

Information Documents

SG/Inf(2026)13

23 April 2026¹

Consolidated report on the conflict in Georgia (October 2025 – March 2026)

1. This document has been classified restricted until examination by the Committee of Ministers.

Introduction

1. At their 1080th meeting on 24 and 26 March 2010, the Ministers' Deputies (hereafter the Deputies) took the following decision: "The Deputies, restating the previous decisions of the Committee of Ministers, invited the Secretary General to prepare his consolidated report on the conflict in Georgia based on his outline and taking into account the comments made during the present meeting".

2. It is recalled that the objective of the report is to take stock of the situation in Georgia following the armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Georgia in August 2008, to report on the related activities of the Council of Europe and to propose further Council of Europe action. The report is composed of four parts:

- update on major developments in the period under review;
- assessment of statutory obligations and commitments related to the conflict and its consequences;
- the human rights situation in the areas affected by the conflict; and
- current Council of Europe activities aimed at addressing the consequences of the conflict, their follow-up and proposals for future action.

3. This 33rd consolidated report covers the period October 2025 - March 2026. It notably builds on the previous consolidated reports and on the related decisions by the Deputies.

4. A delegation of the Secretariat carried out a fact-finding visit to Tbilisi on 4 to 6 March 2026 and had the opportunity to discuss the situation with the Georgian authorities, as well as representatives of international organisations. The Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude to the Georgian authorities for their support in organising the visit and to all interlocutors for their assistance and valuable contributions.

5. The Secretary General continues to call for access in view of fact-finding visits to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia for the preparation of consolidated reports. The Secretariat was not given access on this occasion. In the period under review, the Secretariat and experts also continued to have contacts for the purpose of the implementation of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs).

6. This report does not replace the monitoring procedures established in the Council of Europe. Nor should it be seen as prejudging any possible decisions in the cases related to the conflict and its consequences at the European Court of Human Rights (hereafter "the Court").

7. It is a fundamental objective of the member states of the Council of Europe to uphold the territorial integrity of Georgia. In their successive decisions, the Deputies have reiterated their unequivocal support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. The Deputies have called upon the Russian Federation to stop and reverse illegal processes and to comply with its international obligations and commitments.² Nothing in this report should be interpreted as being contrary to the full respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.

8. This report does not prejudice or infringe upon a possible future political settlement of the conflict, nor potential progress within the framework of the Geneva International Discussions (GID) on the implementation of the six-point Ceasefire Agreement of 12 August 2008 between the Russian Federation and Georgia under the auspices of the European Union (EU), and the implementing measures of 8 September 2008.

2. CM/Del/Dec(2025)1527/2.1 (latest decision of the Ministers' Deputies of 30 April 2025).

I. Update on major developments in the period under review

9. The 65th and 66th rounds of the GID took place on 11 to 12 November 2025 and 18 to 19 March 2026 respectively, under the co-chairpersonship of the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Despite a continued highly challenging regional and geopolitical environment, all participants reconfirmed their lasting commitment to the GID as the unique platform addressing the consequences of the conflict since 2008. As per usual practice, the meeting convened in two parallel working groups on security and humanitarian issues.

10. In their press communiqué following the 65th round, the Co-Chairs emphasised the need for the GID to make tangible progress and deliver on its core agenda items. Working Group I reviewed developments in the security situation since the 64th round including discussion of a potential political statement on the non-use of force. Working Group II meanwhile discussed humanitarian issues including freedom of movement, documentation, livelihoods and missing persons, and held a detailed discussion on freedom of movement and external mobility with a focus on practical solutions.³ The press communiqué following the 66th round highlighted substantially similar issues, also noting that despite “persisting divergences”, substantive discussions continue to take place. In the 66th round, the issue of the non-use of force continued to be a focus in Working Group I.⁴

11. In both meetings, as in previous instances, the issue of internally displaced persons and refugees, specifically as regards the issue of “returns”, could not be discussed, due to a walkout by some participants, with the Co-Chairs calling on participants to address all agenda items without preconditions. The 67th GID round is scheduled for June 2026 in Geneva.

12. During these sessions, the authorities in control of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia reiterated earlier Russian calls to relocate the GID, considering that Geneva no longer provided for a “neutral venue offering equal conditions for all participants of the negotiation process”. These statements however did not produce formal consequences, with no change of venue being foreseen for upcoming rounds.

13. The Georgian Government assessed that the ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the tense geopolitical situation, including the conflict in Iran, continues to impact discussions in Geneva. At the same time, it emphasised the importance of the GID as the only format addressing Russia’s international obligations relating to the armed conflict, as mandated by the Six-Point Ceasefire Agreement of 12 August 2008, under the auspices of the European Union (EU), and the implementing measures of 8 September 2008.⁵

14. With regard to observed developments in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, interlocutors noted no improvement to the restricted space for reconciliation and engagement policy, with threatening rhetoric, political pressure and legal uncertainty converging towards a chilled environment for actors involved in CBMs, thereby affecting existing channels of communication and co-operation.

