



# Today Defence

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## Awards Ceremony of Military Servicemen



Georgian military servicemen were awarded for their bravery in combat operations against Russian aggression. The Awards ceremony of 42 Georgian heroes was held at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia.

A minute of silence was held in the honor of the Georgian military servants who made supreme sacrifice for the territorial integrity of the country. According to the President's Order 17, issued on January 6th, 2009, Defence

Minister of Georgia, Davit Sikharulidze and Deputy Chief of Joint Staff of GAF, Brigadier General Davit Nairashvili awarded 10 servants who are in office and 32 militaries posthumously.

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## Special Commemoration for the Cadets

Many Georgian cadets died in February, 1921, in battle against the Bolshevik Russian 11th Red Army which occupied Tbilisi and declared Soviet rule. The ceremony in commemoration of the cadets was held at the Memorial near Kojori-Tabakhmela.

The event was organized by the Veterans Affairs Department together with Kakutsa Cholokashvili Whole Georgia Chokhosan Knights Union led by Chairman Gogi Dolidze.

The ceremony was attended by the Chief of Joint Staff of GAF, Col. Vladimer Chachibaia, his Deputy Chief, Brigadier General Davit Nairashvili, Head

of the National Guard Department, Col. Shmagi Telia, Chief of Education Department of JS, LTC Zurab Agladze and other leadership of MOD.

The ceremony dedicated to the Georgian cadets included a musical performance by MOD orchestra. The Chief of JS, Col. Vladimer Chachibaia, Chief of the Veterans Affairs Department, Nukri Tsagareishvili and the Chairman of Whole Georgia Chokhosan Knights Union, Gogi Dolidze laid wreaths on the memorial of cadets in Tabakhmela village. Father Giorgi Gugenishvili conducted special prayer for the souls of the cadets.

"Every other century there

are envoys of the Lord in Georgia and they are true examples of our past and ancestry. They are pilgrims and we bring up new generation after their example. We should do honor to their memory and hold their bravery in remembrance," Col. Vladimer Chachibaia mentioned in his speech.

Later, the event continued in the Cinema House and movie director, Gia Chubabria presented the documental film "Tarnished February Shadows". The film was dedicated to the memory of Maro Makhashvili – the only woman among the cadets. The ceremony concluded with a special performance.



## Krakow Ministerial

On the 19-20<sup>th</sup> of February, Poland was the center of world's political activities. Its former capital, Krakow, hosted NATO's Defence Ministers informal meeting. Representatives of military-political alliance member and partner countries discussed its peacekeeping operations, transformations and security issues. The delegation of Ministry of Defence of Georgia participated in ministerial.

Expanding NATO support to the Afghan National Army and Afghan police was a priority of the agenda on the first day's meeting. Defence Minister of Georgia expressed Georgia's readiness to make its contribution to NATO led operation in Afghanistan. He

mal meeting, the NATO-Georgia Commission assembled and reviewed the current situation in the country, the defence and security cooperation and the assistance for Georgia's reform effort provided within the framework of this body. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General, opened the NATO-Georgian commission meeting. The Defence Minister, Davit Sikharulidze, on behalf of Georgia, expressed gratitude to NATO member states and its population for their strong support and solidarity uttered toward Georgia. The Minister emphasized Georgia's full commitment to the Alliance values and its firm aspiration to join NATO as well. Ministers also discussed the con-

tion in Bucharest and their decision to develop an Annual National Program to help advance Georgia's reforms.

US Secretary of Defence, Robert Gates, reiterated US readiness to support Georgia's reforms in defence and security sectors. As he outlined later at the press-conference US has a continuing security relationship with Georgia. "We're involved in training. We are involved in military reform in Georgia. So this is an ongoing relationship and it is a relationship that we are pursuing, both bilaterally and within the framework of our NATO allies, and through the vehicle of the U.S.-Georgia Commission. So I think its pro-



declared that Georgia is ready to participate in operations under ISAF format and Georgian military forces are prepared to join the peace keeping missions. „Despite the fact that Georgia's territories are still under Russian occupation, we continue to develop our defence capabilities and make a valuable contribution to the world defence policy", mentioned Mr. David Sikharulidze.

