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FUTURE SQUAD LEADERS ARE TRAINED IN NCO SCHOOL

NCO School students moved to a new stage of preparation. Field training is a part of the sergeants' four - month course. Training under the name of "Mtsvane Sapari" (Green Cover - Shelter) will take place in Shavnabada woods. The first exercises have started today. In the framework of the course, this covers a tactic preparation in field conditions, NCOs will be trained in alarm check - point

Nowadays Sergeants are being prepared according to NATO standards. That will support a future development of Georgian Armed Forces," Zurab Agladze declared.

After the August events, the desire of the military to undergo trainings in the NCO school is notably high. Approximately 400 military servicemen were registered for vacant positions. Although only 120 of them were

efficiently, together with the unit.

The conscripts are trained by those Georgian instructors who underwent the course for Officers' preparation in the German Federal Republic.

In addition to the practical exercises, the conscripts attend theoretical trainings too. Personnel permanently familiarize themselves with discipline regulations. Classes are conducted in political preparation too.



arrangement, patrolling and movement on the battlefield; at the same time, they will master day and night navigation and ways of fire control.

According to the NCO basic course leader, 1st Lieutenant Murman Khundadze, "Training of this type has its practical purpose. A Sergeant should be able to arrange their own trench, control fire from there and use the rounds thrifty. Those skills are to be improved."

Land Forces Commander LTC Zurab Agladze together with all NCOs from various Brigades, Battalions, Units and Companies attended the first day of training. According to AF Land Forces Commander, training of this type is of a great importance for Georgian Army development: "NCO has a huge priority for Army reformation.

selected, the selection process has not been completed yet.

The Sergeants' basic training course started in November 13, and will last for 15 weeks.

During trainings, future combat leaders will pass exams periodically as expressed by passing appropriate fitness tests. In case of unsatisfactory results, the students will have no right to continue training. Based on this principle, 56 conscripts are being trained nowadays; however, it's possible for their number to be decreased until the end of the program.

After the combat preparation, future Squad Leaders will master the ways of combat in urban areas and wood conditions. The program also includes offensive and defensive methods.

Combined training of this type will assist the Squad Leaders in conducting the combat ef-

Last year's general theoretical knowledge of military servicemen was less influential. Conditions existing nowadays are quite different from those in the past. Lower ranks of the military servicemen are now well informed about various international organizations, as well as about UN and NATO aspirations. They familiarize themselves with the security, defense and foreign policy principles of the leading countries.

Future Squad Leaders will end up in training in February 2009. After a successful completion of the program, they will be granted certificates and appropriate references.

After completion of the training, qualified Sergeants will be back to their Brigades in the rank of Squad Leaders.

Shalva Londaridze



Military Servicemen who made the Supreme Sacrifice for Georgia were buried

10 soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice for the territorial integrity of Georgia were buried with military honors at the Mukhatgverdi Brothers' Cemetery today. The dead bodies of brothers-in-arms were transferred from the conflict zone on November 16. The corpses of these soldiers were handed over by the Russian and Ossetian sides after a few weeks of negotiations, led by the Chairman of the Defence and Security Committee of the Parliament of Georgia. Identification of them has not been done yet. DNA analysis will identify the ten soldiers.

Deputies of the Defence Minister and Chief of the Joint Staff

of the Georgian Armed Forces attended the funeral ceremony of unknown soldiers. Military servicemen of the 4th Infantry Brigade paid their last tribute to the Georgian heroes. Father Giorgi Kharazishvili held a burial service for the killed military servicemen.

After the ceremony, comments were made regarding the heroism of the Georgian soldiers.

"The corpses of these soldiers were handed over by the separatists after a few weeks of negotiations. The Chairman of Defence and Security Committee of the Parliament of Georgia and the Shida Kartli Police Chief were negotiating with the Rus-

sian and Ossetian sides. Georgia swapped the corpses for a dead pilot from the Russian air force. For identification of our soldiers we are waiting for DNA tests results," mentioned Deputy Defence Minister, Mamuka Mujiri.

