troops. A number of Georgians were also mistreated, because they had Abkhaz friends.

Although President Shevardnadze abolished capital punishment in February 1992, the death penalty was reinstated in May 1992. According to Abkhazian sources a considerable number of death penalties were carried out by Georgian military tribunals between August 1992 and September 1993.

A number of mass-graves were reportedly discovered in Abkhazia since the end of the war. In one of the graves, located in Sukhum near the municipal hospital, 128 bodies were discovered. All bodies had bullet wounds and traces indicating that the hands had been bound with barbed wire behind the victim's backs. According to the Abkhazian Prosecutor-General, Mr. Bganba, 84 bodies could be identified as Abkhaz soldiers and civilians. 44 bodies have not been identified. The date of death for the majority of the bodies in the grave was estimated to be March 15 and 16, 1993, and the date of burial March 21 or 22. Video recordings have been made of the clearing of the grave in October 1993. The evidence obtained by the mission, leaves a picture of gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law by Georgian troops and authorities on a scale not acknowledged so far by the UN or other international organizations.

#### *Abkhazian Army.*

The Abkhazian military troops were an ethnic mix. The officers were mainly Abkhaz, though Greeks, Russians, Armenians, a few Estonians, and others served in the Abkhazian army. In January 1993, an Armenian battalion was formed. A group of approximately 300 soldiers from the Northern Caucasus served in the Abkhazian army. According to official representatives of the Northern Caucasus Federation these men came voluntarily "to the rescue of their neighbouring people". The Northern Caucasus Governments did not pay these volunteers. However, practical support, such as the transport of the injured, was provided. A number of Chechen soldiers were incorporated into the Abkhazian army, while oth-

ers served in a Chechen battalion under Chechen command. Abkhaz volunteers from Turkey also came to Abkhazia. The minimum age for service in the Abkhazian army was 18, as was the case in Georgia. During the war, however, younger boys were involved in military activities. No general mobilisation was declared; Abkhazians participated on a voluntary basis. The mission did not receive reports of conscientious objectors, although some young Abkhazians did flee to the Northern Caucasus to avoid the war. The Abkhazian troops were poorly equipped at the start of the war. Abkhazian officials stated that they obtained most of their weaponry by capturing from Georgian troops.

In areas controlled by Abkhazian authorities during the war, there is evidence of anti-Georgian violence, including extra judicial killings, burning and looting of houses and of property, particularly following the taking of Gagra by Abkhazian troops in October 1992. In the final stages of the war, when Abkhazian forces, supported by military units from the Northern Caucasus, took back Sukhum and remaining Abkhazian territory to the Ingur River, there is evidence of serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law committed by members of the Abkhazian forces, Northern Caucasus troops and by armed civilians. When Abkhazian troops entered Sukhum many civilians were killed. Similar incidents also occurred in other parts of Abkhazia. The majority of Georgians, however, fled before Abkhazian and Northern Caucasus troops arrived.

From August 1992 until September 1993, Abkhazian authorities had control over only a portion of the territory. The Government seat was temporarily in Gudauta. In general the police did not exist and their tasks were performed by the Abkhazian army. Military tribunals took over the tasks of civil courts. The law recognized no distinction between Georgian and Abkhaz citizens. Georgian law, as it had been applied in Abkhazia, did not have any death penalty provisions. During the war, however, Abkhazian authorities introduced a death penalty. According to Yuri Voronov, however, no death sentences were passed or executed by Abkhazian courts during the war.

During the visit of the mission to Georgia, Lorig Marshanya, the First Vice-Premier of the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, accused "*Russian imperialists led by Mr. Zhirinovski*", of involvement in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict and of aggravating the conflict by supplying the Abkhazian side with weapons. Georgian authorities could not provide the mission with evidence to support this charge. The Russian "imperialist" forces were said to be active also among the Ossetian, Armenian and Azeri populations of Georgia, with the purpose to destabilize the Georgian state. The "union" between Abkhazia and the Northern Caucasus served a number of purposes, according to Lorig Marshanya. First of all to turn Abkhazia into a stronghold of Muslim fundamentalism. Secondly, to prepare the definitive secession of Abkhazia from Georgia. Thirdly, to oppose the present leadership of the Russian Federation by making friends with the Russian imperialists.

#### **d. Prisoners of War (POWs); Missing in Action (MIAs); Hostages**

The mission obtained a considerable amount of information from both Abkhazian and Georgian sources concerning prisoners of war. Very few soldiers were taken prisoner on both sides. The exceptional low number of POWs can only partly be explained by the nature of the war, that has been dictated by, among other things, two fronts, partisan warfare and extremely difficult lines of communication and supply.

According to Abkhazian and Georgian sources, the Georgian leadership did not have full control over its troops at the time of the war. Georgian *Mkhedrioni* troops had a very bad record when it comes to respect for human rights.

During the failed Abkhazian attempt to retake Sukhum in March 1993, Abkhazian soldiers were taken prisoner by Georgian troops who were in command of the city. The Georgian military commanders did not announce that prisoners had been taken, however, according to Beslan Kobakhiya, Chairman of the Abkhazian Commission for POWs and the Protection of

Human Rights among the Peaceful Population, 200 soldiers were missing. Only later, Georgian authorities did supply a list of 130 names of Abkhazian soldiers who had allegedly died during the battle, while 70 were reported to be missing. 20-30 bodies of the 130 perished Abkhazians were handed over by the Georgian military leaders. Mr. Grivabs, one of the 70 reported missing, was shown on Georgian television. The Abkhazian Commission for POWs contacted Georgian authorities, who promised to release Mr. Grivabs, but never did. Later, Mr. Grivabs was under treatment in the Georgian controlled hospital in Sukhum. Eyewitnesses report that Mr. Grivabs was taken away from the hospital. His body was found near the Gumista river, where he had been executed.

