



Military-Patriotic Lessons Launch at Schools

For the next academic year, a new discipline called Military-Patriotic Education will be introduced at Georgian schools. This initiative aims to “stimulate soldierly spirit” and bring up the future generations on military-patriotic principles. This is one of the most important challenges that our country faces.

President Michael Saakashvili was the first to announce this productive project while meeting with teachers in Batumi to discuss the problems present in the country’s educational system and the necessity of reforms in

young population to have the full impression on the importance of armed forces for the country, in particular their decisive role in terms of national security and in addition, to raise awareness about the function of each citizen in case of necessity,” explained the Defense Minister.

Work on the new course has already started. In order to complete the process, the Defense Ministry actively cooperates with the Ministry of Education and Science. In connection with aforementioned ministries, the first working meeting was held in the

process. As a result, the final curriculum will be tabled in April, 2010. As it was decided at first, the course will be launched as a pilot project in several schools and based on the results and assessment of the pilot project, later the course will be finally formed and become an obligatory subject in every school after September, 2010.

The Defense Minister also mentioned in his statement that the ministry possesses sufficient resources for delivering the lessons on military themes for senior pupils and also to provide



this sphere. The president considers Military-Patriotic Education to be one of the “key triangles and cornerstones” based on which “modern Georgia” should be built. “It is necessary in order to help the children to at least understand many things about their country, and as we have already seen, anything can happen, and Georgia and Georgians should be able to defend at least their village, their town or their district. This system being created in Georgia will enable us to involve each and every person in the defense of their country. 16,000, 20,000, or 30,000 soldiers will not be able to defend a country with population of 5 million; defending of the country with population of 5 million is a matter of all these 5 million people, as well as of the Georgians living abroad,” declared President Saakashvili.

Referring to this initiative, Georgian Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia held a briefing on January 13 during which he spoke on the significance of military discipline. The course will include important issues such as the history of the Georgian Army, and an overview of the armament of the army. “This decision derives from the need to provide an opportunity for the

Georgian Education Ministry led by Minister of Education and Science Dimitri Shashkin. The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia met with Defense Minister; the Deputy Interior and Deputy Environmental Ministers also attended the meeting. “With this new discipline, children will become familiar with the components of the Georgia Army and Georgian armament,” stated Minister of Education and Science Dimitri Shashkin, “Children must have information on mines and cluster bombs in order to avoid accidents. All children’s teachers as well meet this reform positively.”

The main focus of ministers’ meeting was the curriculum of the course. Later the experts will also be involved in the working

reserve officers with the required qualifications. It is also important that demobilized officers from the Georgian Armed Forces will be involved in this process. The candidates will be selected specially, and before starting teaching at school, they will have special trainings.

Military Education was taught at Georgian schools in the past, but as a result of reform, it will be taught with absolutely new methods and approaches. Military-patriotic education means training in civil defense, which stimulates the soldierly spirit which historically has always been in the nature of Georgians. The new method also envisages teaching of Georgian military history.

Tea Kerdzevadze



Preparation for Peacekeeping Mission



Minister of Defense Bacho Akhalaia bid farewell to military servants of the 31st Battalion who left for Germany on January 13. The enhanced Battalion of the third Brigade of the GA, consisting of 185 soldiers, will undergo military training in the German town of Hohenfels. The company will be integrated into the Battalion and go to Afghanistan to perform the peacekeeping mission there. “Our soldiers are properly trained, giving me

confidence that they will be capable to effectively accomplish the duties assigned to them”, stated Akhalaia. The soldiers of the 31st Battalion have been going through the intensive military trainings since September 2009, getting ready for participation in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. The level of preparedness of the Georgian peace contingent is being examined and evaluated by the experts of the U.S. Joint Multinational

Readiness Center (JMRC), as well as the group of trainers and consultants of the US Marines. In total, 750 Georgian military servants are taking part in exercises in the American base located in Hohenfels. They are passing through the trainings in Germany step-by step. In case of successful completion of exercises, Georgian militaries will be entirely prepared to get engaged in the peace-support mission, led by NATO in Afghanistan.