The DNA testing process of 52 soldiers started on August 28, after genetic data was gathered over the period of 16-26 August. In order to confirm relative relations, an analysis of 70 parents, children and brothers was tested at the same time. All of those whose identity has already been found are soldiers of the Georgian Armed Forces. Only 7 of 52 dead persons have not been identified yet.



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Defense Minister of Armenia Seyran Ohanian Visited Georgia

The Defense Minister of Armenia paid a three-day official visit to Georgia. Seyran Ohanian arrived on an official visit to Tbilisi on the invitation of his Georgian counterpart.

It was the first visit of Seyran Ohanian to Georgia in the rank of Defence Minister.

A solemn welcome ceremony was held at the Ministry of Defense of Georgia on November 12. After playing the national anthems of Georgia and Armenia, Davit Kezerashvili introduced the leadership of MOD and the Joint Staff to his Armenian colleague. The members of the Armenian delegation were presented to the Georgian Defense Minister by Seyran Ohanian as well.

After the solemn welcome ceremony, the defense ministers of our two countries held a tête-à-tête meeting. The delegations of Georgia and Armenia joined the meeting later, and ministers of neighboring countries handed memorable gifts to each other.

The Defense Ministries discussed issues regarding the strengthening of Georgian and Armenian cooperation in various fields, as well as in the military and military-technical sphere. They also discussed the existence of Russian military bases in Armenia. Regional security was also a subject of their discussions.

Seyran Ohanian has been the Defense minister of Armenia since April 14, 2008.

He was born in the town of Shusha, then a part of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast. In 1979, he completed high school in the village of Mrghashen, in the region of Nairi in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. Ohanian attended the Baku Higher Joint Command College and completed his studies there in 1983.

He used to be the commander of the Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army. Ohanian is a career officer who was serving in the Soviet military's 23rd Motor Rifle Division as a major before joining Nagorno-Karabakh's newly formed army in 1991 and playing a major role in the Nagorno-Karabakh war against Azerbaijan. He was seriously wounded in action in 1992 and had one of his legs amputated as a result of the injury.

In the government of Nagorno-Karabakh, Ohanian served as Minister of Defense. Subsequently, he was appointed as chief of the general staff of the Armenian Armed Forces and First Dep-

uty Minister of Defense of Armenia in 2007. After Serzh Sargsyan took office as President of Armenia, he appointed Ohanian as Minister of Defense on April 14, 2008.

"Defence Today" had an exclusive interview with Mr. Ohanian.

D.T. What is the purpose of your visit in Georgia?

S.O. First of all, I want to specify that the visit was organized by Mr. Davit Kezerashvili, the Minister of Defense of Georgia. The aim of this visit, especially in the light of present regional military-political circumstances, is to raise confidence and improve direct relations between Georgian and Armenian military leaders and structures; unfortunately these issues are not on the desired level yet. I think, on behalf of our nation's long-lasting friendship, we should establish long-term military cooperation. I'm sure that our collaboration, especially in regional issues, will guarantee regional stability and a safe future of our nations.

D.T. In your opinion, how does the Georgian-Russian conflict reflect on the military balance in the South Caucasus?

S.O. It's very hard for me to forecast how the Russian-Georgian conflict will influence the military balance in the South Caucasus, but I'm absolutely assured that it's not in Armenia's interest to change the military balance in the region. Undesirably, the growth of military potential, increase of military expenditures and large-scale purchase of military techniques, will finally provoke the armaments drive in the region. This is strongest factor of influence on the military balance. The competition among military-political organizations, to our mind, is also intolerable.

D.T. Armenia, like Georgia has conflict regions. The August conflict between Georgia and Russia highlighted a lot of things. In this context, how do you see the conflict resolution in Nagorno-Karabakh?

S.O. Our position about regional conflict resolution, which has been reiterated by the government of Armenia, stays the same and excludes military enforcement. Armenian authorities have many times declared their attitude toward a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We believe that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is unique in its character

and we hope that the interests of USA, EU and Russia do not differ in this case.

As you know, the mission of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution has been assumed by the Minsk group of OSCE. Its co-chairmen are representatives of USA, Russia and France. Such cooperation of forces is the best way for conflict resolution, as all of them are interested in regional development. Furthermore, Minsk group represents most adequate mediator format, because all co-chairmen states are the members of Security Council of UN and play significant role in the international relations.