In the second day of an infor-

sequences of the last August conflict, including Alliance assistance to Georgia in its recovery efforts and the issue of Russian bases on Georgian territory. The NATO - Georgia Commission discussed the assistance for Georgia's reform effort provided within the list of priority items for 2009. The talks took place in the context of the reaffirmation by NATO Foreign Ministers in December of the process set in mo-

ceeding as we had planned", declared Mr. Gates.

In the framework of the Krakow Ministerial, the Georgian Defence Minister had meetings with his counterparts from Finland, Poland, Denmark, the Ukraine and Lithuania. The main topic of discussions at the meeting was to deepen bilateral cooperation between Georgia and its partner states.

*Nino Gogochishvili*

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# Interview with the United Kingdom's Minister for International Defence and Security Rt Hon Baroness Ann TAYLOR PC

On February 10-12 Georgia hosted the United Kingdom's Minister for International Defence and Security Rt Hon Baroness Ann TAYLOR PC. The aims of her visit were to develop further the strong bilateral ties between the UK and Georgia and to discuss implementation of the decision, made recently by NATO Foreign Ministers, on the establishment of a new Annual National Programme (ANP) within the framework of the NATO/Georgia Commission. She reaffirmed the UK's strong support for Georgia's aspirations for closer Euro-Atlantic integration and for the international missions on the ground (UNOMIG, OSCE, EUMM).

On 11 February Rt Hon Baroness Ann TAYLOR visited the Ministry of Defence of Georgia where she met with the Minister of Defence and discussed the above mentioned subjects.

During her visit in Georgia "Defence Today" interviewed Rt Hon Baroness Ann TAYLOR PC where she spoke about Georgia-British relations - mostly military cooperation, recommendations, and future plans...

**Welcome Baroness Taylor to Georgia. What is the main reason of your visit in our country?**

I am here to further develop the strong bilateral ties between the UK and Georgia and to discuss future plans of the decision, made recently by NATO Foreign Ministers, on the establishment of a new Annual National Programme (ANP) within the framework of the NATO-Georgia Commission. I have re-affirmed the UK's strong support for Georgia's aspirations for closer Euro-Atlantic integration, for the international missions on the ground (UNOMIG, OSCE, and EUMM) and the future of the Geneva talks. We enjoy a close relationship and have developed an extensive bilateral security and defence relationship over a number of years. The United Kingdom remains a consistent supporter of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations and we welcome the agreement made at the Bucharest Summit that 'Georgia will become a member of NATO' and the subsequent NATO decision in December to develop an Annual National Programme. This demonstrates the Alliance's commitment to help Georgia prepare for and progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

There is, of course, a lot of work ahead, much of which will be a Georgian responsibility. The United Kingdom will support Georgia in this. I have been greatly encouraged in discussing the next steps towards closer Georgian ties with NATO.

**Georgia-British cooperation has been going on since 1999 and from 2003 you have been working on Georgia's Defence and Security Development. What serious reforms have been implemented in this sphere during these five years? How do you assess this period?**

We have been doing a great deal of work in the areas of training military instructors for Peace Support Operations and in the skills required to teach English. Our consistent aim has been to develop an indigenous capability, allowing the Georgian Armed Forces to be self-reliant in these fields. There has been a steady improvement, but there is still a lot to be done and we, in close co-ordination with our Allies, will help

where we can. One of the successes demonstrated so far is the imminent handover of our Peacekeeping English Project to Georgian ownership.

**The Security Sector Development Advisory Team SSDAT, of British Ministry of Defence is providing recommendations to the Ministry of Defence on personnel management of the Georgian Armed Forces. How do you evaluate the current situation regarding the personnel of the Georgian Armed Forces? What obligatory steps should be done regarding this?**

We are impressed with Georgian military personnel. They appear keen and motivated. We have received good reports of their performance in Iraq under very demanding circumstances. The personnel management system is still in its infancy and difficulties remain in co-ordinating individual training requirements, promotions and appointments in order to ensure that each individual has the correct skill sets and abilities for his or her role. In the UK, such matters are governed by MOD internal directives, not Parliamentary law, and we would urge Georgia to study this model closely. An integrated personnel management policy is slowly emerging within the Georgian MOD and the UK Security Sector Development Advisory Team will continue to remain engaged and to advise and assist where appropriate.