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“In 2010 Georgia will continue its defense transformation path”

Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze



In an interview with “Defence Today,” Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia Mr. Nikoloz Vashakidze summarizes 2009 and speaks about the challenges and priorities of the defense sphere for the 2010. He also addresses the important issues like Georgia’s NATO integration process, participation in peacekeeping missions and bilateral cooperation with NATO member and partner countries.

One year has passed since the U.S.-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership was signed. Along with other spheres, the charter foresees cooperation in the defense and security spheres. How can you evaluate one year of this cooperation in the defense field and what is planned for the coming year?

The conclusion of the U.S.-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership dated Jan. 9, 2009 is indeed a historical event in our bilateral relations. The charter is an overarching framework for cooperation in different fields between the countries which encompasses the security sector as well. The charter has turned out to be a very productive additional tool to streamline existing cooperation between the U.S. DOD and the Defense Ministry of Georgia. Under the charter, complementary bilateral forums take place periodically giving the opportunity to discuss and consult on defense-related matters.

Since conclusion of the charter, two sessions of the U.S.-Georgia joint security working group have been held; the first was held on June 22, 2009 in Washington, DC, and another on Oct. 18, 2009, in Tbilisi. During both sessions, having convened the high rank representatives from the US and Georgian Governments, the areas of U.S. security assistance have been thoroughly reviewed and refined with the focus on professional military education and ISAF contribution.

The last security session of the charter was held on Oct. 18, 2009 chaired by Assistant Defense Secretary Alexander Vershbow. It had particular importance to our cooperation as it pledged the enhancement of the U.S. security assistance considering the immediate needs of the Georgian Armed Forces. Consequently, the U.S.-Georgia Bilateral Defence Consultations held on Nov. 19-20, 2009 specified details of the directions defined during the security session.

In summary, I would like to indicate

that during the consultations, both sides have agreed on the Strategic End State of the cooperation. This aims for training, equipping, and structuring for territorial defense of the Georgian Armed Forces, while supporting Georgia’s defense transformation priorities, NATO aspirations, and coalition contribution efforts. That would be the essence of the cooperation in the defense field between the U.S. and Georgia.

Besides the U.S., the Georgian Defense Ministry is actively cooperating with NATO and partner countries. Bilateral Cooperation Plans are elaborated on an annual basis with each country. Are there any specific programs or directions that you would like to distinguish for the next year?

The Georgian Defense Ministry has a very intensive and already traditional cooperation with 15 NATO and partner countries. It needs to be underscored that we are keen to make this cooperation target oriented and tailored to our needs to the maximum extent possible. When determining direction of bilateral cooperation, we scrutinize the outcomes of the cooperation over the past year with each country. Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of cooperation, we refine it and harmonize with the requirements of Georgian Armed Forces.

In regards to the specific programs and directions for the next year, I would highlight the military education within the Armed Forces. The education sector in defence system is relatively weak and needs to be addressed effectively considering the requirements of the Armed Forces. We need to have well-educated and well-trained professionals in the army. That is why education lies among the top priorities of the defense transformation process. Acknowledging the significance of the issue, we are keen to reflect it in bilateral cooperation with different countries and support from multilateral initiatives in this regard. With the assistance of

partner countries, the development of a high standard military education system is planned, and it will meet the requirements of the Armed Forces. Meanwhile, we are using every opportunity to educate our personnel appropriately outside the country.

As an outcome of those efforts, the armed forces will gradually receive personnel from a highly qualified pool of officers and NCOs in addition to well-organized and streamlined military educational institutions.

NATO integration is Georgia’s foreign policy priority and Georgia is committed to meeting the Alliance standards. Recently, the Annual National Program of Georgia in 2010 has been discussed in Brussels. At the meeting, the Georgian side presented the program to NATO in 2010, developed by the Government of Georgia together with experts. What will be the main directions in defense field during 2010 and how is the Georgian Defense Ministry prepared to fulfill the commitments?