Armenian military authorities have the same view of conflict resolution – by peaceful methods. From this point of view we implement our military strategy and develop the defensive capacity of Armenian Republic. The Armenian Ministry of defense applies a policy of reorganization – decrease of military units, reduction of staff and armament.

Herewith, Armenian authorities stated many times that the only possible, realistic way of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution is the beginning of regional cooperation: implementation of common economical programs, collaboration in the spheres like transport, ecology and etc. Establishment of these connections will create a field of contacts, which will create an atmosphere of mutual confidence between two nations. It is an important condition for conflict resolution and for solid peace in the region. In particular, the 5th Declaration on Nagorno-Karabakh, which was signed by presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia, expresses this view.

D.T. What will be the influence of three presidents meeting and received agreement on resolution of your conflict?

S.O. Off course we are optimistic about the future. A declaration signed on November 2, is the first document after the 1994 cease-fire agreement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We consider that this document is a declaration of good will and it's positive without any doubts. In its basis, main accent was made on political resolution of conflict and presidents confirmed format of resolution in the frame of Minsk group of OSCE.

D.T. Are there any opportunities for Georgia and Armenian military



cooperation?

S.O. There are many bright examples of our nations' cooperation during external aggression. I'm sure today we have big potential to develop long-term military collaboration in the development of regional security and military reforms, which are similar in many cases. Georgia is trying to integrate into NATO, Armenia is a member of the CSTO, but it doesn't mean that our approaches about security issues couldn't be relevant. Foreign policy orientation to integrate into European structures, in which our views are coinciding with each other, is a hard political basis for collaboration in all areas. I think we have many common interests and perspectives to develop bilateral cooperation in the military sphere.

We can assist each other in many spheres, for example:

1. Combined participation in the program, "Partnership for Peace" (trainings, courses);
2. Preparation of a peacekeeping contingent in Georgia as well as in Armenia;
3. Organization of repair works of Armenian military armaments by Georgian manufacturers;
4. Cooperation in areas like stationary and sanatorium regime treatment of militaries;
5. Cooperation in the area like military medicine.

D.T. A lack of information can lead to distortion of facts about internal state processes. Is there any possibility to share information about military reforms and future plans of Georgian and Armenian armed forces in the future?

S.O. Off course it's very bad when there is a distortion of facts between two neighborly states. In my opinion, lack of information is a main reason, why we haven't achieved suitable level of relations between our armed forces yet. In this case, the institute of military attaché can improve the situation.

I would mention with pleasure that the recently accredited Georgian attaché in Armenia has started to attend his direct duties actively. I hope his residence, as well as our military attachés residence in Georgia, will lead to productive cooperation. It'll give us the possibility to maintain direct contacts and a timely exchange of information between our ministries.

D.T. Two month ago, the President of Turkey visited your country. "Tur-

key can play a positive role in the conflict resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh," mentioned Serzh Sargsyan, President of Armenia. How can Turkey assist the conflict resolution? Are there any possibilities of military cooperation between your countries in the future?

S.O. You mentioned that the President of Turkey visited Armenia and didn't point out that the initiative of this visit belonged to President of Armenia, which sent this invitation to his counterpart.

This fact verifies again that we do everything to improve relations between our states. In my opinion, today Armenia and Turkey are closer than ever.

First of all, it is important to normalize relations between Armenia and Turkey. Of course both sides must work hard for it. I suppose that the beginning of normalization for the situation will continue slowly and military cooperation isn't a priority in this context. But I must mention that military collaboration between Armenia and Turkey is developing without complications in the frame of PfP.

D.T. Mr. Michael Harutinyan, former Defense Minister of Armenia, during his visit in Georgia said that relations between NATO and Armenia are limited by three directions:

- Military-political dialogue;
- Reforms in the defense sphere;
- Collaboration in the educational sphere.

Are there any possibilities of a transition of NATO -Armenian relations to the next step, or does it resist the Tashkent Treaty (CSTO)?