15. There were no new developments on the so-called “draft law on non-profit organisations and individuals acting as foreign agents”, the development of which froze following major opposition in 2025.

16. For its part, the Georgian Government raised concern as to observed attempts to condition access of humanitarian actors on particular conduct and activities deemed incompatible with Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.

3. Press communiqué of the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions, 12 November 2025.

4. Press communiqué of the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions, 19 March 2026.

5. On 8 September 2008, a set of Implementing Measures of the Six-Point Agreement was introduced as a reaffirmation of the commitments made in the Agreement.

17. The delegation's attention was drawn to Moscow's continued reported threats to selectively revoke Russian citizenship in order to obtain the fulfilment of "commitments". This includes a continued push for the adoption of the so-called "apartment law", designed to ease the purchase of immovable property by Russian citizens in the eastern part of the region; the so-called "agreement on the implementation of investments projects by Russian legal entities in the territory of Abkhazia". This first so-called "draft apartment law" was withdrawn by the *de facto* authorities on 25 July 2024 in order to appease flaring tensions and related protests. However, various interlocutors indicated that they feel the so-called law might be reintroduced at a later date, possibly in an alternative, indirect form.

18. Against this backdrop, the Georgian authorities furthermore denounced the continued alignment of the Georgian region of Abkhazia with Russian strategic and economic interests, illustrated over recent months by progressive infrastructure developments, possibly preparing the ground for a Russian naval base in Ochamchire. According to several interlocutors, both the Ochamchire port and renovated Sukhumi airport may be used as military hubs enhancing Russia's capability to quickly move troops into the region.

II. Assessment of statutory obligations and commitments related to the conflict and its consequences

19. Below is an update on statutory obligations and specific commitments – as listed in Parliamentary Assembly Opinions 193 (1996) and 209 (1999) – which have been selected for the purpose of reporting on the conflict in Georgia and its consequences. This part builds on Part 1 of the first and second consolidated reports on the conflict in Georgia SG/Inf(2010)8 and SG/Inf(2010)19-final).

a. *To accept the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to collaborate sincerely and effectively in the realisation of the aim of the Council of Europe.*

b. *To settle international as well as internal disputes by peaceful means (an obligation incumbent upon all member states of the Council of Europe), rejecting resolutely any forms of threats of force against its neighbours.*

20. During the reporting period, the Georgian Government reiterated its commitment to pursue the peaceful conflict resolution policy. In this respect, the Georgian authorities again emphasised the importance of taking into account evolving geopolitical realities in the strategic review process of the "State Strategy for De Occupation and Peaceful Conflict Resolution" while the implementation of the 2010 Engagement Strategy and its associated Action Plan continues.

21. As previously reported, the Court delivered on *Georgia v. Russia (II)* (application no. 38263/08), concerning the armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Georgia in August 2008 and its consequences. The Deputies subsequently recalled that the judgment established the responsibility of the Russian Federation for grave human rights violations during the period of occupation of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia following the August 2008 war as the state exercising effective control over those regions, including the killing, torture, ill-treatment and arbitrary detention of Georgian civilians and military personnel; the looting and burning of Georgian homes; the inhuman treatment of Georgians targeted as an ethnic group; and the deprivation of the right of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees to return to their homes.⁶ The Georgian Government submitted its observations under Article 41 of the European Convention on Human Rights (hereafter "the Convention") in January 2022, accompanied by the list of victims. In its judgment on just satisfaction, handed down on 28 April 2023, the Grand Chamber

6. CM/Del/Dec(2023)1479/2.1, 31 October 2023.

ruled that the respondent state, the Russian Federation, was to pay cumulatively the applicant government, Georgia, within three months, €129 827 500 in respect of non-pecuniary damages suffered by an identifiable group of individual victims of the above-listed breaches of the Convention.