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia realizes the decisive importance of a constant and gradual development of all defence system components in order to strengthen peace, modernize Georgian Armed Forces, and achieve NATO interoperability.

Through close cooperation with the other governmental agencies, the Defense Ministry has elaborated Annual National Program 2010 (ANP) and applies utmost efforts for successful implementation of the commitments undertaken in the framework of the ongoing cooperation format with NATO. Assigned commitments are fully in compliance with the “Minister’s Vision 2010”, which reflects defence priorities and incorporates them into planning process for the current year. The vision identifies four fundamental directions for the defense system development: defense capabilities, defense system management, education and human resources, NATO integration and international cooperation.

Since defense priorities are reflected in ANP, we have allocated enough resources to ensure successful implementation of the program. Besides, we are cooperating with partner countries

in the frames of bilateral as well as multilateral partnership formats to accomplish the defined objectives. I would like to underscore that in the process of defense transformation, the ministry encourages interagency cooperation, participation of the various NGOs and involvement of experts to the maximum extent possible. Synchronized collaboration between the different stakeholders in this regard will ensure efficient and successful implementation of the program’s goals.

In April, Georgia will deploy an additional battalion to the International Force in Afghanistan, bringing its total contingent up to 950. That will make Georgia the largest per capita contributor of troops, even larger than that of the U.S. Why is it important for Georgia to take part in this mission?

There are challenges in the world that are too complicated to be dealt by one country alone, no matter how strong and developed they are. Hence, the international community needs to combine efforts to effectively overcome these challenges. The case of Afghanistan is extremely complex. The implication of the situation in the country goes far beyond its boundaries, affecting security and stability internationally. Therefore, active international engagement is very appropriate to effectively deal with the problems in the country.

We might point out several reasons for Georgian participation in ISAF mission.

From the global perspective, Georgia, as a part of international community, fully appreciates the importance of united efforts to effectively deal with problems affecting security and stability and fully understands significance of contribution of every country (despite of its size) in achieving success. Considering the magnitude of the challenges in Afghanistan and their implications, I would say that having been in the mission we are building peace, security and stability not only in Afghanistan but in Georgia and in many other countries as well.

From the regional perspective, the issue is linked to cooperation with North-Atlantic Alliance. We are an applicant country for integration in NATO, but we have to meet some standards and requirements to be accepted. Those standards refer to the armed forces

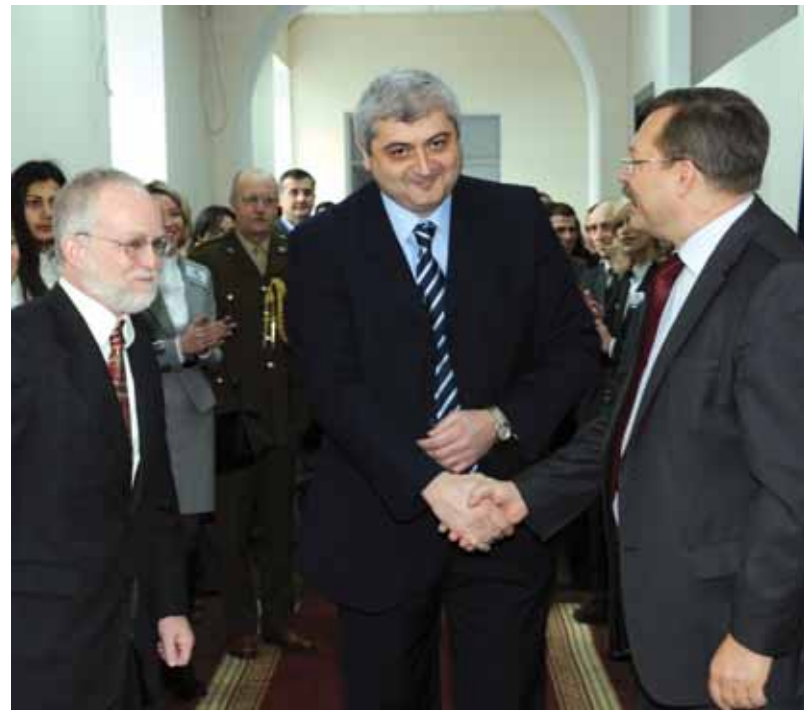
development as well. Participation in ISAF alongside with the armed forces of alliance members supports strengthening of interoperability and implementation of the standards within the Georgian Armed forces. Thus it might be considered as catalyzing factor on our way to integration.