S.O. It's true that Armenia is participating in the military-political processes in the frame of the collective security with Russia and other members. At the same time, it develops constructive cooperation in the framework of EAPC and PfP.

Following to our general interests, we try to create a relevant environment for constructive relations of interested countries and a common security system based on the principles of complementarity.

Cooperation of Armenia in the frame of CSTO and in the frame of NATO not only doesn't contradict, but they supplement each other. It creates additional guaranties for Armenian security as well as for the whole region.



International Security Prospects In The Light of Georgian-Russian War

On November 24, in the Sheraton Metekhi Palace, the Akhaltsikhe International Security Seminar 2008 was opened. The event was organized by the non-governmental organization "New Generation, New Initiative" (nGNI), Latvian Transatlantic Organization (LATO) and Information Center on NATO. Supporters of the seminar were the Ministries of Defence of Georgia and Latvia. The aim of the seminar was an assessment of the post-war security situation, not only in Georgia, but in whole Black sea region and international arena also. Guest-speakers, together with Latvian and Georgian students, were involved in the process.

The seminar started on November 25, following the official opening ceremony of the previous evening. The first day's topics for discussion were "Russia's After-war policy Priorities: Implications for the Wider Europe" and "Russia-Georgia War: Lessons Learned and Future for the EU and NATO." Speakers and moderators of these two panels were Dr. Andris Spruds, Deputy Director of Latvian Foreign Policy Institute, Mr. Janis Garisons, Undersecretary of State for Defence Planning of Ministry of Defence (Latvia), Mr. Pavel Felgenhauer, Defence Analyst and columnist at "Novaya Gazeta", Mr. Temur Yakobashvili, State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration, Ambassador David Smith, Director of the Georgian Security Analyses Center and Senior Fellow at Potomac Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, Mr. Darius Jurgelevicius, Chief political advisor of the EU Monitoring Mission and Ms. Eka Kvesitadze, Political Analyst of "24 Hours" daily.

The seminar was an attempt to evaluate global security challenges in light of Moscow's clearly indicated ambitions. In their speeches, speakers tried to describe the basics of Russia's foreign policy aspects, motivating its intervention in Georgia. As was mentioned by Mr. Andris Spruds, Russia is not a 21st century country, it more looks like 19th century state with empire intentions. Mr. Spruds, in his opening remarks, congratulated the recent anniversary of the Rose revolution and stated that this was a very important episode, not only in Georgia's life, but also for the whole post-Soviet region. The "Rose Revolution, followed by the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, was some kind of 9/11 for Russia. It was very traumatic experience for Russia, which largely influenced on its way of thinking," declared Mr. Spruds.

Mr. Janis Garisons, in the beginning of his speech, declared that he was going to explore current international relations, not as the representative of official structure, but as a historian and political analyst. By his opinion, Russia's foreign policy is some kind of "Mixture of Soviet

et Glory and feature of Empire. Sometimes I suppose that Russia still lives in the past," said Mr. Garisons. Mr. Garisons gave the example of Russia's security issues, which has not changed after the soviet era – NATO stays the biggest threat for Russia, despite the fact that in reality there are many other real risks for the whole world, as well as for Russia, including Iran, the Middle East, or even the rising economic and military potential of China, that should be most of all concerning Russia. "But Russia worries only about the enlargement of NATO, and this shows that security perceptions of this country have not changed since the 19th century. It feels secure while its neighbors are unsecured and have influence on them by different means," added Mr. Garisons. By expert's opinion, Georgia's aspiration to NATO was one of the reasons why Russia tried to draw red lines in such an aggressive manner in the South Caucasus, to show the West that this is the territory where Russia doesn't tolerate western influence any more. And also it wanted to tests the reaction of NATO and the EU.

