INSIDE THIS ISSUE

I. **ABKHAZIA**
   1. Chavez Recognizes South Ossetia, Abkhazia as Independent
   2. Abkhazia Threatens to Sink Georgian Ships

II. **ARMENIA**
   1. EU Funding Goes towards Yerevan Metro

III. **GEORGIA**
   1. UNGA Passes Georgia IDP Resolution
   2. Saakashvili: Key Promise of Rose Revolution Fulfilled
   3. Saakashvili: Georgia Confronts ‘Imperialist Monster’
   4. Georgia Opens Check Point at Border with Russia
   5. Georgian Journalist Requests Asylum in South Ossetia
   6. Georgian Opposition Complains about Repression

IV. **MOLDOVA**
   1. Moldavia's Incumbent President Steps down
   2. Instability in Moldova Could Lead to Armed Provocations – Smirnov
   3. Moldova Leader Pushes for Unification with Romania

V. **RUSSIA**
   1. Kesaeva: The State Failed to Learn How to Prevent Terror Acts
   2. Russian Warns Georgia Against Ship Seizures
   3. Russia Again Urging OSCE to Review Trans-Caucasus Situation
   4. Russia Says Recognition of South Ossetia, Abkhazia Legitimate

VI. **TURKEY**
   1. Leaders Urged to Unblock Turkey's EU Bid
   2. Football Diplomacy
   3. Turkey's Circular Worries

VII. **UKRAINE**
   1. Ukraine's Return to a Multi-Vector Policy
   2. Ukrainian Troops not Involved in South Ossetia War - Yushchenko

VIII. **BSEC**
   1. BSEC to Host International Conference on Olive Trees in Baku

IX. **BLACK SEA**
   1. Georgia Releases Turkish Tanker Captain
   2. Georgia Can Import Grain from Ukraine by Lower Prices
### CAUCASUS
1. General Affairs and External Relations, 2961st Council Meeting, Press Release
2. EU Welcomes Turkey, Armenia Agreement
3. Azerbaijani Dispute Threatens Armenian/Turkey Ties
4. Armenian Border Doubts

### ENERGY
1. Russian, Kazakh Leaders Discuss Energy Cooperation
2. Georgia Quake 'Did Not Affect' BTK Construction
3. Rosneft Announces Revenue Decline, Confident for 2009
4. Nabucco Can’t Fail, Says EU Commissioner

### SECURITY
1. Russia Demonstrates Military Machismo in West 2009 War Games

### ABKHAZIA
1. Chavez Recognizes South Ossetia, Abkhazia as Independent
   READ MORE: [http://www.rferl.org/content/Chavez_Visits_Russia_To_Discuss_Arms_Energy_Deals/1819273.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Chavez_Visits_Russia_To_Discuss_Arms_Energy_Deals/1819273.html)
   On a visit to Moscow, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez says Caracas plans to immediately recognize Georgia’s pro-Russia separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. Chavez told Russian President Dmitry Medvedev during a visit to the Kremlin that his country would consider the two regions - considered by most of the world as part of Georgia - sovereign states "from today," Russian news agencies reported. Russia recognized the two rebel regions as independent in the wake of its war last year with Georgia, but most of the world condemned the move and considers them part of Georgian territory.

2. Abkhazia Threatens to Sink Georgian Ships
   06.09.2009, New Europe
   The breakaway Georgian Republic of Abkhazia threatened on September 2 to sink Georgian ships that violate its territorial waters in the Black Sea. The move came two days after a court in Georgia sentenced a Turkish captain to 24 years in prison for transporting fuel supplies to Abkhazia. I have ordered our navy to destroy Georgian ships if they violate the maritime borders of Abkhazia, Interfax quoted Abkhazian President Sergei Bagapsh as saying.

### ARMENIA
1. EU Funding Goes towards Yerevan Metro
   03.09.2009, New Europe
   The Armenian government recently announced that international financial institutions offered 16.5 million Euro in external grants and loans for modernising Yerevan’s disused underground metro system, Armenia Liberty.com reported. According to Finance Minister Tigran Davtian, the funding will be provided by the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB).
III. GEORGIA

1. UNGA Passes Georgia IDP Resolution
10.09.2009, Civil.ge
READ MORE: http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21447
The UN General Assembly passed on September 9 a resolution recognizing the right of return of all displaced persons and refugees and their descendants to their homes in breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossetia and underlining “the urgent need for unimpeded access for humanitarian activities” in those regions. The resolution, entitled “Status of Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia, Georgia”, was passed with 48 countries voting in favor; 19 – against; with 78 abstentions. “We’ve won with 48 to 19,” Alexander Lomaia, Georgia’s UN envoy told RFE/RL Georgian service.