From the national-military perspective, participation in the mission has very practical benefits. Our soldiers acquire invaluable skills of conducting military operations in the difficult environment under the harsh conditions that ensures rising of their professionalism as soldiers that eventually is reflected on the strengthening of our Armed Forces.

How can you evaluate the past year and what will be the main directions and what challenges do you see during this year?

2009 has brought significant changes in Georgia and in its defense system. Immense efforts have been applied to reinforce the modernization and reformation processes. We succeeded to enhance our defense reforms and accomplish objectives set forth in the Minister’s Vision 2009 and the Annual National Program. Our progress in implementing the ANP was very positively assessed by NATO. The main focus was made on the review of strategic and conceptual documents, defense planning, personnel management, military education, and the training system. In 2010, Georgia will continue its defense transformation path and concentrate on the areas identified in the Minister’s Vision 2010, encompassing defense capabilities, defense system management, education and human resources, NATO integration and international cooperation.

The main challenge, as I see it, would be the financial restriction in defence budget. This year we have almost half of the budget 2009. It means that the defense system needs to be even more efficient and rationalized. I think we will have to cut down some activities that do not represent the priorities of the Armed Forces. But I must say that the budget allocated for this year is big enough to address our urgent needs and priorities which can be considered a quite positive fact if we take into account consequences of the financial crises all over the world and severe cuts within the defense budgets of even well developed countries.



Cadets Military Lyceum Opens in September

Many countries have educational military programs where juveniles are able to gain productive military preparation and leadership skills. For example, the U.S. has the JROTC and ROTC programs available to secondary and university students, respectively. In that vein, Georgian Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia has set a new initiative to restore the Cadets Military Lyceum in the city of Kutaisi. The lyceum will be an educational institution where children can master military disciplines and be given more rigorous and intensive physical education.

The lyceum is slated to open in autumn 2010. Interested candidates between the ages of 14 and 17 will take entrance exams during which attention will be paid to their physical fitness and general intellectual preparedness to master different disciplines. The tuition period will last for three years. Nearly 200 cadets are expected to be enrolled in the institution annually. The priorities of the lyceum will be physical education, foreign languages, and military preparation. The academic curriculum will basically correspond to other school programs. "All educational programs must be based on Georgian reality. I can easily say that we have quite a good civilian and military educational system based on Western standards.



The main purpose of this new project is to strengthen the interoperability of the Georgian armed forces and military educational system to Western culture, NATO and the European Union," stated Commander of Training and Military Education of the Joint Staff, Lieutenant Colonel Lasha Beridze.

After leaving the Lyceum, the cadets are able to serve in any unit of the Georgian Armed Forces. The main goal is to prepare cadets for the Georgian National Defense Academy. Ac-

ording to the Defense Ministry, the Lyceum undergraduates will have an unhindered advantage to enroll in the Defense Academy without competition. "Be sure, there is such an intensive working process in the Lyceum that almost all cadets will be eager to connect their future career to military sphere," commented Lieutenant Colonel Beridze.

Tuition period at the lyceum is free. The lyceum doesn't have its own budget. The Defense Ministry finances ev-

erything, including cadets' accommodations, medical service and other expenses. The best students will be granted scholarships as well. The lyceum will give cadets the opportunity to be healthy and fit, and master all subjects at a high level. They are able to use every privilege that ordinary military servicemen and women have in the Armed Forces.

The Cadets Corp existed in Georgia until 2005. In 2006, some legislative changes were made in Georgia, ed-

ucational laws, going as far as entirely removing the article on military education. The Defense Ministry intensively works in order to carry out all necessary actions, including legislative changes, licensee taking, and obtaining accreditation. Curriculums are under elaboration as well.