22. The Committee of Ministers (“CM”) examined the *Georgia v. Russia (II)* judgment, adopting a decision during its 1537th meeting (September 2025) (DH). The CM again noted with concern that no payment of just satisfaction awarded by the Court had yet been made, while the deadline for payment had expired on 28 July 2023.⁷ Recalling the unconditional obligation to implement the Court’s judgments under Article 46, paragraph 1 of the Convention, the Deputies underlined that the default interest continued to accrue on the amount awarded by the Court. As of September 2025, the total amount owed by the Russian Federation in line with this judgment, including default interest accrued was €148 985 231.16. It strongly urged the Russian authorities to pay without any further delay. Moreover, the Deputies again exhorted the Russian authorities to thoroughly, independently, effectively and promptly investigate the serious crimes committed during the active phase of hostilities as well as during the period of occupation, so as to identify all those responsible for the purposes of bringing the perpetrators to justice. They also firmly reiterated their deepest concern about the inability of Georgian nationals to return to their homes, and strongly insisted that the Russian Federation, having effective control over these regions, ensure without delay measures to prevent kidnapping, killing, torture or any other incident impeding the free and safe movement of Georgian nationals, and allow for the safe return of persons wishing to return to their homes. The CM is set to examine this case again at the DH meeting scheduled for September 2026.

23. On 9 April 2024, the Court (Second Section) delivered a judgment on the merits in the inter-State case *Georgia v. Russia (IV)* (no. 39611/18), referring to the ongoing illegal so-called “borderisation” process as “one of the most painful legacies of the August 2008 armed conflict”.⁸ When lodging the application in August 2018, the Georgian Government had denounced the deterioration of the human rights situation along the Occupation Line (OL), alleging in particular that people had been killed, arrested, illegally detained and/or ill-treated for “illegally crossing”, while also pointing to farmers deprived of their land, families being separated and children forced to choose between learning in Russian or making long and perilous journeys to Tbilisi-administered territory to attend school. In its judgment, the Court found that it had sufficient evidence to conclude beyond reasonable doubt that the alleged incidents were not isolated and were sufficiently numerous and interconnected to amount to a pattern or system of violations. It also noted that the apparent lack of an effective investigation into the incidents and the general application of the measures to all people concerned proved that such practices were officially tolerated by the Russian authorities. The Court thus held that there had been violations of the right to life, the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to liberty and security, the right to respect for private and family life, the right to protection of property, the right to education and the right to freedom of movement. The question of just satisfaction (Article 41) was dealt with by a Chamber judgment of 13 October 2025, with the Court unanimously awarding a total of EUR 253 018 000 in respect of non-pecuniary damages suffered by more than 29 000 victims of that pattern or system of violations. Russia’s responsibility under the Convention for those violations had previously been established in the Court’s previous judgment on the merits delivered on 9 April 2024. In the same judgment, the Court entrusted the Georgian Government with establishing an effective mechanism for distributing the sums awarded to the individual victims within 18 months of payment by the Russian Government. The Court further noted that the Committee of Ministers continues to supervise the execution of judgments against Russia, and that, under Article 46 of the Convention (binding force and execution of judgments), Russia remains bound to implement judgments concerning facts that occurred prior to 16 September 2022, the date on which it ceased to be a Contracting Party to the Convention. Following this judgment on Article 41, there are no remaining inter-state cases concerning the

7. CM/Del/Dec(2024)1507/H46-28.

8. *Georgia v. Russia (IV)*, Application No. 39611/18, judgment of 9 April 2024, paragraph 11.

conflict. This inter-State case was classified at the 1514th meeting (December 2024) (DH) and is set for consideration in the meeting set for September 2026.

24. On 17 December 2024, the Court unanimously found violations in respect of five of the six applicants in the individual application of *Taganova and Others v. Georgia and Russia* (application nos. 18102/04) and four others. The case involved Georgian citizens who fled Abkhazia during the 1992 hostilities and could not return to their homes. They claimed ownership of property in Abkhazia but found no effective legal remedies in Georgia or Russia. The Court ruled that Abkhazia is under Russia's *de facto* control and held Russia solely responsible for the property rights violations, as Georgia had made efforts to re-establish control over the territory. Russia failed to protect the applicants' property rights from 5 May 1998 until 16 September 2022, leading to ongoing violations attributed to the Russian Federation.

25. The investigation authorised by the International Criminal Court (ICC) into the *Situation in Georgia* covering the period from 1 July 2008 to 10 October 2008, for war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in and around the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, was concluded on 16 December 2022.⁹ The three arrest warrants issued by the Office of the Prosecutor on 30 June 2022 remain active to date and remain important elements for accountability.

- c. *To respect strictly the provisions of international humanitarian law, including in cases of armed conflict on its territory.*
- d. *To co-operate in good faith with international humanitarian organisations and to enable them to carry out their activities on its territory in conformity with their mandates.*
- e. *To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable groups of the population affected by the consequences of the conflict.*

26. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) continues its long-standing activities in support of efforts aimed at clarifying the fate and whereabouts of nearly 1 900 persons that still remain unaccounted for as a result of the armed conflicts, also accompanying their families. The 17th meeting of the "*Coordination Mechanism on the persons unaccounted for in connection with the 1992-1993 armed conflict and aftermath in Abkhazia*" took place in Istanbul, Türkiye on 4 December 2025, bringing together Georgian and Abkhaz participants. Participants discussed ongoing work in the search for potential burial sites as well as the recovery and identification of mission persons. During the reporting period, 11 potential grave sites were excavated, leading to the recovery of a notable number of human remains, mainly in Abkhazia, as well as one in Tbilisi administered territory.