**On the base of the special agreement, Britain has been carrying out joint training "Georgian Express" since 2004. What innovations do you see in the current Georgian Army? How do the trainings grow the preparedness and qualifications of Georgian and British Military Servicemen?**

Exercise "GEORGIAN EXPRESS" has been successful over the years. The ability of the Georgian Armed Forces to train alongside the British Army has improved year after year, as the skills learnt have been disseminated and built upon. In an era of expeditionary capabilities, the experience of training abroad alongside other armed forces is very useful for both sides. This year we will be contributing to the NATO Exercise CO-OPERATIVE LONGBOW/



LANCER, but we hope to resume the bilateral exercise next year.

**What can you say about future plans of Georgia-British military relations?**

I had a useful and constructive meeting with Minister of Defence Sikharulidze, as a result, I am fully aware of his priorities. We will continue to assist where we can and I look forward to an ever-closer relationship of mutual benefit between the British and Georgian Armed Forces.

**Georgia has aspired to Euro-Atlantic Structures for several years. As you have mentioned in the comment made at the Ministry of Defence, Great Britain supports Georgia on the way of integration to the above mentioned alliances. In your opinion, is Georgia ready to move forward to the next step and what are future changes in this regard? What recommendations should you give Georgia in this sphere?**

We believe that Georgia is ready to move forward. This belief is clearly demonstrated by the Bucharest Summit

Declaration and the development of the Annual National Programme. In terms of recommendations, I would suggest that Georgia continues with its package of internal reforms and makes full use of the NATO-Georgia Commission and the Annual National Programme to help achieve these. NATO views strong democratic institutions and values, as well as the rule of law, as key principles. The UK is committed to helping Georgia on its internal reform path.

**After the Russian aggression in August how does the world change regarding security issues and what challenges do you see in this regard?**

My friend the Foreign Secretary addressed this question at the 7 February Munich Security Conference when he said "I think the most important lessons are those that say first international law, not the rule of force, is the basis for resolving disputes. Secondly, that when UN Security Council resolutions are passed, as they were most recently in April, they need to be honoured by all sides and you'll remember the Russians did sign April's UN Security

Council resolution including its commitment to territorial integrity of Georgia. Thirdly that states surrounding Russia, the neighbouring countries of Russia, are not ex Soviet states. They are independent sovereign democracies and those democracies need to be defended. They need relations with Russia, but they also need relations with the rest of Europe and the rest of the world.

And I think fourth and most important lesson that I take away from this is that political processes need to have a dynamic about them. These frozen conflicts had become too isolated and it allowed too many people to give up on the political route. I think that the letter I wrote to Alexander Stubb, the current Chairman of the OSCE, the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe, urging him to build new momentum in the process, not just in Georgia but also in other frozen conflicts in Trans-Dniester, in Nagorno-Karabakh, is an important lesson for us."

Tea Kerdzevadze



Head of MoD Administration at the hospital

## Daughter of Deceased Military Serviceman Born

The family of Corporal Giorgi Antsukhelidze, fallen during the Russian aggression, celebrates the birth of a new family member, Anna. Corporal of the IV Infantry Brigade, Giorgi Antsukhelidze was killed on August 9, 2008.

Chief of MOD Administration, Otar Berdzenishvili and Head of Personnel Department J-1 of the Joint Staff of GAF, and Col. Tariel Londaridze visited the maternity hospital and congratulated the

mother of the newborn child on this beautiful gift of life. Representatives of the Defence Ministry presented gifts to the daughter of the killed corporal as well.

"Last month a special commission was founded at the Defence Ministry, which considers living and employment conditions of the families of killed and missing Georgian militaries and assists them with appropriate aid," Otar Berdzenishvili said.

With the assistance of the commission, the wife of Corporal Giorgi Antsukhelidze has been employed at the communication unit of the Georgian Armed Forces.

Presents were given to the family members of another Georgian serviceman killed during the battle with the Russian aggressors. A daughter was born to Corporal of the V Infantry Brigade, Raul Mzhavanadze.