The newly founded military lyceum will be principally different from the previous Cadets Military Lyceum. First of all, the institution will depend on the Western-style military system where students are prepared for the Georgian National Defense Academy. This is the main goal of the lyceum.

The academy and the lyceum will have a mutual connection. Currently, the Defense Academy is under reorganization. Some defects in the academy, including a four-month tuition course made clear that this decision didn't work productively. In this result, it became necessary to restore a four-year schooling program in order to become a real military serviceman. The Defense Ministry is establishing a Military Academy in Georgia in the style of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, slated to open its doors in 2011. The academy will give students the opportunity to get a Western-style military education and a bachelor's degree.

Tea Kerdzevadze

Transformation Course

Up to 185 sergeants of the Georgian Armed Forces underwent a transformation course. A solemn ceremony dedicated to the closing of the course was held at the Vaziani Military Base. Military servants were selected for the training program from various units of Armed Forces, already equipped with a certain level of combat experience.

Around 600 soldiers passed the selection stage for the Platoon Sergeants Transformation Course. During the nine months of preparation, 199 soldiers were given an opportunity to adopt needed skills in self-defense operations, setting up posts, patrolling, handling fire, as well as training in strategic movement on the battlefield. Along with practical exercises, the participants were given lessons in theory, including joint-army regulations, topography, unit leading and drill trainings.

During the ceremony, the state anthem was specially performed and a minute of silence was held for the military servicemen fallen in the fight for the integrity and unity of homeland. At the end, the course graduates were given relevant certificates.

"This unit is the best one. Nine months ago we started selecting the

best infantry of the GAF, distinguished for their bravery and leadership skills demonstrated during the war and began their retraining. Although the course was too weary, overloaded and sometimes too boring, the soldiers participating in the course proved to be successful. All the attending military servants, being retrained during a nine-month period, represent the basic segment of the Georgian armed forces. Without their high motivation and combat spirit none of the colonels or generals would be of any importance for the army. This kind of course is one more step forward, and what's more, we plan to arrange another series of trainings as well, which, I believe, will be as successful as the present one", declared Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia.

In total, 185 sergeants went through the training course; nine among them were granted with medals of Best Graduate.

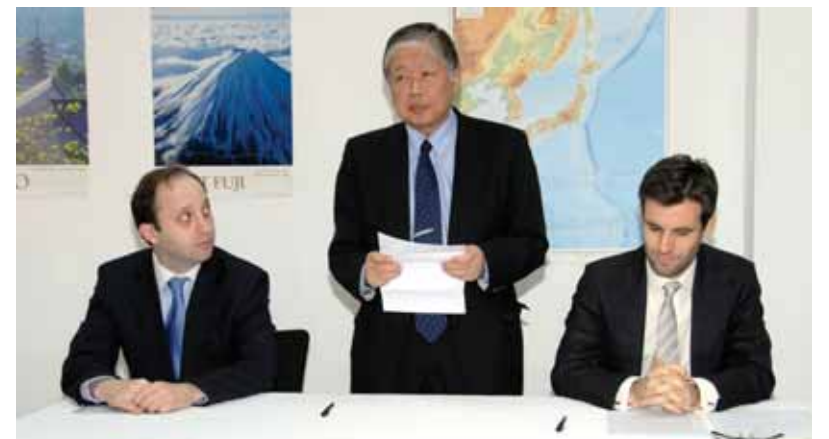
The solemn occasion went on in the presence of Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia, Chief of Joint Staff of GAF Major General Devi Chankotadze, along with other MoD and Joint Staff leading officials.