27. The ICRC proceeded with the collection and analysis of available data for the identification of missing persons, also implementing forensic capacity-building activities and facilitating the handover of human remains. In 2025, six identified missing persons were handed over to their families in Tbilisi for dignified burial. Moreover, the gradual transition of certain tasks undertaken by the ICRC to the Georgian authorities continued. Following the signature of a dedicated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 1 August 2024, the entire *Accompaniment for the Families of the Missing Persons* programme was successfully transferred to the Office of the State-Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality (SMR). Discussions on the planned handover of work on forensic and data collection are ongoing, with a further MoU planned with the SMR and the National Forensic Bureau (NFB) for additional transfer of responsibility. Discussions on transfers of tasks and responsibilities also continued in Sukhumi and Tskhinvali in co-operation with relevant stakeholders and family representatives, in view of further local ownership.

9. Statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, 16 December 2022.

28. The ICRC furthermore carried out other regular activities in line with its mandate as a neutral humanitarian intermediary and maintained contacts between separated families. It conducted visits to so-called “penitentiary structures” with the aim of securing human conditions of detention and, upon request, re-establishing or facilitating communication between detainees and their families by exchanging “Red Cross Messages”. In the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, the ICRC provided domestic support as well as food, hygiene, and medical/orthopaedic assistance to particularly vulnerable individuals. In Abkhazia, the ICRC also delivered assistance to particularly vulnerable families and individuals, including three rounds of assistance to 22 vulnerable people in the remote Kodori Gorge. During 2025, the ICRC facilitated a total of 224 medical evacuations for 204 patients from the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia.

29. The UN agencies, funds and programmes continued to engage in the Georgian region of Abkhazia through a range of programming activities, based on the internationally recognised human rights standards and humanitarian principles. Access for project-related purposes continued where possible despite the continued so-called visa issue. The EU remained a major funder of these programmes, alongside individual states.

30. The international community also contributed to the overall goal of peacebuilding by fostering dialogue between conflict-affected communities across dividing lines. In this context, all interlocutors pointed to the tangible positive impact of projects facilitating people-to-people contacts, emphasising the importance of upholding this engagement.

31. At the same time, as reported above, concerns were raised as to continued attempts to undermine CBMs, which have become subject to extraordinary scrutiny, bureaucratic hurdles and hostile rhetoric by the authorities in control. The overall operating environment was generally assessed as difficult and unpredictable, characterised by widespread legal and political uncertainty. It was noted that travel for programme participants across the OL is inconsistent. UN local staff continue to receive only month-long so-called visas, instead of year-long as was previously the case. It was also reported that partner NGOs were subject to continued pressure, stigmatisation and intimidation by security actors.

32. Despite repeated offers and calls, no progress was made concerning international humanitarian access to the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, which remained exclusively restricted to the ICRC.

33. The Georgian authorities continued to provide conflict-affected populations with free medical treatment during the entire reporting period. During the reporting period, the dedicated State Referral Healthcare Service Programme financed treatment for 553 patients from Abkhazia and 116 patients from South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region with a budget of GEL 1.34 million and 3 104 patients living in villages adjacent to the OL with a budget of GEL 2.86 million. Over the same period, 101 persons were transported by ambulance to hospitals in Tbilisi-administered territory under the programme “*Ambulance, Emergency and Medical Transportation*”, out of which 36 patients from the Georgian region of Abkhazia and 65 patients from the Georgian Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. Within the ambulance component of the programme, 261 ambulances were called from both regions. The possibility for holders of status-neutral identification numbers to enrol in specialised programmes operated by the Health Ministry allowed for the significant expansion of the number of beneficiaries, with 78 residents in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia able to benefit from free treatment through the programme in 2025. Support provided by the Georgian Government furthermore comprised of various pharmaceuticals and vaccines, the delivery of which was facilitated under the Liaison Mechanism and by international partners.

34. The Georgian Government reiterated its commitment to reconciliation and engagement policy as an important direction of its comprehensive peaceful conflict resolution through a pragmatic and humanitarian approach, as illustrated by its flagship peace initiative entitled “A step to a better future”. Cross-OL trade continued to be fostered through simplified status-neutral procedures for business registrations and commercial grants, thereby improving the socio-economic situation of the conflict-affected population. Since its inception in 2020, the “Peace Fund for a Better Future” successfully provided support to over 120 joint business projects. In 2025, the Fund received 62 applications, with 18 business selected, primarily in the agricultural sector.