2. Saakashvili: Key Promise of Rose Revolution Fulfilled
09.09.2009, Civil.ge
READ MORE: http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21442
President Saakashvili said on September 9, that the Georgian government created equal opportunities and chances for everyone and by doing so it had fulfilled key promises of the Rose Revolution. He said that the World Bank’s recent survey in terms of ease of doing business in which Georgia was ranked 11th was a confirmation of his words. “Georgia has progressed in Doing Business rating on 11th place,” Saakashvili said while speaking at a government organized event in the town of Telavi in eastern region of Kakheti. The event was similar to the one which was held in Tbilisi on Saturday aimed at demonstrating, as the government said, its achievements.

3. Saakashvili: Georgia Confronts ‘Imperialist Monster’
08.09.2009, Civil.ge
READ MORE: http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21441
President Saakashvili said there were certain forces in Europe “irritated” with Georgia’s resistance to “imperialistic threat.” “Georgia is in existential struggle; struggle for freedom… development and de-occupation,” he told the Georgian diplomats in Tbilisi on September 8. Georgian ambassadors were gathered for a two-day annual meeting to identify priorities of the Georgian diplomatic missions abroad. “The fact that the Georgian state survived in this aggression [last August], that it now managed to move on the path of development – although slowly and difficulty; the fact that it managed to endure the global economic crisis with the least losses – all these are changing order in our region and are having serious influence on the world political order,” Saakashvili said.

4. Georgia Opens Check Point at Border with Russia
04.09.2009, RiaNovosti
READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/exsoviet/20090904/156027018.html
Georgia officially opened a check point located on its border with Russia on Friday. The U.S. Ambassador to Georgia, John Tefft, and heads from the Georgian Interior Ministry’s border and patrol police, Zaza Gogava and Georgy Grigalishvili, attended the opening ceremony. The Kazbegi checkpoint was built as part of a program to ensure Georgian border security and sponsored by the U.S. government. The construction of the outpost led by a team of U.S. Army engineers involved $2.4 million of investment. Russia closed the Verkhny Lars check point in July 2006 for repairs and upgrading. The modernization of the Verkhny Lars vehicle checkpoint, the only one along the Russian-Georgian border, was completed in May. The reopening of the Kazbegi-Verkhny Lars was hampered after the two former Soviet states broke off diplomatic relations.
5. **Georgian Journalist Requests Asylum in South Ossetia**

04.09.2009, RiaNovosti


A Georgian journalist and his family, who earlier criticized Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's political regime, have requested political asylum in South Ossetia, the foreign minister said on Friday. "The Gudadze family requested asylum in South Ossetia yesterday. Our authorities are working on it," the spokesman said, adding that the family was currently living in the capital Tskhinvali. According to the press and mass communication ministry, Georgian journalist Levan Gudadze and his family left Georgia because of threats "over his journalistic activity". The ministry said that on September 3 Gudadze with his wife, two-year-old daughter and mother crossed the border between Georgia and South Ossetia and requested asylum from border guards.

6. **Georgian Opposition Complains about Repression**

04.09.2009, Voice of Russia


The Georgian opposition complains about numerous incidents in which many of its supporters were intimidated, fined, beaten and wrongfully jailed. The former parliamentary speaker Nino Burdzhadamadze told this to foreign diplomats at a meeting in Tbilisi on Friday. The period from April through July saw mass protests with demands that President Mikhail Saakashvili stand down.

IV. **MOLDOVA**

1. **Moldavia’s Incumbent President Steps down**

11.09.2009, Voice of Russia


Vladimir Voronin steps down as Moldavian President but says he has no faith in that the new leadership will be able to come up with any positive programme. He points out in an address to his compatriots that the politicians who have come to power have formed their alliance exclusively on the basis of denying all previous achievements, denigrating their own country and division of powers. Voronin further said that half of Moldavian society voted for further pursuance of the pervious leadership’s policy of reform.

2. **Instability in Moldova Could Lead to Armed Provocations - Smirnov**

06.09.2009, RiaNovosti


The president of Transdnestr voiced fears Sunday that political instability in Moldova could cause provocations. "Instability in Moldova is increasing. This could lead to various provocations, including armed ones," Igor Smirnov told the Transdnestr Armed Forces that mark the 18th anniversary on September 6. The Russian-speaking province of Transdnestr has maintained de facto independence from Moldova since a brief war in 1992, which was the culmination of tensions following the breakup of the Soviet Union.