Mine clearing works to be financed by the Japanese government

The project Humanitarian Demining of Mtskheta and Sagarejo Regions, financed by the Japanese government, was signed on the 22nd of November 2010. The program is being realized within the frames of the Grassroots and Human Security Grant Assistance Program in Georgia. This humanitarian project covers the clearing of the demined areas in the Mtskheta and Sagarejo regions from hazardous explosive materials. It is also set to provide needed technical facilities such as an armored excavator and an auto-carrier, and it allocates sufficient funds for personnel to carry out mine clearing activities in both regions. The cost of the project at the moment adds up to \$652,835. The project signing ceremony went on in the presence of Deputy Defense Minister Nodar Kharshiladze, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Georgia Masayoshi Kamohara, and Patrick Thomson, the Program Manager at the HALO Trust, which is the project implementing organization in Georgia.

According to the Deputy Minister, The HALO Trust will lead the clearing of the remnants of dangerous explosives from the mined areas in the Sagarejo and Mtskheta regions thanks to the Japanese grant worth of \$652 000, allocated for that purpose. This is one more action aimed at completely clearing the mined territories in both regions, which helps the local residents feel more secure and will make their living environment as safe as it had been before unleashing the military conflict in 2008.

The Grassroots and Human Security Grant Assistance Program is a much larger humanitarian program as compared to those programs provided by municipalities, medical facilities and non-governmental sector organizations, which are designed for improving the living standards for materially deprived and vulnerable families. Target spheres of the project may be healthcare system, public schools, social and environmental protection, eradication of poverty and revenues. The government of Japan launched financing the grant program in 1984. For the time being, around 94 projects have been implemented in Georgia due to the internationally provided financial re-



courses worth of \$6,987,354.

"Within the frames of the Official Development Assistance Program of Japan, \$150.5 million have been earmarked in Georgia to foster development in such important spheres as economic infrastructure, agriculture, social and cultural directions and on top of all, the development of human resources. The main reason why we have chosen this project is that we place a key focus on the number of population to be effected by the project. In this particular case, quantity of the target population is too large. Notwithstanding the cost of the project itself, which is ten times larger compared to other projects being realized in Georgia, it is oriented on much bigger number of population, prompting us to stand our choice on the given project. This program affords us with an opportunity to neutralize the mines on the very crucial areas of Georgia," explained a Japanese Ambassador.

Following the implementation of the project, the combined population of both regions and the tourists staying in those areas will no longer be exposed to any threats related to mine explosions. According to Nodar Kharshiladze, as a result of the execution of the humanitarian project in Georgia, the local residents will be able to return to their usual way of living and working without any kinds of threats or obstacles.

It is notable that the quality of the humanitarian demining activities on Georgian territory is being monitored by the international organization Information Management and Mine Actions Programme (IMMAP, the U.S.) in Georgia. Removal of the dangerous explosives from the region of Mtskheta will start next week and go on for five months. As for the Sagarejo region, it will be subject to mine-clearing in March of next year and will last for about one year.

Tea Ivanishvili



Georgian Militaries and MoD Civilians To Attend An English Language Course In York

From Jan. 11 to April 1, 2010, three officers and three civilians from the Georgian Defense Ministry will attend an English Language course at York St John University.

This course has been provided to the Georgian Defense sector as a part of an annual bilateral contribution by the British government since 2001 and constitutes a substantial investment in the advancement of the English language capability of civilian and military personnel alike. English language training is just one part of a wider UK-Georgia defense cooperation program designed to assist Georgia to play her full part in international affairs and to help her on the road to NATO membership.

The Georgian Defense Ministry recognizes English language capability as an important component of the professional development of its personnel. Good English language skills not only provide opportunities for further training and education but are also absolutely necessary for international military cooperation, particularly because coalition operations in Afghanistan are invariably conducted in English.

This year, the participants were selected through the NATO Professional Development Program for Georgia with the participation of the British Embassy rep-



resentative in Georgia, Deputy Defense Attaché Staff Sergeant Peter Johnson. The Professional Development Program has operated on the ground since June 2009 to assist the Georgian Defense and Security sectors in meeting the training and development requirements of its personnel. Increasing English language ca-

pability has been identified within the framework of this program as one of the priorities for 2010. The United Kingdom is co-lead nation along with Latvia for the Professional Development Program.