35. In the field of education, the government pledged continued support to the enrolment of students from the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia in universities on Tbilisi-administered territory. In 2025, 151 students from the Gali district were admitted to Georgian higher education institutions, mainly universities for the 2025-2026 academic year. A range of scholarships were also granted to a number of students from the conflict-affected regions, with five students receiving the Dimitri Gulia and Kosta Khetagurov scholarships and 20 students receiving scholarships under the “Preparation Program for Post-School Education”. 1 254 students from the area close to the OL received grants for the first semester of the 2025-2026 academic year from the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia (MoESY), while 420 students from villages adjacent to the OL, who study at Gori State University or Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University are provided with a social scholarship.

36. The SMR also maintained close co-operation with conflict-affected women and women-led CSOs working on peacebuilding issues. Meetings were held in villages adjacent to the OL to identify needs and raise awareness about state services available to victims of gender-based violence. A grant competition incorporated into practical training courses on entrepreneurship offered to conflict-affected women was launched in spring 2025, in co-operation between the SMR and UN Women. The grant competition took place in September 2025, with all 28 applicant women receiving small grants to support business initiatives developed during the training course.

37. The SMR’s unified information portal ‘www.openbf.info’, developed with UNDP support, continues to fully operate. It serves as a consolidated platform offering comprehensive and user-friendly information in Georgian, Abkhazian, Ossetian and English languages about all programmes, services and benefits available to residents of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia.

38. The Georgian Government also continued to allocate funding to address remaining needs in the field of infrastructure, transportation, education and healthcare for the conflict-affected population in villages adjacent to the OL.

III. Human rights situation in the areas affected by the conflict

39. The Georgian authorities pointed to continued illegal so-called “borderisation” processes, citing 24 incidents across both regions involving the installation of surveillance booths, barriers, barbed wire, cameras, motion detectors and other infrastructure. The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) noted the installation of 1 858 metres of new fencing in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia in the period from September 2025 to February 2026, as well as the installation of 190 metres of new fencing in Abkhazia, alongside solar-powered surveillance devices.

40. The EUMM continues to note a reduced number of military exercises held in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, in part due to Russian military personnel and assets being relocated to Ukraine. Georgian authorities cite 15 military drills in Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia and 10 in Abkhazia during the reporting period, as well as 17 cases of airspace violation, either by helicopters or UAVs: 10 in Abkhazia and 7 in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. In this context, the Georgian authorities noted a continued high number of illegal detentions. In total, 15 new illegal detentions took place in the Tskhinvali

region/South Ossetia and 16 in Abkhazia during the reporting period.

41. Several interlocutors cited the arrival of military supplies to the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, in 22 military trucks which arrived from Russia in late 2025 and early 2026. It is presumed that the majority of these supplies are uniforms and logistics equipment. However, a 20 February announcement by the *de facto* authorities in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia was highlighted by interlocutors, showcasing the arrival of a sizeable number of fibre-optic cable offensive First Person View (FPV) drones, of the type used by the Russian Federation in its ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine.

42. The Georgian authorities further noted that all unresolved cases remained unaddressed, deploring a manifest lack of effective investigations into the killings of Giga Otkhзорia, Davit Basharuli, Archil Tatumashvili, Irakli Kvaratskhelia, Inal Jabiev, Temur Karbaia and Tamaz Ginturi. Various interlocutors denounced the overall sense of impunity surrounding crimes committed against ethnic Georgians, highlighting the pressing need to ensure accountability for grave human rights violations. The Georgian Government underlines the necessity for the perpetrators to face justice.

43. Throughout the reporting period, unilateral restrictions on free movement of people and goods continued to affect the daily lives and enjoyment of human rights of the conflict-affected population, disrupting their access to basic rights, services and livelihood opportunities. While previous openings of several so-called “crossing points” on the OL were upheld, free movement remained hindered by impediments related to so-called documentation issues, characterised by a selective issuing of so-called permits and temporary closures. The failure to address various forms of discrimination against ethnic Georgians – including by depriving conflict-affected children of the right to an education in their mother tongue – prompted further alienation and displacement, thereby exacerbating the demographic ageing and population decline of the Gali district.

44. The Georgian authorities finally reiterated their concerns about the state of Georgian religious and cultural heritage in both regions with several historic monuments having reportedly suffered deliberate stylistic alterations and irreversible damage, with the Bedia Monastery, Ilori Church, Dranda Cathedral and New Athos Monastery cited as examples. Georgian authorities also stated that ‘renovation’ works had begun on a 10th century temple in Mokvi, Ochamchire, with further works planned on churches in Pokveshi, Ochamchire and the 9th century church of St Simon the Canaanite in Akhali Atoni. Georgian authorities stated that both interior and exterior of the latter would be transformed completely, to erase Georgian cultural elements.