# Minister's Vision 2009



The Minister of Defence of Georgia composed the new document called, "Minister's Vision 2009". This document provides a general guidance for the Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff and Georgian Armed Forces for 2009 and highlights the main prospects for further development. Vision aims to raise the short and long term priorities, which are erected from the postwar realities, learned lessons and country's permanent security issues as well. Fulfillment of these issues will enhance Georgia's military capabilities and establish a more secure environment which gained special importance after last summer's experience. Apart from other directions, particular emphasis in 2009 will be focused on social priorities, in order to support the families of the soldiers killed or injured as a result of the Russian aggression, as well as reconstruction and full rehabilitation of damaged infrastructures.

There are four major directions in "Minister's Vision", each of which contains number of different concepts. Improvement and further institutionalization of the Defence Management System will be one of the year's priorities. Also, it is quite remarkable that, according to the document, education arises as the priority of defence policy. The next point concerns the development of capabilities of Georgian Armed Forces. The document also underlines our country's consistent and unchangeable foreign policy priority – such as Georgia's aspiration to join the North Atlantic Alliance Organization. It declares, in the "Minister's Vision 2009", that Georgia will continue to uphold its commitment toward the organization, in order to intensify integration process and raise its compatibility with NATO standards. It is also important that, among foreign priorities, there are listed points like, the deepening of bilateral relations with partner countries and Georgia's intention to enhance its contribution into international counter-terrorism and peace support operations.

Official presentation of the "Minister's Vision 2009" document took place in Hotel "Sheraton Metekhi Palace" on February 17. The ceremony was attended by representatives of executive and legislative government, military attachés, ambassadors of foreign countries accredited to Georgia, representatives of NGO's and military experts. Mr. David Sikharulidze, Minister of Defence of Georgia, presented the guests with the new document and briefly introduced its main points. By the words of Minister - "Ministry of Defence of Georgia fully acknowledges its role in maintaining country's security and will undertake all necessary measures in order to enhance Georgia's defence capabilities". David Sikharulidze also mentioned that docu-

ment completely emphasizes lessons learned in August 2008, during Russian aggression, and tries to fill all the gaps revealed in Georgian Armed forces and in Defence Structure as a whole. "On the one hand, Ministry of Defence should respond to the new demands in light of the current security environment, which developed after August 2008 and on the other hand we should maintain course of action in the direction of sustained development of armed forces and NATO integration", added Mr. Sikharulidze.

Col. Vladimir Chachibaia, Chief of Joint Staff, more broadly presented military aspects of "Minister's Vision 2009". As it was revealed in Chachibaia's speech, the General Staff participates in preparation of new documents on threats assessment and National Security. "Georgian Armed Forces today is going through the phase of analyzing the experience gained during August Russian aggression. This means elimination of problems, which occurred during warfare, development and implementation of result-oriented military policy and transformation of military forces in proper direction", mentioned Col. Chachibaia.

Finally, representatives of legislative branch of government expressed their opinion about presented document. Mr. Zaza Gelashvili, Deputy Chairman of Defence and Security Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, declared that the "Minister's Vision 2009" was thoroughly discussed and positively evaluated by their committee, as it correctly reflects all the new realities, challenges and demands of Georgian State. Mr. Gelashvili strongly appreciated involvement of education among prior points.

Mr. Nika Laliashvili, representative of Parliamentary Minority, Christian-Democrat Party mentioned that "Minister's Vision" is the only adequate conceptual document in the country. "I am very glad that first time we see the words "lessons learned". This means that government realizes its mistakes and the State starts to base its decisions on past experience, even on very bitter ones". Mr. Giorgi Targamadze, the leader of Parliamentary Minority noted that in this case opposition would cooperate with government for effective implementation of principles pointed out in "Minister's Vision 2009".

LTC DA Nick Ridout, Defence Attaché of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commented that the document is a very encouraging one, as it lays down very clear targets and requirements. "There weren't big surprises for us in the document; this is very good, because it means the continuity of policy that is very important. Also it was very pleasant for me to see among priorities greater coordination between Ministry of Defence and Joint

Staff. As the Minister's Vision is an annual document we will look forward for the next year to see how well those principles have been implemented and to evaluate the level of progress", said LTC DA Ridout.

Mrs. Patricia Hildegard Flor, the Ambassador of Germany in Georgia mentioned that it was the right moment to evaluate learned lessons of last year and especially of the warfare period. She also noted that Minister's Vision is, at the same time, pragmatic and also a very broad outline of what Georgian Armed Forces should look like in the future. "For Germany the emphasis on education is especially important, because we already have very strong partnership with Georgia exactly in this field. We took part in establishment of Sergeant School in Georgia and also we took a lot of officers for trainings in Germany. We are going to intensify these relations", added, Mrs. Ambassador.