The course offered in York includes intensive language training tailored to improve communicative language skills

with particular emphasis on Military English as well as developing an understanding of British values, life and institutions. The Georgian students live with an English family in their home, exposing them to the English language 24 hours a day and absorbing a wider understanding of British culture, behav-

ior, values and attitudes. British Defense Attaché to Georgia Lieutenant Colonel Nick Ridout says: "Living in a foreign country broadens the mind. I am thoroughly enjoying my chance to live and work in Georgia, so it gives me enormous pleasure to give Georgian officers the opportunity to do the same thing in my country whilst at the same time contributing constructively to enhancing Georgian and international defense and security capabilities".

This year, the course in York will be attended by three officers from Sachkhere Mountain Training School along with representatives from the Defense Ministry's Finance Management Department, Analytical Department and Central Division of NATO Classified Information. The British Government is covering all the expenses in full – travel, studies and accommodation. By the end of the course, the participants will have acquired the skill to use military terminology particularly for peace-support and other multi-national operations, demonstrated cross-cultural awareness in relation to the UK and other countries represented by the course participants, and developed a good understanding of the structure and ethos of the British armed forces.

Elina Lange

“Aliante 2010”

The final part of the international youth competition “Aliante 2010”, which focuses on NATO and security topics, will be organized this time in Georgia. In consultation with international coordinators of the competition visiting Georgia, the Georgian Defense Ministry reached the decision about hosting the competition in Georgia.

Founded in 2000 with NATO support, the goal of the contest is to raise the awareness of youth on security issues and NATO's role in this regard. Every year, a final stage of the competition is held at a military base that satisfies the international standards and requirements. The international organizer of the competition, Zbynek Pavlacik, Chairman of the Jagello 2000 Association for Euro Atlantic Cooperation, personally took a view

of the Sachkhere Mountain Training School, where the final stage of the “Aliante 2010” is to be organized.

“I would like to thank the Defense Ministry of Georgia for its active support and cooperation. It is a very important fact that the finishing stage of the international-level competition will be conducted in the country which is not yet a member nation of NATO,” commented Mr. Pavlacik at the briefing. “This is a competition arranged every year with the participation of senior pupils from NATO member and partner nations. What I want to say is that the young participants from Georgia have proved to be quite successful and active for many years already. At this ongoing stage, a lot of Georgian youths take part in the competition, and that's why our partners have decided to arrange the final stage of the

contest in Georgia,” explained Deputy Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze.

Participants in the final stage will go through several trainings and complete tasks at the Sachkhere-based school over the course of three to four days. The winners will be awarded with a 10-day trip in one of the NATO member countries. Of the competition's three stages, the first and second rounds will be conducted over the internet. The competition involves teams of four members from 13 nations: the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the UK, Ukraine, and the U.S. According to the concept of the competition, the participants are given an opportunity to test their own physical strength, resilience, knowledge, and on top of all, to go traveling around the world.

New Church Opens at Krtsanisi National Training Center



The David Agmashenebeli Church was opened at the Krtsanisi National Training Center on January 28. Father Ioan held the first service in the church.

The foundation of the temple was laid in early 2006 thanks to the blessing by the Catholicos Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II. The David Agmashenebeli Church was constructed upon the joint initiative of the Defense Ministry and Patriarchate.

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Patriarchate on behalf of the Defense Ministry for its care and attention towards our army. It is a great pleasure for me to be a part of this pious event. I should also note that a number of temples have already been func-

tioning on several military bases, alongside the intensive ongoing constructions. Today we all have witnessed the opening of one more church of this type,” stated Deputy Defense Minister during the ceremony.

Father Aleksandre, chaplain of the church, also commented that the churches acting in Georgia do their best to deepen the faith of soldiers in the long and complicated process to build up and develop the Georgian armed forces. Father Aleksandre added that the representatives of clergy will always stand side by side with the Georgian army.

The opening ceremony proceeded in the presence of Deputy Defense Minister, along with representatives from the Patriarchate and Training Center.