On October 6, 1993, 128 bodies of persons who had been executed on March 15 and 16, 1993, were excavated from a mass grave near the Sukhum hospital. According to the Abkhazian Prosecutor-General, Mr. Bganba, the remains of a number of the missing POWs were found in the grave. A list of ten POWs, whose bodies were identified, was made available to the mission. On October 11, 1993 a collective lawsuit was filed in Sukhum against the Georgians suspected to be responsible for these executions and who now live in Georgia.

Georgian military authorities frequently prevented Abkhazian families or authorities from receiving the bodies of relatives who had died in custody, unless a ransom was paid. The Abkhazian General-Prosecutor Sergei Bganba related two such cases to the mission, that of Mr. Gimur Vladimirovitch and that of Roman Shatajevitch Gitsba. The international press, however, incorrectly reported that Abkhazian authorities were not willing to take back these bodies.

The mission received contradicting information concerning the exact numbers of POWs in Georgia and in Abkhazia. Abkhazian authorities provided the mission with a list of ten Abkhazian POWs detained in Tbilisi as of December 1993. The ICRC co-ordinator, however, mentioned that eight Abkhaz POWs were kept in Tbilisi. Abkhazian authorities later added another six names, bringing the total to sixteen persons. According to Georgian sources, however, only seven Abkhaz POWs were left in Georgia by December 1993. The Georgian registration, however, dated from *before* August 24, 1993, after which date Georgia had taken additional Abkhazian POWs.

According to Abkhazian authorities, in December 1993 there were twelve Georgian POWs in Abkhazia, two in Sukhum and ten in Gudauta. During the war a total of 150-200 Georgian soldiers were taken prisoner by Abkhazian troops, of whom 60-80 were captured during the battle for Gagra in October 1992. The maximum number of Georgian POWs imprisoned in Abkhazia at any given time was 46. At first, the Georgian POWs were kept in special detention centers; later the POWs were transferred to prisons where ordinary criminals were kept as well. ICRC representatives and other international observers regularly visited Georgian POWs in Abkhazia. The mission met with two Georgian POWs in Sukhum, David G. Tchonashvili and Gvicha V. Khadueli, who were both taken prisoner on October 1, 1993 in Sukhum. They were both in reasonably good condition. Georgian authorities, however, repeatedly told the mission that all other Georgian POWs were killed, although no figures were rendered.

The mission found no evidence to support the Georgian allegation that more than 4,000 Georgian POWs were still detained in concentration camps in Bzyb, in the neighbourhood of Gagra. Since December 1993, in accordance with an agreement negotiated in Geneva on December 2, 1993, Abkhazian and Georgian POWs were exchanged "all for all".

Until the Geneva agreement was concluded, negotiations for the exchange of POWs were held in Gudauta, Sukhum and Sochi. Abkhazians complain that the exchanges were not even. On more than one occasion Abkhazia released Georgian POWs without the latter reciprocity. In March 1993, an exchange of POWs took place. More than 20 Abkhazian POWs were delivered to Abkhazian authorities killed immediately before the exchange. As their bodies were still warm, Abkhazians concluded that they had been killed just before arrival. French journalists were reported to have witnessed this scene. Allegedly, Abkhazian doctors prepared medical reports.

According to Abkhazian authorities, 1,500-3,000 Abkhazians are missing. Lists are available. According to Georgian authorities, 1,800 Georgian soldiers are missing.

Both Georgian and Abkhazian troops took civilian hostages. In many cases ransom was paid for their release. POWs and hostages were exchanged on local level, but no reliable statistics are available. In other cases hostages were killed by both sides.

#### **e. Refugees**

On the basis of information provided by Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian authorities and personal accounts of several refugees, the mission has noted the following:

During the war, until September 1993, tens of thousands of Abkhaz, Armenian, Russian, Greeks and others fled the Georgian controlled areas in Abkhazia to safer Abkhazian controlled areas. Especially civilians from the Eastern part of Abkhazia found themselves in a difficult position; approximately 11,000 persons fled to safer places, for example to the city Tkvarchali. Here many internally displaced persons from the surrounding region sought protection from the war. By December 1993, many of them had returned to their houses in the surrounding region, although some 5,000 had not returned yet. Refugees from other parts of Abkhazia fled to the Gudauta region, as that area was never controlled by Georgian troops. Flats in Abkhazia deserted by Georgians and others were used to lodge displaced persons.

Near the end of the war, a considerable percentage of the Georgian population of Abkhazia fled the country and sought refuge in Tbilisi and other parts of Georgia, the mountain area along the Abkhazian-Georgian border, in Moscow and in areas along the Abkhazian-Russian border. According to authorities in Tbilisi, 200,000 to 240,000 Georgians were deported from Abkhazia.

According to Abkhazian authorities, however, some 100,000 to 150,000 Georgians fled from Abkhazia as a result of their collaboration with the occupying force and fear of accusation thereof. According to the UNHCR Update on the Caucasus of March 15, 1994:

"there were 14,000 refugees from Georgia in Krasnodar Krai, Russian Federation, by March 1994. (...) This group is primarily composed of ethnic Russians, Armenians, Meskheta Turks and Georgians. They are among an estimated 135,000 refugees and forced migrants from war affected areas of Abkhazia and other parts of Georgia who have fled to the region around Krasnodar and Sochi."

In Tbilisi, there are 50,000 Georgian refugees from Abkhazia who are lodged in hotels and with relatives. An additional 10,000 refugees from Abkhazia are in Moscow, including Georgians, Armenians, Russians and Greeks, according to the Georgian Vice-Consul and the Chairman of the Refugee Support Committee in Moscow. The Consulate changed the office opening hours in order to digest the stream of refugees.

Georgians fled Abkhazia for various reasons. In many cases Georgians fled out of fear for their personal safety and their possessions. Wild rumors often caused fear. In other cases, however, Georgians were intimidated, harassed and subjected to violence. A deeply rooted Caucasus tradition of revenge and retaliation was often mentioned in this respect.

In some cases, refugees were assisted by civilians of other nationality, who provided them with transport and false passports. Refugees in Tbilisi told the mission that they were forced to pay high prices to get out of Abkhazia, but it was not clear to whom they had to pay.