Mr. Pavel Felgenhauer, who is from the very small number of independent political and military analysts in Moscow, a few months before August war, predicted that such a development of the situation was expected. In his speech, Mr. Felgenhauer made an overview of the Russian-Georgian war and tried to analyze military aspects of the conflict. By his opinion, Russia's intervention in Georgia was a preplanned military operation. Experts declared that the total unpreparedness of Georgian military forces was absolutely obvious during the war, while Russia was prepared for a full-scale military engagement. Mr. Felgenhauer marked that all pre-war circumstances gave a clear picture of Moscow's intentions toward Georgia, but the Georgian side, as well as West, does not pay proper attention to these evidences. In any case, this confrontation hardly could be avoided, as it was part of Russia's policy of demonstrating strength and humiliating the western world. Russia's mind was clearly defined by the recent words of Mr. Medvedev: "Russia can either be big and strong power or it will cease to exist," declared Mr. Felgenhauer. The target of Russia was also President Saakashvili's regime, which is personally hated by Mr. Putin - "the aim of Russia was punishment and a change of Saakashvili for his western-oriented politics; but in the last moment, a party of peace took an advantage over the party of war in Moscow, which was demanding to take Tbilisi, change the government and hang the Russian flag on the Governmental Building in Georgia," mentioned Felgenhauer, who added that the western reaction

should have been more active and today unarmed observers are absolutely ineffective while the situation is still very tense. Unfortunately for us, Mr. Felgenhauer forecasted one more escalation of the conflict in the spring.



Mr. Temur Yakobashvili, guest-speaker of next panel, made an assessment of lessons learned from the Georgian-Russian war and mentioned that most important lesson for the whole world from this conflict was the recognition of Russia's real role in it, which was not news for Georgia itself. "If before Russia was a peacekeeper in the conflict, today everyone treats it as aggressor and participant of the conflict," stated Mr. Yakobashvili. This new reality inspire some shifts in attitudes toward conflict resolution aspects, considers Mr. Yakobashvili. First of all, it should be definitely realized that the situation in Georgia is not an intrastate problem, and it is a confrontation of two states. Also, by the Minister's opinion, a lesson for Europe is that what happened in Georgia is not only our country's, but also all Europe's business, because Russia now is trying to redraw the map of Europe – its eastern borders. This war made evident that the EU is not as dysfunctional as some believed, and the US is not as powerful as we all believed. So what Georgia should learn from this conflict is that you have to excessively rely on your own sources, because the international community may come, may come later or may not come at all," stated Mr. Minister. In the end of the speech, Mr. Yakobashvili once again expressed gratefulness for this "enormous solidarity" of European leaders, who have visited Tbilisi in a very critical time, and said their unity was the main determinative factor to stop Russian aggression.

Mr. David Smith spoke about geopolitical issues and reasons of Russian ag-

gression toward Georgia. As he supposes, the August war was much more than conflict over the small separatist regions of Georgia and more than even a conflict over Georgia itself. "The context of the conflict was geopolitical and Georgia was

fire agreement on the ground and not to provide further security guarantees in conflict zones. On the moderator's question whether he believed that this mission was able to avoid an eruption of the next cycle of conflict, the advisors answer was somehow ambiguous – at first he said that the mission would be absolutely effective, but he added that in case of conflict escalation, monitors couldn't be involved in the process, but as they will have direct access to the information, they will be able to provide exact analyses about which side and by what means has violated articles of agreement.

On the next day of seminar, they discussed issues of energy politics and Black Sea regional security aspects. Guest-speakers and moderators of these two panels were Mr. Vladimir Socor, Political Analyst of East European Affairs for the Jamestown Foundation, Mr. Bakhtiyar A. Aslanbayli, Senior Lecturer and Researcher of the Diplomacy and Integration Processes Department of the Baku State University, Dr. Andris Spruds, Mr. Bakur Kvashilava, Dean of School of Law and Politics at Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA), Dr. Sergei Konoplyov, Director of the Harvard Black Sea Security Program, Mr. Kakha Gogolashvili, Director of Georgian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre (GEPLAC) and Mr. Jonathan D. Kulick, Director of Studies at Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS).

Speakers analyzed security issues of the region in the context of global energy policy. As it was declared on the session, it is in EU's and USA's primary interests to provide Georgia with security, because of Georgia's strategic location on the road of energy pipelines from the Caspian supply to the West. One of the experts, particularly Mr. Socor, also mentioned a United Nations historic attempt, from the Nixon Period, to provide Europe's energy independence from Russia, because this issue always weakened the positions of the North Atlantic Coalition. Reporters agreed on the importance of EU and US cooperation to continue working on energy diversification for Europe, in order to release them from dependence on Russia. Thus the issue of Georgia in this case is the corner stone.