What is specifically important about the new document is the unity of attitude and evaluations of military experts. David J. Smith, Director of Georgian Security Analysis Center said: "I may say that it is a visionary vision. It means that Georgia is moving forward and is not staying where it is. The document quite logically examines doctrine, training, management, and capability. It sets forth what has to be done for the next year. That is both, evaluation, and continuity to build capability and continuity to work with the NATO. Overall, it is good work". Mr. Irakli Sesiasvili from "Association of Justice and Freedom" noted that he likes "Minister's Vision 2009", because it doesn't look like some PR documents and correctly demonstrates all the existing problems in the defence system. Mr. Irakli Aladashvili, editor of military journal "Arsenal" also mentioned that almost everything necessary is highlighted in the document, but now, the most important is the realization of these statements. Mr. Koba Liklikadze, Military expert commented that the document adequately reflects post-war realities and problems revealed within the Georgian Armed Forces last August, especially in the command system. "Also a military-civil relation is very interesting, because neither of the countries is able to win the war, if it doesn't have support from society", added Mr. Liklikadze.

"Ministers Vision 2009" appeared to be the rare exception in our country's reality which received positive appraisal in almost every part of society that in itself is very encouraging. Now it's time simply to wish successful implementation of noted purposes that will provide for all the citizens of Georgian to live in more defensible, secure and hopeful country.

Ana Alania

## NATO Secretary General's Special Representative at the Defence Ministry

The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia Robert Simmons paid visit to Georgia. Robert Simmons visited the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. He was received by the Defence Minister, Davit Sikharulidze and Deputy defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze. Together with Mr. Simmons the Defence Ministry visited the Political Issues and Security Policy Advisor, Georgia's Desk, Mr. James Mackey.

The Annual National Program and NATO-Georgian Organization's, further close cooperation was the subject matter at the meeting. The Defence Ministry's priorities, like military education, trainings, personnel management, system improvement and defence planning system development were argued at the meeting as well.

The Defence Minister introduced the well received document - "Minister's Vision 2009" to the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative. Sides discussed NATO liaison office enlargement possibilities. After an hour meeting, Davit Sikharulidze and Robert Simmons

made comments for journalists.

According to the Defence Minister - "We discussed several topics including security conditions in Georgia. We discussed that the Russian side does not obey the ceasefire agreement. In spite of this, we had talks about NATO integration issues and trends of the Annual National Program as Georgia's pathway to NATO."

"We've just had a very good discussion about the security situation in Georgia, about which NATO is very concerned, about rebuilding up its Armed Forces, and the Defence Ministries role in the Annual National Program. NATO as you know is moving forward towards preparing Georgia for membership, as we committed ourselves to in Bucharest, of which the Defence Ministry will play an important role, as will "Minister's Vision 2009", the document which will help prepare Georgia for membership. I think that the Ministry of Defence has a very good planned security effort and we, speaking from NATO's side, look forward to working with them on that regard," Robert Simmons said.



NATO Liaison Officer in the Caucasus Zbigniew Rybacki and Robert Simmons

## The International Commission Investigating August War Details at MOD

The International Commission investigating the Russia-Georgia war details attended the Defence Ministry of Georgia. The eight-person delegation was led by the chairperson of commission, Heidy Tagliavini.

Current developments at the conflict zones and future activity plans of the commission were subjects of discussions at the Defence Ministry.

After the August war, this made it the second visit at the Defence Ministry of this commission. Georgian MOD has cooperated actively with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the conflict in Georgia and will continue to do so.

Guests were received by the Defence Minister, Davit Sikharulidze. The meeting was attended by Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze and Head of Analytical Department, Davit Nardaia.

Heidy Tagliavini held the meeting in the Joint Staff of GAF as well. Guests were received by the Chief of JS, Col. Vladimir Chachibaia and his deputy, Brigadier General Davit Nairashvili.

As Chairperson of the delegation who are investigating the Russia-Georgia war details, Heidy Tagliavini, introduced the commission's course of action to the executive and legislative authorities.