In December 1993, the mission witnessed the departure of Georgian civilians from Sukhum. They were provided with means of transportation by the Abkhazian authorities. With some irregularity, buses left from Sukhum for Tbilisi and other destinations in Georgia. This bus service was also used by Georgians and others who traveled to Georgia for a short visit only.

In order to leave Abkhazia, all persons, including Georgians, need a valid residence permit ("propiska").

Members of the Greek minority in Abkhazia fled in great numbers at different stages of the war; totally 6,000 to 7,000 of whom 2,000 left for Russia, 5,000 were evacuated to Greece by the Greek Government. Of the total Jewish population of approximately 6,000 persons in Abkhazia, 2,000 to 3,000 fled the country. Georgian refugees who were interviewed upon arrival in Greece, reported that they had been ill-treated by Georgian troops and were forced to leave Abkhazia. However, Greek inhabitants of Konstantinovka, a village near Sukhum fled following an attack by bandits in August 1993, after Georgian troops had already left the region. Georgian authorities claimed that the Jewish population of Abkhazia was expelled by Abkhazian authorities. Greek villagers, however, explained that it was the Georgians who forced them and their Jewish fellow villagers to leave. A considerable number of Abkhaz, Georgians, Greeks, Jews, Armenians and Russians, left Abkhazia, not because of oppression or fear, but because of deteriorating economic conditions. The war brought the economy to a virtual stand still; those with land of their own were in the position to provide for themselves, others were forced to flee.

#### **f. Sochi Agreement**

On July 27, 1993 the Sochi Agreement on Cease Fire in Abkhazia and on the Control Mechanism of its Observation was signed by representatives of Abkhazia, Georgia and the Russian Federation. The agreement stipulated for a cease fire, disarmament and withdrawal of the troops and first steps towards a peaceful settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.

The parties to the conflict, among others things, agreed that

"Parties to the conflict instate a cease-fire regime, assuming obligations to strictly observe the cease-fire and not to use force against each other in the conflict zone.

From 29 July 1993, Georgian-Abkhazian-Russian provisional groups (3-9 members) will start functioning. To observe the cease-fire the provisional control groups are to be deployed in Sukhum, Gulrips, Ochamchira, Gudauta Noviy Afon, Tkvarchal, Gagra, Gali.

A Joint Committee on the Regulation of the Situation in Abkhazia is to be formed before 5 August, 1993.

The Parties deem it necessary to invite and use international observers and peace-keeping forces in the conflict zone.

The successive demilitarization of the conflict zone begins; within 10-15 days from the beginning of the cease-fire, military formations of the Republic of Georgia are to be withdrawn from the territory of Abkhazia. The Parties guarantee the observance of rights of the poly-ethnic population.

Measures will be taken for refugees to return to the places of their permanent residence. The Russian troops temporarily stationed in the territory of Abkhazia strictly observe neutrality.

The Parties will create conditions for the resumption of the normal functioning of the legitimate authorities in Abkhazia."

According to Alexander Russetski, a well informed Georgian source, the agreement was signed under pressure. Allegedly, both Georgia and Abkhazia realized that Georgia could meet the precisions in the agreement. However, Georgia was forced to sign the agreement, as it was in an extremely weak military position and Sukhum was surrounded.

On August 5, 1993, as a result of the Sochi Agreement, a Joint Committee was formed with representatives of the Russian Federation, Georgia and Abkhazia. The Joint Committee met several times to negotiate different issues, including the exchange of POWs.

Georgia and Abkhazia claimed that the Sochi Agreement was violated by the other party. Abkhazia stated that Georgia did not withdraw its troops and equipment as required by the Sochi Agreement, on the contrary, Georgia brought in a large number of troops into Sukhum

and the surrounding area. Georgia claimed that Abkhazia hid its equipment instead of disarming its troops as required by the agreement. Georgia accused the Russian Federation of supplying Abkhazia with new weapons. In August 1993 Georgia accused Abkhazia of sabotaging the Joint Committee meetings. Abkhazia, however, refused to comply with the Joint Committee decision concerning the exchange of POWs, as Georgia was not fulfilling its obligations under the Sochi Agreement. In any event, the agreement was broken. On September 16, 1993, fighting broke out and Abkhazian troops moved in force to retake the capital of Sukhum.

### **III. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE END OF THE FIGHTING**

The violation of the Sochi Agreement ushered in the last phase of the Georgian-Abkhazian war. By the end of September 1993, the Abkhazian troops had retaken Sukhum and the rest of Abkhazia. Since, only sporadic clashes occurred in Abkhazia, Svanetia and along the Inguri river.

#### **a. Measures for Protection of Human Rights by Abkhazian Authorities**

The mission investigated measures that Georgian and Abkhazian authorities have taken to promote and protect human rights, punish violators, and to bring the post-war situation under control. The mission found that Abkhazian Government had taken earnest measures to bring the situation, particularly in the cities, under control.

A special commission to facilitate the return of refugees to Abkhazia was set up. The first priority of the commission is the repatriation of the Russian speaking refugee<sup>3</sup>, including Armenians; then the repatriation of Greeks and Jews; and finally the repatriation of Georgian refugees. This prioritization was meant to prevent chaos. Georgia, however, accused Abkhazia of planning to prevent the Georgian population from returning to their homes. The mission met Georgians who had returned to Abkhazia, especially to the Gali district and Ochamchira region. Several hundreds such refugees had already returned.

The Abkhazian Parliament - in absence of its Georgian members - reinstated, on July 23, 1992, the Abkhazian constitution of 1925. Currently, drafts for a new constitution are being discussed by the Parliament of Abkhazia. UNPO advisors have helped in the drafting process. A large section of this new constitution will be devoted to human rights. Equality before the law of all inhabitants of Abkhazia, regardless of their ethnic background, will be one of its basic principles. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be incorporated in the constitution. No decision was made regarding death penalty. Some MPs, like Mr. Zora Achma, saw the death penalty as necessity in the present situation and even mentioned the shortage of prison space as supporting evidence of this idea.