3. **Moldova Leader Pushes for Unification with Romania**

05.09.2009, RiaNovosti

READ MORE: [http://en.rian.ru/world/20090905/156033823.html](http://en.rian.ru/world/20090905/156033823.html)

Moldovan Parliament Speaker Mihai Ghimpu said during a televised interview on Saturday he would like to annul the country’s sovereignty and unite with Romania. When asked by the interviewer if
he was a unionist, Ghimpu answered positively. "Yes, I am. The idea belongs to me, to someone who
knows history," Ghimpu said in regard to uniting Moldova and Romania. Moldova's acting president
Vladimir Voronin formally resigned on Wednesday to become a member of parliament, after
strongly criticizing the incoming leadership.

V. RUSSIA

1. Kesaeva: The State Failed to Learn How to Prevent Terror Acts
04.09.09, Caucasian Knot
READ MORE: http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/11101
Terror acts are committed in Russia, because the state cannot prevent them. This is the opinion of
Ella Kesaeva, head of the All-Russian Public Organization "Voice of Beslan". "Unfortunately, the
state can't or wouldn't like to take lessons from those tragedies, which could be prevented. Death of
innocent victims could have been prevented, like in our case. So many people perished; so many
children's and adults' tombs - and no conclusions; this is what oppresses us especially deeply," Ms
Kesaeva said to the "Caucasian Knot" correspondent.

2. Russian Warns Georgia Against Ship Seizures
03.09.2009, Civil.ge
READ MORE: http://www.civil.ge/eng/_print.php?id=21423
Further seizure of cargo ships en-route to Abkhazia by Georgian coast guard may cause "serious
armed incidents," Andrei Nesterenko, a spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry said on
September 3. “Besides the fact that such actions of the Georgian leadership violate international
maritime navigation rules and is an attempt to impose sea blockade on Abkhazian coast, they are
fraught with aggravating the military-political situation in the region and may lead to serious armed
incidents,” Nesterenko said in remarks posted on the Russian Foreign Ministry’s website. “Full
responsibility for possible unpredictable consequences completely lies on the Georgian side,” he said
and added that Georgia had not yet given up plans for “forceful resolution of the territorial issues.”

3. Russia Again Urging OSCE to Review Trans-Caucasus Situation
03.09.2009, Voice of Russia
Russia is again urging its OSCE partners to take a new look on the situation in the trans-Caucasus and
build relations with the region having in mind what this country describes as a new political reality.
Addressing Thursday's session of the OSCE's Standing Council, Russia's envoy to the Organization
said that \the year that had elapsed since the August 2008 Georgian aggression against the South
Ossetian people and Russian peacekeepers deployed in the region, had seen the emergence of two
new sovereign states officially recognized by Russia. “Russia has since signed a sheaf of bilateral
accords with both South. Ossetia and Abkhazia and many more agreements on defuse and economic
cooperation are now being drawn up,” Anvar Azimov said.

4. Russia Says Recognition of South Ossetia, Abkhazia Legitimate
30.08.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=95901
Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on August 26 hailed the first anniversary of the independence
of the breakaway Georgian republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and said Moscow's recognition
of the two was absolutely legitimate. In remarks reported by Interfax, Medvedev appealed to other
countries to follow up with recognition, and said Moscow's move to recognise the two republics was
irreversible. He said Russia would continue to provide military support for the two republics. Our step was, also from a point of view of international law, absolutely legitimate, Medvedev said about the August 26, 2008 move by Moscow to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a step coming shortly after the end of the brief but bitter war with Georgia.

VI. TURKEY

1. Leaders Urged to Unblock Turkey's EU Bid
08.09.2009, EurActiv
Nobel peace prize winner Marti Ahtisaari and several other personalities that are members of the EU’s Independent Commission on Turkey' urged European leaders to unblock negotiations with Ankara, warning that any other alternative runs contrary to the Union's interests. EurActiv spoke to former French prime minister Michel Rocard, a member of the Commission, in an interview.

2. Football Diplomacy
03.09.2009, The Economist
After decades of fierce animosity, are Turkey and Armenia getting closer to peace? This week the two countries announced plans for six weeks of “internal political consultations” before establishing diplomatic ties and reopening their border. Coming after several months of Swiss mediation and arm-twisting by America, the declaration makes reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia a real prospect—but not a foregone conclusion.