III.1 Reports on the Georgian region of Abkhazia, Georgia

III.1.i Security

45. The Gali Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) under the auspices of the United Nations remained halted as has been the case since 2018. Accordingly, no IPRM meetings were held during the period under review. The Georgian Government expressed regret over continued attempts by the authorities in control to bargain with unacceptable conditions, deploring excessive demands which further prevented the recovery of the halted format. The EUMM-facilitated hotline continued to operate, although Georgian authorities expressed concerns relating to persistent delays in notification in cases of illegal detentions.

46. The delegation was informed about the continuation of illegal so-called “borderisation” activities, including the installation of barbed wire fences, the digging of so-called anti-fire trenches and the use of modern surveillance equipment to trace the movements of people. Specifically, during the reporting period, Georgian authorities note three cases, including the installation of surveillance equipment on the central bridge of the Enguri River and the installation of a metal gate on the Rukhi bridge. While no deadly incidents occurred during the reporting period, the number of illegal apprehensions and security incidents remain high.

III.1.ii Freedom of movement

47. The current period saw no major change in crossings through the Enguri Bridge, with fairly consistent traffic. Delays with obtaining so-called documents for crossing purposes as well as allegations of selectivity in their granting by the *de facto* authorities nonetheless impacted freedom of movement for local residents wishing to enter Tbilisi-administered territory. On the day of and the days before and after so-called local elections in October, the so-called “crossing points” were closed.

48. The Georgian authorities observed that the malpractice of illegal detentions persisted. The Georgian authorities again cited comments raised at the GID about Georgian citizens under illegal investigation by the authorities in control, where the hotline does not appear to have been activated. Georgian authorities cited 16 cases of illegal detentions during the reporting period, with those detained only released after payment of so-called fines or expulsion to Tbilisi-administered territory. In total, the Georgian authorities cited seven people who remain in illegal custody during the reporting period, consisting of four Georgian citizens and three foreigners.

49. Kristine Takalandze, deprived of her liberty since 2022, remains in illegal custody. Georgian citizens Shalva Khizanishvili and Emzar Bagishvili were illegally detained on 1 October 2025 and 10 March 2026 respectively on allegations of so-called espionage and have not been released. Comments made in the context of the GID suggest there could be more illegal detainees not declared via the hotline.

III.1.iii Humanitarian situation

50. The humanitarian plight of the ethnic Georgian population remains a matter of concern. The two remaining so-called “crossing points” are still subject to arbitrary closures, while the illegal inspection of goods by so-called “border guards” continues to occur.

51. Emergency medical evacuations to Tbilisi-administered territory remained available throughout the reporting period, also by virtue of an effective facilitation via the EUMM-managed hotline.

III.1.iv Identity documents

52. Documentation gaps remained a recurrent problem impacting both the status and daily lives of ethnic Georgians, primarily in Gali but also in Ochamchire and Tkvarcheli, with adverse implications for the effective enjoyment of their rights, in particular freedom of movement, employment and property rights.

53. During the period under review, the authorities in control continued to issue so-called “foreign resident permits”, which were first delivered in 2017. To recall, their validity was extended from five to ten years in December 2023. While these so-called permits appear as the only option offered to many ethnic Georgians, they do not provide access to a full scope of rights. In addition, a significant proportion of local residents remains reluctant to accept the implied “foreigner status” in their land of origin. The Georgian Government has continuously denounced this policy as a deliberate discrimination against ethnic Georgians.

54. While lengthy delays of obtention were significantly reduced in 2024, arbitrary practices persisted with grounds for rejection remaining open to interpretation. The need to prove permanent residence further created difficulties for students and people employed on Tbilisi-administered territory.

55. No significant developments were observed as to previously announced regulatory changes by which ethnic Georgians could potentially apply for so-called “Abkhaz passports”, provided they denied their Georgian identity by changing their last names. As previously reported, the 2024 legislative amendments to the so-called “citizenship laws” added restrictions for “those involved in the 1992-1993 Georgian-Abkhaz war”. Applicants seeking so-called “Abkhaz citizenship” are hence to prove continuous residence in the region for 25 years. In parallel, the Georgian authorities reiterated concerns as to the continuous pressure exerted on holders of Georgian passports, denouncing numerous intimidation attempts meant to counter the heightened interest in these so-called identity documents by creating a climate of fear.