Legislation is under consideration to permit Abkhazians living abroad to have double citizenship. The mission was informed that under current proposals all persons born in Abkhazia after 1931 would automatically obtain Abkhazian citizenship. In addition persons with at least one parent born in Abkhazia before 1931 also will qualify for citizenship. Although Georgian minority members would have the same right to Abkhazian citizenship as others, they would be deprived of the right if they engaged in anti-Abkhazian activities. It is unclear if they will qualify for Abkhazian citizenship after serving their sentence or what period would be considered relevant for "anti-Abkhazian activities". Special attention will be paid to the activities of Georgians who were involved in ideological war preparation and will be excluded from Abkhazian citizenship. Some Abkhazian officials favored to check the behaviour of Georgians in the "incubation period" before the war, 1989-1993.

Georgian civilians were imprisoned in Abkhazia for ideological and political reasons. A journalist of the newspaper "Democratic Abkhazia" and a professor of history at Sukhum

University were both accused of engaging in activities that the Abkhazian authorities described as "inducing inter-ethnic problems". At the time of writing, the prisoners were released.

The population in Abkhazia is provided with bread coupons. Canteens serve food to all who are not able to buy it. Abkhazian NGOs, such as the Hare Krishna and the Foundation for the Protection of War Victims, are also involved in food distribution.

A parliamentary Committee for Human Rights was created, which is composed of 1 Armenian, 1 Russian and 3 Abkhaz. The mandate of the Committee is to propagate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; to collect information on human rights violations in co-operation with Abkhazian and international NGOs and Abkhazian governmental bodies; to monitor the governmental human rights policies and to give human rights education for the population of Abkhazia. This is part of the government policy to cultivate an environment of ethnic tolerance.

To enhance public safety, Abkhazian authorities started to disarm civilians. Weapons from soldiers who returned to civilian life are also collected. The mission was informed that, in violent incidents involving marauding gangs since the end of the war, at least 5 Abkhazians, 9 Armenians, 4 Russians, an Estonian and a number of Greeks were murdered. In Sukhum and Gagra curfew has been imposed.

Persons suspected of crimes, including human rights violation, are arrested and tried. Several Abkhazians responsible for crimes against Georgian civilians were prosecuted or are awaiting their trial in Sukhum. In three cases, Abkhazians were found responsible for murder and rape and were sentenced with 6-10 years imprisonment. The Abkhazian Prosecutor-General, Mr. Bganba, informed the mission that another 13 Abkhazian citizens were arrested on suspicion of murdering Georgian civilians. The mission was told of 5 Abkhazians, 9 Armenians, 4 Russians, 1 Estonian and a number of Greeks that were killed recently. Of these crimes, however, according to Mr. Bganba, the culprits are not known.

Despite these measures Abkhazia faces a major problem of law and order in the countryside. The population complains that authorities do not provide sufficient protection against roving gangs. As a result, civilians are armed in order to protect the population against bandits. Georgian civilians are especially afraid for their property and personal safety.

Because of cultural taboos, rape is a subject that is not easily dealt with in Abkhazian society. This prevents women from reporting sexual crimes. The MSF medical coordinator stressed the negative effect of this tradition. Abkhazian authorities acknowledged this problem. There were many rape victims during and after the war.

The mission expressed concern about measures taken by Abkhazian authorities to prevent deserted Georgian houses from being looted or confiscated by Abkhazian civilians. Some of these houses are used as temporary reception for Abkhazian displaced persons until the original inhabitants claim their house. Abkhazian authorities agreed that returning refugees should be able to claim the right to repossess their houses, but no measures were taken to facilitate this.

The mission spoke with Georgian refugees in Tbilisi who were determined never to return to Abkhazia. It was reported by Georgian authorities that some Georgian refugees only return to their houses in Abkhazia during the night to inspect their possession and to visit relatives. Registration of returning refugees to Abkhazia is not performed adequately. Before the war 120,000 Russian speaking minorities lived in Abkhazia, of whom only 40,000-50,000 remain.

The massive departure of the Georgian population has created vacancies on every level of the administration. This causes major problems in the daily management of the country. The police, for example, suffers a 50% shortage of personnel. Only 35 out of 65 seats of the

Supreme Council are occupied; all Georgian MPs left the country. A Russian, an Armenian and a Kabardinian representative lost their seats in the Supreme Council because of their pro-Georgian position during the war. The present breakdown of the seats is as follows: 3 Armenians, 3 Russians, 2 Georgians and 27 Abkhaz. The two Georgian MPs were elected during additional elections on August 26, 1993. On the future structure of the Supreme Council nothing was decided yet. Positions within the administration used to be distributed among the ethnic population on the basis of set quota. Some Abkhazian leaders voiced the opinion that in the future there should be no pre-determined ethnic balances in the Parliament.

In March 1994, the Georgian Parliament declared the Supreme Council in Abkhazia to be illegal. The Georgian community in Abkhazia was weakened considerably by the war and the subsequent flight of Georgians. Especially worrying is the flight of the entire leadership of the Georgian minority and the likelihood of their not returning. The mission was concerned that this will have consequences for the promotion of the interest of the Georgian population of Abkhazia, also after an eventual return of Georgian refugees.

Another point of focus for the Abkhazian authorities, are the Georgian special services operative in Abkhazia. The Abkhazian authorities fear a fifth column of Georgian saboteurs. Georgians suspected of supporting such a fifth column are closely followed. Up until December 1993, 60 alleged Georgian military agents had been exposed, according to the Abkhazian Minister of Interior, Mr. Gyvi Kamugovitch Agrba. With respect to anti-Abkhazian activities, different degrees are distinguished, ranging from offering transportation to taking up arms against Abkhazians. In this context, it was remarked that the immediate return of all Georgian refugees would create a considerable safety problem. Georgians in Abkhazia have been issued a clearance document stating that they have not been involved in anti-Abkhazian crimes. This document is referred to as *propiska*. A *propiska* is needed for housing and work licenses. The Abkhazian internal intelligence police is in charge of the antecedental research connected with this clearance. 2200 *propiskas* were approved while 150 applicants were rejected due to involvement in military or other anti-Abkhazian activities. Those rejected are given the choice, either to stay and face prosecution or to leave Abkhazia.