3. Turkey's Circular Worries
03.09.2009, The Economist
READ MORE: http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displayStory.cfm?story_id=14363116
TURKEY’S friends inside the European Union believe that history is on their side. Ask these national politicians, diplomats and EU officials if they think Turkey will one day achieve full membership, and they answer that it must. In a decade or two, they say, objections to Turkish entry will look trifling, next to the country’s strategic benefits as an energy hub, regional diplomatic power and bridge to the Muslim world, not to mention as a dynamic economy filled with young people.

VII. UKRAINE

1. Ukraine's Return to a Multi-Vector Policy
11.09.2009, euobserver.com
READ MORE: http://euobserver.com/9/28650/?rk=1
"Ukraine must return to a multi-vector and balanced foreign policy," Serhiy Tihipko, a candidate in Ukraine's upcoming presidential elections, said in a newspaper article last week. A former ally of Viktor Yanukovych in 2004, Mr Tihipko argues that Ukraine must stay away from Nato membership, normalise relations with Russia, give up political rapprochement with the EU and focus on pragmatic dialogue and "economic diplomacy."

2. Ukrainian Troops not Involved in South Ossetia War - Yushchenko
07.09.2009, RiaNovosti
READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/exsoviet/20090907/156051086.html
Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko has denied that Ukrainian military units fought for Georgia during the August 2008 war with Russia over South Ossetia. "It's a big lie. I'm prepared to support any international investigation. Similar lies were also spread during the gas dispute at the beginning of the year to swing public opinion in Europe against us," Yushchenko said in an interview with the Der Spiegel magazine published on Monday.

VIII. BSEC

1. BSEC to Host International Conference on Olive Trees in Baku
09.09.2009, BSANNA News
READ MORE: http://bsanna-news.ukrinform.ua/newsitem.php?id=10302&lang=en
A Business Council of the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) will host an international conference titled “Olive-tree and olive oil: symbols of prosperity and culture in Black Sea region” in Baku, on October 7.

IX. BLACK SEA

1. Georgia Releases Turkish Tanker Captain
10.09.2009, Today’s Zaman
READ MORE: http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=186702
Georgia on Tuesday released a Turkish ship captain jailed last week for trying to deliver fuel to its rebel Abkhazia region in violation of an embargo that is fueling tensions in the Black Sea. Mehmet Öztürk had been sentenced to 24 years in jail. His release, on payment of a 30,000 lari ($18,000) fine, coincided with a visit to Tbilisi by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu.

2. Georgia Can Import Grain from Ukraine by Lower Prices
08.09.2009, BSANNA News
Georgia can import wheat from Ukraine by lower prices, the matter concerned it during negotiations between representative of the Ukrainian Grain Association who was on a visit to Tbilisi and the Georgian party, UKRINFORM reports with reference to the Ukrainian Grain Association.

X. CAUCASUS

1. General Affairs and External Relations, 2961st Council Meeting, Press Release
15.08.2009, Council of the European Union
The Council had an exchange of views on the strengthening of the EU’s relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, within the framework of the EU’s Eastern Partnership. The discussion focused on how to enhance bilateral relations with the three Southern Caucasian countries, including principles for enhancing those relations. In the light of the debate, the Commission announced that it would present draft negotiation directives for association agreements with the three countries in early November.

2. EU Welcomes Turkey, Armenia Agreement
06.09.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=96063
The European Union on September 1 said moves by Turkey and Armenia to resume diplomatic
relations after decades of hostility could foster peace and stability in the South Caucasus. The European Commission attaches high importance to a rapid and steady implementation of the protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations and on the development of bilateral relations. This agreement should contribute to peace and stability in the South Caucasus, said EU external affairs commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Turkey and Armenia agreed on August 31 to resume diplomatic relations after decades of hostility between the neighbours. Under Swiss mediation, delegations from both countries agreed to resume diplomatic relations and begin bilateral cooperation and political proceedings, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said. The agreement is to be signed by the parliaments of both nations in six weeks.