Heidy Tagliavini

# Munich Security Conference

The Hotel "Bayerischer Hof" in Munich, hosted a very important forum on foreign and security policy issues in Europe and beyond on February 6-8. Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Federation, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, opened the 45<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference there with an impassioned call for a new era in global disarmament. The conference began by focusing on issues of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, arms control and above all Iran's feared nuclear weapons program in Munich.

The German Foreign Minister also made an appeal to the 300 high-ranking participants of the conference to contribute in building a new security architecture embracing Russia. Steinmeier also insisted that arms control had to be extended to include conventional weapons. His own vision was a world without nuclear weapons. To this end, Cold War patterns of thought had to be overcome 20 years after the end of that era. But the suspension on the CFE Treaty by Moscow demonstrated that conventional arms control was just as urgent as during that period.

The participants of the Security Conference totaled 300 high-ranking and top-level participants from more than 50 countries, among them a dozen heads of state and government and approximately 50 high-ranking foreign and defence policy-makers.

Along with the defined political-economical issues of international security, one of the main topics at the conference was the current situation in the Caucasus and building Russian military bases in Georgian occupied territories. The speakers of the conference highlighted two fundamental changes in the assumptions of European security architecture and Europe's relations with its neighbors to the East. One is the Georgian-Russian War, the second, the recent gas cut-off to Ukraine. In this respect, Georgia again gained the support of the world, as the west urges Russia to stop its in-

tervention and the militarization of the separatist regions. The Vice President of the United States of America Joseph R. Biden expressed his opinion on the Russian policy towards Georgia at the conference, "We will not agree with Russia on everything. For example, the United States will not recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. We will not recognize a sphere of influence. It will remain our view that sovereign states have the right to make their own decisions and choose their own alliances. But the United States and Russia can disagree and still work together where our interests coincide".

Minister of Defence of Georgia, David Sikharulidze, made a comment on Biden's report and mentioned that the statement of the Vice President of the United States of America is a clear message towards Moscow and practically the first public formulation of the foreign policy of President Obama's administration.

In his speech Biden also spoke about challenges, what the US would do and what America hoped its partners would consider. The Vice President named three main priorities within US activities in the global arena where he gave a gentle hint to Russia on its aggressive policy towards Georgia as well, "The threats we face have no respect for borders. No single country, no matter how powerful, can meet them alone. We believe that international alliances and organizations do not diminish America's power; they help us advance our collective security, economic interests and values. So we will engage. We will listen. We will consult. America needs the world, just as I believe the world needs America. But we say to our friends that the alliances, treaties and international organizations we build must be credible and they must be effective. That requires a common commitment not only to live by the rules, but to enforce them".

EU High Representative for the



Common Foreign and Security Policy, Dr. Javier Solana Madariaga, also mentioned Russia's attitude towards its neighbours. As he stated from the EU, the idea of Russia feeling threatened is absurd, "but for Russia, apparently, that is the case. Russia should understand how small countries feel vulnerable beside a giant neighbor. And that in today's world it's not a good sign if you have

difficult relations with many of your neighbors".

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth of the Affairs United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, David Miliband, began his report about new threats of security in parts of Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Caucasus. He mentioned that the conflict in Georgia last summer showed

how vulnerable individual states were when there was a breakdown in respect for basic principles like peaceful resolution of conflicts.

About the new security fears, Miliband made the following statement in his report: "Europe's security architecture therefore needs to address new global fears and our traditional concerns. And it needs to build on the systems and institutions that proved themselves over the last few decades - NATO, the EU, the OSCE, the UN and the Council of Europe - while reaching out to forge new relationships to underpin our stability and prosperity".

The issue of Georgia was raised by NATO Secretary, General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, during the meeting with the Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ivanov, where they discussed - but did not agree on - Russia's unilateral recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and the Polish Prime Minister also talked about Georgia's integration into NATO. "Ukraine and Georgia will join NATO. No third country is eligible to interfere in this process. When these countries are ready to bring security to the alliance, they will become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization", said Angela Merkel.

Nikolas Sarkozy agreed with Mrs. Merkel regarding Georgia and Ukraine and said that NATO and EU are so important organizations, certain rules are necessary to be kept. Distrust exists between Russia and EU after the Georgian crisis. He does not think that today's Russia is dangerous for NATO or EU, because Russia has plenty of internal problems and conflicts to solve.