## **b. Measures for Protection of Human Rights by Georgian Authorities**

Georgian authorities in Tbilisi were unable to provide the mission with evidence or data concerning the prosecution of Georgians, Megrelians<sup>4</sup>, Abkhazians or others who committed human rights violations and other crimes during the time Georgian authorities controlled parts of Abkhazia. It was argued that all judicial files have been left behind in Sukhum. The mission had the strong impression that this issue is not given priority by the Georgian Prosecutor-General. Cooperation between Georgian and Abkhazian judicial authorities is non-existent.

## **c. Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing**

In discussions with the mission, the principal accusation of Georgian authorities made against Abkhazian authorities was genocide committed against the Georgian population of Abkhazia. The mission did not, however, obtain convincing evidence that would support this claim.

Georgians allege that the Abkhazian leaders are responsible for the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Georgian people in Abkhazia. They claim that 200,000-250,000 Georgians were driven away from Abkhazian territory and that in the process tens of thousands died

in the mountains on their way to Georgia. Georgian authorities also allege that due to Chairman Ardzinba's "apartheid regime", all opposition has been silenced; in this context the Georgian authorities speak of "self genocide".

Georgian authorities accused the Abkhazian leaders of preparing the genocide against the Georgian people since 1988. According to the Georgian leaders the Abkhazian authorities initiated a hate campaign against the Georgian civilian population of Abkhazia. By means of psychological warfare the Abkhazian population was indoctrinated. In that sense the Abkhaz members of the Supreme Council, the Council of Ministers and a handful of Abkhaz historians and journalists were considered the spiritual fathers of the genocidal policies that have recently been carried out to their full extent. The Georgian Prosecutor-General in charge of the dossier claimed to have thousands of documents to prove this, however, they could not be made available to the mission. He stressed that the Abkhazian authorities would try to suppress incriminating evidence, when details of the extent of the human rights violations that have taken place under Abkhazian authority were made public. In this context he explicitly referred to the existence of "innumerable" mass graves where 15,000 to 20,000 Georgian victims are buried. The mission was told that Georgia will persecute Abkhazian leaders in international courts. Upon repeated requests, the mission was shown one document as evidence, the text of Law No. 1708.XI, concerning the allocation of seats in the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, according to ethnicity, adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic of the Republic of Abkhazia in 1989. According to the Georgian authorities this law endangered the sovereignty of the Georgian state and is the most important legal basis for allegations of the Abkhaz genocide against the Georgian people. This law proved that the policies of the Abkhaz political elite from 1988 onwards were aimed at the creation of a mono-ethnic Abkhazia. It should be noted that the personal advisor to the Georgian President, Levan Alexidze, was the co-author of this law, which was accepted by Abkhazian authorities at the suggestion of President Gamsakhurdia.

In the past, Abkhazian authorities frequently claimed that the discriminatory and oppressive Georgian policies towards the Abkhaz population should be regarded as genocide and ethnic cleansing. The Abkhazian Minister of Social Welfare Mistakopoulos stated to the mission that Georgian authorities and political groupings had ideologically prepared the war long before 1992 and that they had even distributed arms to the Georgian population in Abkhazia.

#### **d. Geneva Memorandum and Political Settlement of the Conflict**

From November 30 until December 1, 1993, the first round of negotiations on a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict took place in Geneva under the aegis of the United Nations, with the Russian Federation as facilitator and a representative of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as observer. The meeting was chaired by Edouard Brunner, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Georgia. The General Secretary of UNPO assisted the Abkhazian delegation as a member of that delegation. The first round of negotiations resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Georgian and Abkhazian sides. It was agreed that Georgia and Abkhazia would exchange POWs "all for all" within 20 days after the signing of the Memorandum. This exchange took place on December 19, 1993; Abkhazia released twelve POWs and Georgia released seven. Among those released by Georgia were no ethnic Abkhaz POWs, only POWs from the Northern Caucasus. After this exchange, POWs were again taken by both parties as intermittent hostilities continued.

The Geneva Memorandum further stipulated the creation of a group of experts, including representatives of Georgia and Abkhazia, the UN, the Russian Federation and the CSCE, to prepare recommendations on the future political status of Abkhazia. This group of experts met several times, in December 1993, in January, February and continued until July 1994.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Upon its arrival in Moscow, on December 10, 1993, the mission made the following recommendations:

That the Parliament, Government and other authorities in Abkhazia:

1. vigorously and publicly pursue, arrest and try persons suspected of human rights violations and violent crimes, regardless of who the perpetrators and who the victims are; This process should be public and publicized;
2. intensify educational campaigns through television and other media on the importance of the protection of human rights;
3. create conditions for a safe return of refugees and displaced persons.
4. pursue the disarmament of civilians while providing effective protection to the populations of cities and of villages;
5. establish a facility to assist, with due regard to confidentiality, victims of rape;
6. develop a truly democratic system of government which guarantees individual human rights and fully protects rights of all ethnic groups in Abkhazia;
7. take concrete measures to implement the Memorandum signed in Geneva on December 1, 1993;

That the Government of Georgia:

1. vigorously pursue, arrest and try persons suspected of human rights violations and other crimes committed in areas of Abkhazia under Georgian control during the period of the war;
2. take concrete steps to reassure all parties concerned that no force will be used in efforts to resolve the conflict with Abkhazia, in line with the Geneva Memorandum;

That the Government of the Russian Federation:

1. lift the economic blockade of Abkhazia, in line with the spirit of the Geneva Memorandum which it signed.