At the end of each seminar day, there were working groups, where participant students had an opportunity to express their opinions about discussed issues and current political issues in the world. This seminar was another successful attempt of evaluating the Russian-Georgian conflict, its consequences and future security prospects for the entire world. One of the participants wittily contradicted Francis Fukuyama saying that "history is still going on and it has not finished yet."

Ana Alania

COMMAND POST EXERCISES COMPLETED

Command Post Exercises (CPX) have been completed at the Krtsanisi Training Centre.

Over two weeks, commanders of various Brigades and Units underwent theoretical and practical trainings in gaining and developing commanders' skills and their further utilization.

Officers were prepared in Sachkhere Mountain Training School and Krtsanisi Training Centre.

The program for mountain preparation was introduced to Military servicemen in Sachkhere. Later, they attended the demonstrative trainings in movement on a complex terrain. Officers were familiarized with various regulations and witnessed the preparation of different documentations, regarding NATO standards.



Training in the general skills of combat preparation planning were conducted on Krtsanisi Military Base - including directions of Communication, Logistic Support, Reconnaissance and Personnel selection. Commanders passed norm tests in shooting small caliber guns.

According to the Head of Combat Preparation Department of G-7, Nodar Kvilitaia, training of this kind will assist commanders to improve acquired military skills that, in its turn, will support low step teams to be well-informed about military commands.

Commanders of military Brigades and Units familiarized with preparation action plan for the recruits, who are desired to serve in Army and are intensively undergoing military preparation on Krtsanisi Range.