III.1.v Access to education including teaching of/in the native language

56. Access to mother tongue-based education in Georgian remains unavailable, as it was completely phased out in 2022 in kindergartens, preschool institutions and schools. The Georgian authorities reported few changes in the reporting period. The instructional process predominantly takes place in Russian and to a very limited extent in Abkhazian. At the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year, the situation with regard to Georgian language teaching appears to show continued deterioration, with Russian remaining the main language in all schools. While Georgian language and literature are precluded in all schools in Tkvarcheli and Ochamchire, both subjects were previously taught from the 1st to the 11th grade in 18 (out of 19) schools in Gali. Georgian language instruction has been removed entirely from grades 1 through 4 in these 18 schools, leaving only 7 hours of instruction, down from 21 hours during the previous reporting period. In the N1 Secondary school of Gali, the Georgian language is not taught even as an optional subject (formerly, two hours per week were allocated for Georgian language in 5th grade). The number of pupils enrolled in these schools steadily decreases, further contributing to the ageing of the local population and to the risk of closure of schools with a low enrolment. The Georgian authorities strongly denounced these restrictions as yet another manifestation of discrimination and an attempt to undermine the Georgian identity and culture, contrary to international standards.

57. Interlocutors reiterated apprehension about continued instances of pressure on ethnic Georgian teachers in Gali, especially those educated in Tbilisi-administered territory, some of whom were forced out of their positions. The remaining teachers are prohibited from working in their native language and from organising events and communicating with students in Georgian. The forced transition to Russian-language tuition has obliged many of them to undergo re-qualification, thus negatively affecting the quality of education.

III.2 Reports on the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia

III.2.i Security

58. Overall, the situation along the OL continued to be assessed as tense but relatively stable. The Georgian authorities cite 21 incidents¹⁰ of illegal so-called “borderisation” during the reporting period. These incidents consist mainly of the maintenance and installation of barbed wire, artificial barriers, fences and so-called border signs and banners, surveillance devices, trenches and so-called anti-fire lines and the reinforcement of observations posts – incidents which raise concern as to additional adverse effects on the local population. The EUMM continued to note an increased number of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flights from across the OL, which often follow EUMM patrols.

59. No major developments were reported concerning the security situation in the Chorchana-Tsnelisi section of the OL.

60. The Ergneti IPRM, co-facilitated by the OSCE and the EUMM, continued to convene on a regular basis, with four meetings held during the period under review. The 128th meeting took place on 18 November 2025, with the OSCE and EUMM co-facilitators advocating for a discontinuing of detention practices and for an easing of free movement. A Technical Meeting on irrigation was also held¹¹ The 129th meeting on 22 December 2025 saw exchanges on freedom of movement, including during the Christmas period,¹² while the 130th meeting on 29 January 2026 focused on the continued practice of detentions.¹³ The 131st meeting on 31 March saw co-facilitators advocate for the lifting of restrictions on the freedom of movement for Orthodox Easter as well as cases of detentions including that of Ms Tamara Mearakishvili.¹⁴ A next IPRM meeting is set for 14 May 2026.

61. Georgian authorities continue to note attempts by the Russian delegation to import GID-relevant topics into the – by essence depoliticised – IPRM discussions, including accusations against the EUMM, pointing to another alarming trend.

62. The Georgian Government further continued to insist on the need for accountability and on a proper investigation into the murder of Mr Ginturi, deeply deploring that the Russian side maintained its claims as to a perpetrator having acted according to operational rules on the use of firearms, therefore denying any grounds to charge him.

III.2.ii Freedom of movement

63. While freedom of movement remained significantly restricted due to the closure of the OL, temporary openings of the Mosabruni/Odzisi and Kardzmani so-called “crossings points” were sustained between the 20th and 30th of each month, allowing people to take advantage of medical care, services and livelihood opportunities within this limited timeframe.

64. The delegation was furthermore informed of 15 new cases of illegal detentions by so-called “border guards” from October 2025 - March 2026, with 10 cases still active. Pointing to a significant increase in numbers compared to previous years, several interlocutors also highlighted frequent cases of ill-treatment and various instances of prolonged illegal custody.

10. Georgian authorities cite observation and information from the EUMM and local police divisions as the source of this figure, which does not include any unobserved activities across the OL.

11. Press release, OSCE, 128th Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti, 18 November 2025.

12. Press release, OSCE, 129th Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti, 22 December 2025.

13. Press release, OSCE, 130th Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti, 29 January 2026.

14. Press release, OSCE, 131st Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti, 31 March 2026.

III.2.iii Humanitarian situation

65. The protracted periods of closure of the OL continued to significantly hamper livelihood activities as well as access to markets, pensions and other social benefits on the Tbilisi-administered territory. With temporary openings applying exclusively to pedestrians, the flow of goods remained restricted with little opportunity to resume trade. Efforts to encourage the *de facto* authorities to allow ad-hoc openings during Orthodox Christmas and New Year by the co-facilitators of the Ergneti IPRM were not heeded.