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#### **V. FOOTNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> In this report "Abkhazian" means "of Abkhazia". All citizens of Abkhazia regardless of their ethnic background are included in the term "Abkhazian". In this report the term "Abkhaz" is used to denote the ethnic group indigenous to Abkhazia.

<sup>2</sup> Georgia was a Founding Member of the UNPO. When Georgia became independent, it became "Supporting Member" of UNPO, in accordance with the Covenant of UNPO. Abkhazia became a full Member in January 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Russian speaking refers to the Russian minority in Abkhazia, as well as to the Armenian minority.

<sup>4</sup> The Megrelians live in the western region of Georgia and in the eastern region of Abkhazia. Svans live in the mountain regions near the Abkhazian-Georgian border. They mostly consider themselves ethnic Georgians, but have their own language, which belongs to the Georgian language group. In this report the term "Georgian", unless when specified otherwise, includes Megrelians and Svans.

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## APPENDICES

- Timeline, main events in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.
- UNPO Fact Sheet and Map of Abkhazia.
- Sochi Agreement reached by Georgia, Abkhazia and the Russian Federation on July 27, 1993.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Georgian and the Abkhazian sides at the negotiations in Geneva. (November 30 to December 1, 1993)
- List of documents collected by the mission in Abkhazia and Georgia.

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### **Timeline - Course of the War and Events after the War**

- \* August 27, 1991: Law no. 1708.XI concerning the distribution of seats in the Supreme Council on the basis of ethnicity/district adopted.
  
- \* April 1992: both in Gagra as well as in Ochamchira region Georgian civilians are supplied with weapons by Georgian authorities.
  
- \* Early August, 1992: the proposed a draft for a federal treaty with Georgia fails to meet approval in Tbilisi. The negotiation process continues, but the tensions mount. Georgian MPs walk out the Parliament building in Sukhum.
  
- \* August 11, 1992: three days before Georgian troops enter Abkhazia, Georgian political leaders flee from Gagra
  
- \* August 14, 1992: Georgian troops enter Abkhazia, the war starts. Georgian troops take Sukhum, Gagra and most of eastern and western Abkhazia. An Abkhazian opposition government is installed.
  
- \* October 1992: Abkhazian troops retake the northern town of Gagra, and regain control over parts of Ochamchira region. Large numbers of refugees flee from Georgian held areas.
  
- \* January 1993: Georgian refugees leave parts of Abkhazia taken by Abkhazian forces.
  
- \* March, 1993: failed Abkhazian attempt to retake Sukhum.
  
- \* April, 1993: Thamas Nadareishvili, former Georgian Deputy Chairman of the Abkhazian Parliament, later occupying a military post, promulgates the general mobilisation of Georgians in Abkhazia.
  
- \* July 1993: Armenian partisan groups in Ochamchira region are disarmed by Abkhazian troops, in order to prevent provocation of Georgians along the border.
  
- \* July 27, 1993: Sochi Cease Fire Agreement concluded and signed by Abkhazia, Georgia and the Russian Federation.
  
- \* September 16, 1993: Abkhazian offensive to retake Sukhum.
  
- \* September 19, 1993: Georgian President Shevardnadze visits in Sukhum.
  
- \* September 24, 1993: battle for the State Council building in Sukhum.
- \* September 27, 1993: Abkhazian troops retake Sukhum.
  
- \* October 7, 1993: the Abkhazian Chairman Ardzinba issues an 8-point memorandum for peaceful resolution of the conflict, guaranteeing safe travel and return for all refugees.
  
- \* November 30 until December 1, 1993: first round of negotiations on a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict took place under the aegis of the United Nations with the Russian Federation as facilitator and attended by a representative of the CSCE and Michael van Walt van Praag, UNPO General-Secretary.
  
- \* December 15-16, 1993: first meeting of a group of experts, including representatives of Abkhazia and Georgia, the UN, the Russian Federation and the CSCE, preparing recommendations on the political status of Abkhazia.
  
- \* January 11-12, 1994: second round of negotiations on a comprehensive settlement of the

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Georgian-Abkhazian conflict in Moscow.

- \* February 11, 1994: second meeting of the group of experts, including representatives of Georgia and Abkhazia, the UN, the Russian Federation and the CSCE, preparing recommendations on the political status of Abkhazia in Geneva.
- \* February 22, 1994: third round of negotiation on a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict in Geneva.
- \* March 7-9, 1994: continuation of third round of negotiations in New York.
- \* March 9, 1994: Georgian Parliament adopts decision to "dissolve" Abkhazian Parliament and set up exile Government in Tbilisi; also calls for arrest and prosecution of Abkhazian leaders for crimes against humanity.
- \* March 15, 1994: Abkhazia announces suspension of negotiations as reaction to Georgian Parliament decision.
- \* April 5, 1994: following days of talks at Russian initiative, signing of agreement. Repatriation of refugees and a framework for a political solution to the conflict; resumption of negotiation process. Renewed fighting in north-west Abkhazia.
- \* May 1994:
- \* June 1994:
- \* July 1994:

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# REPUBLIC OF ABKHAZIA

## Legal Status:

Abkhazia has a long history of sovereignty, at times within the Soviet Union and Georgia. The present status is disputed.

## Political Leaders/Parties:

Chairman of the Parliament: Vladislav Ardzinba.

## Political System/Government:

Parliamentary System

## Religion

Orthodox Christian, Sunni Muslim



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## Language

The Abkhaz language belongs to the West Caucasian linguistic group, which is a branch of the North Caucasian linguistic family.

## Ethnicity:

Abkhaz, Georgian, Mingrelian, Russian, Armenian, Greek, Ukrainian, and Jewish.

## Economy:

Agriculture, citrus fruits, corn, tea, tobacco, iron industry, coal and baryte mining, fish farming, bee-keeping, silk-production and viticulture. Abkhazia has a large tourist industry.

## Bordering Countries:

Russian Federation, Georgia.

Size: 8.7 km sq.