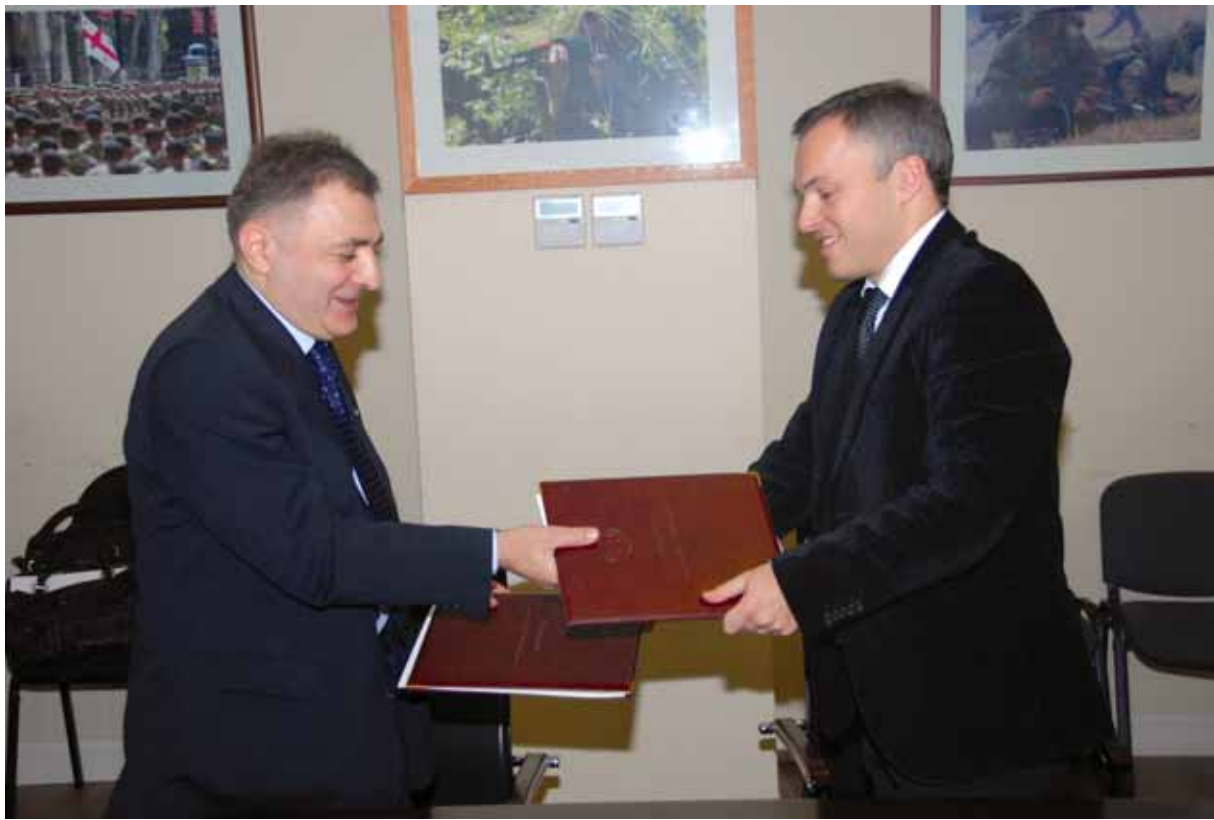
Memorandum of Cooperation Was Signed

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia and Civil Council on Defence and Security signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on November 17. "The Memorandum of Cooperation on Strategic Defence Review 2008-2009" was signed by the First Deputy Defence Minister, Mr. Batu Kutelia, and the Chairman of the Civil Council on Defence and Security Issues, Mr. Erekle Mchedlishvili.

The Memorandum envisages a cooperation between the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Council on Defence and Security in elaborating the conceptual documents scheduled until Fall 2009. After the Georgia-Russian war in August 2008, the Ministry of Defence of Georgia launched a new Strategic Defence Review. The Memorandum of Understanding considers both Parties to be involved in a strategic defence planning process.

"We have already scheduled the main stages and meetings for an elaboration of the threats assessment document, political assumptions, and force structure of the Georgian Army, and the Strategic Defence Review in general. I believe that this process will be accomplished successfully in a year, and the SDR document will represent all threats and challenges. Participation of the civil society is very significant in this process," said Mr. Batu Kutelia, after the signing ceremony.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia has experience with using such a



format of cooperation with the NGO, sector and clearly understands the importance of civil society in a democratic state. Civil society was actively involved in the elaboration process of the current Strategic Defence Review. In January, the Georgian MoD released the public version of Strategic Defence Review 2007 (SDR) and according to

assessments of independent experts, the presentation was the culmination of a transparent process. For over a year, MoD officials provided draft chapters to a group of NGO defence experts and then met with them to hear their comments. Civil society was informed and the MoD received the benefits of non-governmental experts' perspectives.

Cooperation with the NGO sector, their expertise and evaluations are very important for further development of the Defence Sector. The potential of expertise and monitoring of NGOs enables the Defence Ministry to make the right decisions based on healthy criticism.

The Chairman of the Civil Council on Defence and Security Issues, Mr.

Erekle Mchedlishvili, has also underscored the importance of cooperation with civil society in his remarks: "The signing of the Memorandum implies involvement of the public sector representatives, as well as NGOs and independent experts in the process of Strategic Defence Review. We continue cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and this cooperation acquires even more importance after recent developments. Participation of the society will ensure more transparency and effectiveness to MoD activities."

"The Memorandum of Cooperation on Strategic Defence Review 2008-2009" is based on the Memorandum of Cooperation concluded with the Civil Council on Defence and Security in 2007. The founders of the Council, "Open Society – Georgia, "Liberty Institute," "Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development," "Georgian Young Lawyers Association" and "Peace and International Relations Research Center" expressed readiness in organizing defence monitoring regularly.

The schedule and format of this cooperation has already been drawn up by the signatory parties and series of meetings have already been scheduled. Intensification of cooperation with the NGO sector will ensure the effective strategic review process, and MoD will benefit from intensive, professional and impartial expertise in its policy planning.

The Georgian Defence Ministry Delegation at the NATO HQ



A meeting to discuss the fulfillment of Defence Planning and Review Process (PARP) commitments was held with the NATO Political - Military Steering Committee in Brussels on November 20. The Georgian delegation was led by the Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze.