66. While the partial reopening of the so-called “crossing points” alleviated some of the hardships, the delegation’s interlocutors convergently stressed the urgent need for a full re-opening without any hindrances to offset the negative consequences of isolation.

67. Ongoing restrictions also continued to negatively affect patients suffering from chronic diseases and requiring constant medical care. In the period under review, medical evacuations to Tbilisi-administered territory generally proceeded without obstacles, although cumbersome administrative procedures nevertheless generated undue delays in rare cases.

III.2.iv Identity documents

68. The burdensome access to so-called “permits” (*“Propusks”*) – used for crossing purposes – remained of concern, also in light of reported arbitrary practices and different validity periods.

III.2.v Access to education, including teaching of/in the native language

69. Similar to the Abkhaz context, access to education in the Georgian native language remained banned in all schools of the Georgian-inhabited Akhagori district. Of the schools in the Akhagori district that remained under the administration of the Georgian government until August 2008, only five schools are currently operational. Of these, four initially provided instruction in Georgian, but the language of instruction has gradually switched to Russian. Various programmes implemented by the Russian Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*“Russotrudnichestvo”*) continued to sustain an active policy of russification. The compulsory teaching in Russian language forced the persons wishing to receive an education in their native Georgian language to relocate to Tbilisi-administered territory.

III.3 The situation of internally displaced persons

70. During the period under review, no progress could be reported as regards the voluntary, safe, dignified and unhindered return of IDPs and refugees on the basis of internationally recognised principles.

71. According to the Georgian authorities, as of December 2025, 300 492 persons held IDP status. In the absence of conditions conducive to their return, the Georgian Government continued to undertake efforts to provide IDPs with alternative durable solutions.

72. As regards durable housing solutions (DHS), several programmes are conducted by the Agency for Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood. They include purchasing of individual apartments and their subsequent transfer to the IDPs’ private ownership, engaging in large-scale construction of new apartments across five territorial units (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Rustavi, Zugdidi and Borjomi), privatisation of residential properties, granting rent subsidy as well as providing temporary accommodation in case of emergency. According to the authorities, by the end of 2025, legal ownership of state-registered residential properties had been granted to 680 IDP families, while residential houses and apartments were purchased for 2 825 IDP families. Further to this, 1 588 IDPs have been provided temporary housing assistance through rental subsidies.

The delegation's interlocutors reiterated the Georgian Government's intention to accommodate all IDPs in crucial need by 2026, implying the closure of all remaining collective centres within the same timeframe, and with large-scale construction of apartments taking place to house IDPs across five regions of Georgia.

73. While the provision of accommodation remains listed as a core priority for both IDPs and the government, the authorities also specified the Agency's latest steps to assist the IDPs on access to livelihoods through dedicated programmes. During the period under review, the government continued to provide monthly allowances and one-time monetary assistance based on an assessment of the level of income through a scoring system. By the end of 2025, 24 540 IDPs had been supported with one-time financial assistance, while 440 IDPs received support as part of the IDP Self-Employment Support Grant Programme. In 2025, 223 IDPs also benefited from the IDP professional education support program, which disbursed GEL 106 248 for transportation and related costs.

74. In the light of the magnitude of displacement, it is understood that further reforms are necessary to improve IDPs' socio-economic conditions and address the substantial challenges in terms of access to employment, healthcare and education.

IV. Activities of Council of Europe organs and institutions and their follow-up

IV.1 Operational activities

IV.1.i DG II/Youth

75. Youth leaders and facilitators from both sides of the OL took part in the 2025 Youth Peace Camp (1-9 July 2025, Strasbourg). The activity was successful in supporting dialogue among the young people. Participants also committed to develop follow-up initiatives or activities within their respective communities and youth groups. Educational and financial support to local follow-up initiatives by former participants is also put into place for participants of the 2023 and 2024 Peace Camps, including possible financial support by the European Youth Foundation.

IV.1.ii Operational activities on confidence-building measures and their follow-up

76. During the reporting period, the Secretariat implemented the programme of CBMs aimed at promoting reconciliation and dialogue efforts, in close co-ordination with the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality and the Liaison Mechanism.

77. Support to the dialogue on archives between professionals from Sukhumi and Tbilisi continued. During the reporting period a meeting of the archives group was held in Paris from 31 March - 1 April 2026, facilitated by the Secretariat. The next meeting is foreseen for September 2026.

78. In this respect, the delegation's interlocutors in Tbilisi explicitly stressed the importance of the continuity and regularity of CBMs and in general people-to-people contacts to preserve the long-established dialogue and the trust built between all actors concerned.