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Capital: Sukhum Population: Total 525,061. 18% is Abkhazian, while the Georgian part (consisting of Georgians, Mingrelians and Svans) is 45% of the population. The rest of the population is of Armenian (15%), Russian (14%) or Greek (3%) origin.

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Text of the Sochi agreement as it was signed on July 27, 1993 by representatives of Abkhazia, Georgia and the Russian Federation

## **AGREEMENT ON CEASE-FIRE IN ABKHAZIA AND ON THE CONTROL MECHANISM FOR ITS OBSERVATION**

Representatives of the Parties to the conflict with the mediation of Russia agreed on the following:

1. Parties to the conflict reinstate from 12 p.m. 28 July 1993 a cease-fire regime of 20 May, assuming obligations to strictly observe the cease-fire and not to use force against each other in the conflict zone.

Combat use of air-crafts, artillery, ships and other vessels, of any military equipment and weapons is banned.

Additional armed forces and other military formations will not be moved to the conflict zone (into the territory of Abkhazia); uncoordinated dislocation of armed forces and other formations will not be carried out; weapons and ammunition will not be supplied; installations of military infrastructure will not be built.

2. From 29 July 1993 Georgian-Abkhazian-Russian provisional control groups (3-9 members) will start functioning. The personnel is to be approved by the Parties.

To observe cease-fire Provisional control groups are to be deployed in Sukhum, Gulripsh, Ochamchira, Gudauta, Noviy Afon, Tkvarchal, Gagra, Gali. If necessary, similar groups are deployed in other places by the consent of the Parties. Control groups have access to any place in the conflict zone upon corresponding notification of the Parties. The Parties to the conflict provide safety of the control groups, create conditions for their accommodation, provide transport for them.

The control groups can consider appeals of the population on various problems. Upon the arrival of international observers, the provisional control groups establish close contact with the former.

3. Each Party is to take immediate and effective measures to suppress any violation by its units of cease-fire regime, registered by the control groups. Each Party is to respond immediately to the recommendations and initiatives of the control groups.

Violations by the Parties of the provisions of the current agreement are to be reported to the UN and CSCE.

4. A Joint Committee on the Regulation of the Situation in Abkhazia is to be formed before 5 August 1993. The statute of the Committee is to be approved by the Parties. The UN and CSCE representatives and observers by their own consent participate in the work of the Committee.

5. The Parties deem it necessary to invite and use international observers and peace-keeping forces in the conflict zone. The number and composition of peace-keeping forces are determined upon the consultation with the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council by the consent of the Parties.

6. The successive demilitarization of the conflict zone begins.

International observers are immediately introduced into the conflict zone; within 10-15 days from the beginning of the cease-fire military formations of the Republic of Georgia are to be withdrawn from the territory of Abkhazia. Within the same period military formations, groups and individuals in the conflict zone are to be disbanded and withdrawn from Abkhazia.

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To safeguard the main lines and important installations in accordance with the Final Document of the 3-d September, 1993 Moscow Summit a sub-unit of Interior forces of the Georgian Party is formed out of the local population and is stationed in billets. Later this subunit together with the interior regiment described below will join the poliethnic Interior forces of Abkhazia.

Military formations of the Abkhazian Party are transformed into an Interior regiment, lodged in billets, performing the functions of interior forces (safe-guarding of main lines and important installations) until a comprehensive agreement is reached. All the above actions are carried out under the observation of the Joint Committee. International observers are deployed along the Rivers Gumista, Psou and Ingur. Immediately after the cease-fire poliethnic police forces are created to provide public order in the conflict zone. Their number and composition are determined by the Parties. To maintain cease-fire, law and order international forces are drawn in, including, upon a consultation with the UN, the Russian military contingent, temporary stationed in the conflict zone.

The parties guarantee the observance of rights of the poliethnic population.

Measures will be taken for the refugees to return to the places of their permanent residence and also for rendering assistance to the latter. The Joint Committee forms a special group to solve the problems, connected with the refugees, effectively.

7. The Russian troops temporarily stationed in the territory of Abkhazia strictly observe neutrality.

The status of the temporary presence, conditions for functioning, the date and order of the withdrawal of military formations and border guard units of the Russian Federation will be determined by special agreements.

The parties are to provide the safety of the Russian military and their families.

8. In accordance with the Final Document of the 3-d September, 1993 Moscow Summit the Parties will create conditions for the resumption of the normal functioning of the legitimate authorities in Abkhazia.

9. Under the UN auspices and with Russia's mediation the Parties to the conflict will proceed with negotiations on the preparations of the Agreement on a comprehensive solution of the conflict in Abkhazia.

The agreement will include principle questions of peace maintenance, demilitarization of the conflict zone, the use of peace-keeping forces, adjustment of economics, public order, criminal proceedings against individuals involved in the crimes against the civilian population, reinstatement of the refugees in the places of their permanent residence, observation of human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities, guarantees for the political status and the state system of Abkhazia.

10. The Parties in the current Agreement assume obligations not to use the provisions of the latter, or the cease-fire to carry out activities at the expense of each other's interests.

Sochi, 27 July 1993.

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MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING

between the Georgian and the Abkhaz sides at the negotiations in Geneva

From 30 November to 1 December 1993 in Geneva, the first round of negotiations on a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict took place under the aegis of the United Nations with the Russian Federation as facilitator and a representative of the CSCE.

The negotiations were held in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 849 of 9 July 1993, 854 of 6 August 1993, 858 of 24 August 1993, 876 of 19 October 1993 and 881 of 4 November 1993.

Agreement was reached concerning the following:

1. In accordance with the main provisions of the Sochi Agreement of 27 July 1993 on the cease-fire in Abkhazia and the mechanism for monitoring its observance, the parties commit themselves not to use force or the threat of force against each other for the period of the continuing negotiations to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia.

2. The parties consider that the maintenance of peace would be promoted by an increase in the zone of conflict of the number of international observers and by the use of international peacekeeping forces subject to agreement by the Security Council and the United Nations Secretary-General.