3. 
Azerbaijani Dispute Threatens Armenian/Turkey Ties
06.09.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=96081

Armenia refused Turkish demands early last week that it withdraw troops from a region claimed by both Armenia and Azerbaijan, reported the Interfax news agency, casting doubts on renewed Turkish-Armenian relations a day after they were announced. Turkey and Armenia agreed on August 31 to resume diplomatic relations after decades of hostility between the neighbours. But on Tuesday, Armenian President Serzh Sargsian said his country would accept no preconditions on its renewed ties to Turkey. Those include withdrawal of its troops from the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, which Armenia has occupied since the early 1990s following an attempt by the region’s Armenian population to break away and join Armenia. Turkey originally broke off ties to Armenia in 1993 to protest ongoing military efforts by Armenia to control Nagorno-Karabakh.

4. 
Armenian Border Doubts
03.09.2009, Institute for War & Peace Reporting
READ MORE: http://www.iwpr.net/?p=crs&s=f&o=355568&apc_state=henpcrs

Armenians living along their country’s border with Turkey are deeply distrustful of moves by politicians to build ties with the neighbouring state, saying they fear a repeat of the massacres of 1915. The founders of the village Bagaran were refugees from an Armenian village of the same name in what is now Turkey, who were driven from their homes by the campaign against them during World War One. The Turkish government denies that the killings were genocide, and the villagers see that as a sign that the Turks are still not to be trusted.

XI. ENERGY
1. 
Russian, Kazakh Leaders Discuss Energy Cooperation
11.09.2009, RiaNovosti

The presidents of Russia and Kazakhstan met on Friday on the sidelines of a regional forum in the Urals city of Orenburg dominated by bilateral energy projects. Dmitry Medvedev confirmed plans for a joint nuclear power venture, which the two countries had announced at a 2008 summit in Astana. He also urged for more active contacts within the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, which runs a pipeline pumping Kazakh and Russian crude to a Russian terminal on the Black Sea. In 2008, CPC transported 31.5 million metric tons of oil, down from 32.6 million in 2007. In January-March 2009, the pipeline transported 8.7 million tons of crude.
2. Georgia Quake 'Did Not Affect' BTK Construction
09.09.2009, BSANNA News

Yesterday´s earthquake in Georgia did not affect construction of the Georgian part of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, said spokesman of the Azerbaijan Railway Department Nadir Azmammadov. The quake of magnitude 6.2 hit northern Georgia on Tuesday night but caused no casualties and no major destructions.

3. Rosneft Announces Revenue Decline, Confident for 2009
06.09.2009, New Europe
READ MORE: http://www.neurope.eu/print.php?id=96069

Russia’s number one oil producer Rosneft reported a 48.8 percent decline in revenue for the first half of 2009, though second-quarter results improved. Rosneft announced its revenue in the first half of 2009 fell USD 19.2 billion, a 48.8 percent decline from the first half of 2008. The company blamed a drop in the average price of crude oil and energy prices for most of that loss. Net income, meanwhile, fell 21.7 percent quarter-on-quarter to USD 1.6 billion due in part to an income tax growth rate from 5.7 percent to 19.9 percent and appreciation in the value of the ruble.

4. Nabucco Can’t Fail, says EU Commissioner
02.09.2009, EurActiv

Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs told the European Parliament today (2 September) that the EU-sponsored Nabucco gas pipeline could not fail, despite attempts by Russia to undermine the project by speeding up work on the rival 'South Stream' pipe.

XII. SECURITY
1. Russia Demonstrates Military Machismo in West 2009 War Games
08.09.2009, RiaNovosti
READ MORE: http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20090908/156063504.html

A combined force of 12,500 troops, over 220 tanks, some 470 armored combat vehicles, 230 self-propelled and towed artillery pieces, mortar guns and multiple-launch rocket systems, auxiliary equipment and warships from the Baltic, Black Sea and Northern fleets, 60 airplanes and 40 helicopters, and officers from the two countries’ security and law-enforcement forces will train in order to “ensure strategic stability in the East European region” from September 8 to 29. Russia will be represented by the 20th multiservice army of the Moscow Military District, Air Force Main Command task forces, and the Military Transport Aviation and the Airborne Forces, including units from the 98th Airborne Division that took part in the 2008 war against Georgia. The plan for the war games calls for an airborne assault by 600 troops with armored vehicles. Another goal is to test the new command and control systems for the new types of units formed during the ongoing military reform. The two countries’ chiefs of staff - Gen. Nikolai Makarov (Russia) and Gen. Sergei Gurulev (Belarus) - will lead them.
**Black Sea News Update (BSNU)** is a fortnightly brief of political and economic developments covering the Black Sea region. It is produced by the **ICBSS**, a think-tank aiming to foster regional cooperation in the Black Sea area.

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