At the session participants were acquainted with ongoing processes in the defence sphere and future plans of the Georgian side. The Alliance has evaluated positively all measures taken by Georgia to fulfill commitments taken under the defence sphere reformation and further development. The NATO alliance members have mentioned that Georgia achieved significant progress in the defence field. Representatives of the Alliance expressed unanimous support for Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Battalion Commanders at the Academy

Educational issues remain a priority in the Georgian Armed Forces. The first step of the reform envisages an improvement of the military education system, attracting professional personnel, and their preparation has almost come to the end. Huge attention is paid to the establishment of a stage-by-stage training system that will provide an officer of any level with appropriate knowledge, starting from Captain Career Courses, including Military Collage.

Switching to the joint standard of AF activity is the main requirement for integration into NATO. For this purpose, retraining courses for Battalion Commanders and Battalion Staff officers were established at the Academy. The course is short-term, though it will be conducted step-by-step in a year's time and a commander of any unit will be trained with the same standard. Courses of this type are conducted for the first time at the Academy. The maneuver was established based on the Captain Career course and is carried out by the Academy instructors' leadership.

The instructor of the Maneuver Captain Career course, Major Levan Maisuradze, talks to us in detail about the aforementioned course:

"The course started on October 17, and will be over on December 28. The trainings are done mainly by Battalion Commanders and Heads of the G-3 sections of the Brigade Staff. The course will be conducted step-by-step, and will cover the whole Armed Forces. Courses are recommended for those militaries, who already work or are being appointed to the aforementioned positions. Officers' retraining at the Academy will go on until CSGC is opened."

What kind of knowledge will Officers gain in the framework of the course?

This course was based on the Captain Career one, and covers issues that are used by Commanders for unit and Staff guidance. Graduates should be able to utilize Command Post skills in practice and plan combat operations on a tactic level that envisage the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) and Operations Order (OPERDER) elaboration.

Are practical exercises conducted together with a theoretical training?

80-90% of the course includes tactic, unit command procedures, and the Military Decision Making Process. Operational Order elaboration takes place during practical exercises. Students receive an Operations Order elaborated by higher staff. Work on the OPERDER takes place in Battalion Staffs by passing ev-

tries. Unification of this knowledge under one system is in the agenda. The training serves this purpose. After completion of the course, the gained knowledge will be united under one joint standard.

In the framework of this course you meet with famous representatives once a week. What about this project?

We have a possibility to meet weekly with famous representatives and people



ery steps of MDMP.

We had a conversation with some Officers to receive detailed information about aforementioned course.

Major Levan Japaridze, the 11th Battalion Commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade: After the events in August, all kinds of problems were revealed. Discussion and analysis of those problems are going on at the Academy. We share our views with one another about the issues that bother us. Here we work, learn, and search for the ways to utilize our resources more efficiently and purposefully in the future.

Course of this kind has never been conducted at the Academy before. What about its importance?

Every military serviceman has the various trainings undergone in different coun-

tries. We frankly talk with guests about integration of the militaries in the public; we learn their views about ongoing processes in the country. We have already invited a 5th guest. I want to distinguish Ms. Nana Chachua. Meeting with the psychologist was particularly interesting for me. I am glad that aforementioned project is going on.

Captain Zurab Maisuradze – 12th Battalion Commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade: The course is divided into Company and Battalion phases. We undergo unit command procedures on Company and MDMP on the Battalion levels. The training covers offense and defense operations, together with Stability and Support, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian operations.

What about the training format and program of the course?

Team is divided into staffs that support us to work efficiently. We have theoretical exercises as well as practical ones. At the end of the course, situation exercises (STX) are planned; Air and Fire support officers will be next to us and an imitation of large-scale training will take place. This will enable us to see synchronous operation processes of various staffs in practice.

As for the course duration—I think the time apportioned for this training is not enough. Here we discuss very important issues that I wish to be learnt in detail.

The course has almost come to the end. Was it successful for you?

I'm glad that I underwent this course, since I remembered many things and learnt many new ones. We touched important issues; I think this course is essential for every Officer.

In general, I wish the course for rising officers' qualification to be conducted at the Academy even once a year. It's essential for their permanent improvement.

I hope I'll successfully use the knowledge and experience that I've gained here in my unit.

Eka Gakhokidze