

Timeline of Georgian-Russian Relations Since 1995

- November 1995** Eduard Shevardnadze elected president of Georgia.
- May 1998** Fighting erupts between Abkhazians and Georgians in Abkhazia's Gali region; displaced Georgians now number in the tens of thousands.
- December 2001** South Ossetian separatists elect current president Eduard Kokoity; elections unrecognized outside of South Ossetia and Russia.
- November 2002** Georgia announces intention to join NATO; becomes subject to the provisions of an individual partnership action plan (IPAP).
- January 2003** Putin's government has conferred Russian citizenship on the vast majority of ethnic Abkhazians and South Ossetians.
- April 2003** Construction begins on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline.
- November 23, 2003** Rose Revolution, largely orchestrated by United National Movement leader Mikheil Saakashvili, peacefully deposes Shevardnadze.
- January 2004** Saakashvili elected president; pledges to reunite Georgia by reasserting central control over the irredentist republics of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Ach'ara.
- May 2004** Saakashvili ousts the increasingly powerful Aslan Abashidze as leader of Georgia's Autonomous Republic of Ach'ara; Abashidze flees.
- July 2006** Georgian Special Forces regain control of Kodori Gorge, a key geographic boundary between de facto independent Abkhazia and Georgia.
- September 2006** NATO member countries agree to commencement of intensified dialogue (ID) stage with Georgia.
- July 2006** BTC pipeline begins transporting Caspian oil through Georgia and Turkey to the Mediterranean, bypassing Russia.
- November 2007** Saakashvili authorizes use of force to quell antigovernment demonstrations in the streets of Tbilisi. He calls for snap presidential elections and resigns to campaign for reelection.
- January 2008** Upon reelection, Saakashvili reshuffles his cabinet and commits to increasing dialogue with Russia.
- February 2008** Kosovo declares independence from Serbia.
- March 2, 2008** Dmitri Medvedev is elected President of Russia and appoints his predecessor, Vladimir Putin, as prime minister.
- April 3, 2008** NATO agrees that Georgia and Ukraine may join the alliance in the future, though neither country is advanced to Membership Action Plan (MAP) status.
- April 2008** Russia dispatches reinforcement troops to Abkhazia, reportedly in response to increased Georgian aggression in the region.
- July 8, 2008** Russian fighter jets fly over South Ossetia.
- July 10, 2008** Georgia withdraws its ambassador from Moscow in response to the violation of its airspace.
- August 8, 2008** Georgian forces penetrate South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali in an effort to retake the city. Russia sends in its own forces, stating it will protect its citizens from Georgian aggression.