3. As a gesture of good will, the parties before 20 December 1993 will exchange prisoners-of-war in accordance with the principle of all for all without any preconditions. Urgent measures will be taken to find those missing, for which purpose the parties will give each other the appropriate lists. In addition, measures will be taken for the reburial of the dead.

4. The parties consider it their duty to find an urgent solution to the problem of the refugees and displaced persons. They undertake to create conditions for the voluntary, safe and speedy return of refugees to the places of their permanent residence in all regions of Abkhazia. The apartments, houses, plots of land and property which they left shall be returned to all those refugees who return.

The parties express the hope for participation in the solution to the problem of refugees by the UNHCR.

5. The parties appeal to the international community to render assistance in re-establishing basic supply systems to the population in the conflict zone, and to render all victims of the conflict various types of humanitarian assistance.

6. The parties express the wish that for purposes of promoting economic recovery in the conflict zone an international commission be established with the participation of international and national organizations.

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7. To prepare recommendations on the political status of Abkhazia, a group of experts including representatives of the parties, the United Nations, the Russian Federation and the CSCE will begin work in Moscow in early December 1993. The group will submit its report to the next round of negotiations.

8. The next round of negotiations for a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict under the aegis of the United Nations, with the Russian Federation as facilitator and with the participation of the CSCE representative will begin on 11 January 1994 in Moscow or Geneva.

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## Documents collected by the Mission in Abkhazia and Georgia

1. Documents provided by the Abkhazian Minister of Defence;
  - Declaration in relation to the mass killing and ill-treatment of Abkhazian POWs by Georgian soldiers. (December 7, 1993).
  - Declaration about criminal research in relation to murder and looting in the period August 14, 1992 until September 27, 1993 and from September 27, 1993 until December 7, 1993.
  - Letter by Mr. Voronov to Ms. Mein, head of the UN mission.
  - Appeal by the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Abkhazia, Mr. Sosnaliev, to the Georgian troops. (September 4, 1993).
  - Appeal by the Abkhazian Chairman Ardzinba to Mr. Boutros Boutros Ghali to send UN observers. (November 13, 1993).
  - Letter in which the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Georgia, Mr. Kitovani, requests the head commander of the Caucasus region of the army of the Russian Federation, to send 10 military advisers. (November 5, 1992).
2. Documents provided by the Committee on Human rights Violations of the Union of Women of Abkhazia. (Gudauta)
  - "War in Abkhazia. Illustrative examples of breaching principles of humanity and human rights violations."
3. "100 years of disputes and war in Abkhazia", by Mr. Lakoba. A compilation of documents to prove that Georgians were for a period of hundred years trying to overrule Abkhazia.
4. Statement by the Abkhazian Independent Human Rights group Asarkial (Gudauta, September 7, 1993).
5. Whitebook, published by the Abkhazian Committee on Human Rights of the Republic of Abkhazia. (Moscow, October; 1993).
6. "Abkhazia. Brief information about Abkhazia." Documents provided by the Abkhazian Ministry of Interior (Gudauta. August, 1993).
7. List of people allegedly killed by Abkhazian bombardments, published during the Georgian occupation in the newspaper "Democratic Abkhazia", and an answer prepared by Asarkial. (Gudauta, August, 1993).
8. "Report of the autopsy on bodies found after the liberation of Sukhum", by \_Mr. Gurtskaia. (Sukhum, September 26, 1993).
9. Document "085-1227", Request by the Abkhazian Government to the Israeli Government to assist in the repatriation of Jews to Abkhazia. (October 27, 1993).
10. Document "085-1228", Request by the Abkhazian Government to the Greek Government to assist in the repatriation of Greeks to Abkhazia. (October 27, 1993).
11. Document "085-1229", Regulations issued by the Abkhazian Government concerning the repatriation of Georgian refugees. (October 27, 1993).
12. "Arbitrary executions without proceedings" prepared by the Abkhazian Independent Human Rights Group Asarkial. (Gudauta, July 1993)\_
13. "No. 3174-93", Letter by the Abkhazian authorities denying Georgian accusations of human rights violations. (September, 9, 1993).
14. "UNHCR information about numbers and location of displaced persons in Georgia". (November 17, 1993).

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14. "UNHCR information about numbers and location of displaced persons in Georgia". (November 17, 1993).

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15. List compiled by Mrs. Asatiani, a Georgian refugee in Tbilisi, of people who disappeared in Gagra on October 3, 1992.
  16. Letter by Ms. Astemirova, Georgian Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee, to that commission regarding a meeting that had to be cancelled as the Abkhaz representatives did not show up. (August 27, 1993).
  17. Letter by Mr. Shartava, Abkhazian Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee, concerning the importance of a good arrangement of the repatriation of Georgian refugees to Abkhazia. (September 27, 1993).
  18. List of 137 persons made prisoner who subsequently disappeared or were killed by Abkhazian troops in the period from August 14, 1992, until September 13, 1993. (August 14, 1993).
  19. List of 434 people executed in the period from August 14, 1992 until October 27, 1992. (October 27, 1992).
  20. Materials presented to the fact finding mission of the UN on the continuous policy of ethnic cleansing of the Georgian population in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia.
  21. "Bloody separatism. What happened in Abkhazia.", booklet published by the Georgian Committee for Human Rights and Inter-ethnic Relations
  22. Statement of the Joint Committee concerning the situation of Georgian civilians in Abkhazia, after a visit of the Committee to Bzyb and Gagra. (August 9, 1993).
  23. "Statement about the ethnic cleansing and genocide of Georgian population in Abkhazia", by the Committee for Human Rights and Inter-ethnic Relations of the Republic of Georgia.

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The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) provides a platform for those nations, minorities and peoples, indigenous and other, not represented in established international forums such as the United Nations. UNPO was created by these peoples and nations to empower themselves. UNPO Membership, rapidly growing since its founding in February 1991, today represents over 100 million people. Through UNPO its Members today have a legitimate international forum and are developing the mechanisms and professional services to advance their needs and aspirations through peaceful and democratic means.