The foreign and security policy makers at the Munich Conference reiterated their support for the territorial integrity of Georgia and its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

Tea Kerdzavadze

## Awards Ceremony of Military Servicemen

Continued from p.1

Nine soldiers were invested with the Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of I rank, the Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of II and III ranks were granted to 13 military servicemen and 10 servants - Military Courage Medals posthumously. The Leadership of MOD granted the rewards to their family members.

Ten Georgian militaries who are serving in the forces were awarded as well. Orders for Military Courage, Medals for Service and the Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of III rank were granted to them.

A few days later a separate awards ceremony was held at the Defence Ministry and national rewards were granted to the family members of killed military

servicemen. The relatives some of Georgian servants, who were recommend for a medal, were not able to attend the ceremony. The leadership of the Ministry of Defence and the Joint Staff of GAF called on these families.

Junior Sergeant of the First Infantry Brigade, Ushangi Sophromadze and Captain of the Fourth Infantry Brigade, Aleksandre Tandashvili were invested with the national rewards posthumously. The Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of I rank granted to their relatives Deputy Defence Minister, Shalva Kochladze and Commander of IV Infantry Brigade, Major Giorgi Kalandadze in Tbilisi.

A similar event took place in West Georgia. Deputy Defence Minister, Gela Berdzenishvili invested with national awards family members of the Georgian

heroes in Kharagauli, Lanchkhuti and Kobuleti. Corporals of IV infantry Brigade, Zaza Glunchidze and Tengiz Chigladze, were awarded with Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of II rank and Corporal of the First Infantry Brigade Ruslan Tsuladze was presented with Medal for Military Courage posthumously.

Ceremony of awarding medals took place in Imereti as well. Head of MOD Administration, Otar Berdzenishvili visited cities of Samtredia, Tkibuli, Bagdadi and Vani. The Head of MOD Administration handed over the Vakhtang Gorgasali's Orders of III rank to relatives of Corporal of IV Infantry Brigade, Avedik Lomadze. Families of sergeants of the Second Infantry Brigade Nikoloz Porchkhidze, Zviad Katsadze and Ilia Gabunia were granted Medals for Military Courage.

As Otar Berdzenishvili mentioned - the awarding process is permanent and not symbolic. It includes social support measures for relatives of the killed or missing Georgian military servicemen.

"According to the Order of the Defence Minister of Georgia, issued on January 15th, 2009, was established council for" Considering Social Security Issues for the Family Members of Killed and Missing Military Servants of the Georgian Armed Forces during the warfare against Russian occupation," by way of the Council activities 23 people were employed and in the near future the number of them will be increased." - Otar Berdzenishvili said.

## The First Judo Tournament



The first Judo tournament was held among the military servicemen of GAF at the MOD sports complex "ORBI". The military servicemen of all units of the Georgian Armed Forces participated in the tournament. According to the Olympic system, winners were divided into 7 weight classes among the wrestlers.

Military athletes won medals. Corporal of the V Infantry Brigade, Khvicha Khaptani won in 96 kg category, Special Operations' Forces Sergeant, Mamuka Mazmiasvili - in 66 kg category, Junior Sergeant of SO battalion, Zura Dogonadze overpowered in 73 kg class, Aleksandre Chakhunashvili, Lieutenant of the Second Artillery Brigade - in 81 kg category, Corporal of the First Infantry Brigade Mamuka Margiani - 90 kg category, Corporal of the Engineering Brigade Kakhaber Murachashvili won in 100 kg category. The winner in a

heavy weight class is Battalion Commander of SO Forces, Lieutenant Davit Dardzuli.

The tournament was attended by Minister of the Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport, Nikoloz Rurua, Head of Sport's Department, Davit Namgalauri, Deputy Head of Judo Federation, Davit Berdzenishvili and veteran sportsmen.

Winners were decorated with medals by Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze, and Deputy Chief of JS, Major General, Devi Chankotadze and Land Forces Commander, Col. Koba Lachkepiani.

Judges of the international category participated in the tournament as well. Head of Sport's Department, Davit Namgalauri on behalf of the Minister of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport, granted presents to the Defence Ministry.



Deputy Chief of Joint Staff BG Davit Nairashvili awarding the military serviceman