Country/entity	Georgia Abkhazia
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Istanbul Statement of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides on confidence-building measures
Date	9 Jun 1999
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes

Agreement/conflict level Intrastate/intrastate conflict

Georgian Separatist Conflicts (1989 -)

The Abkhazia-Georgia Conflict (1992 -)
Much like other conflicts that sprung up in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Abkhazia conflict emerged as an ethnic conflict following heighten nationalist awareness among Abkhaz and other minorities residing in the region. In 1978, protests against the Georgianization of Abkhazia emerged from Abkhaz intellectuals. Towards the end of the 1980s, both Georgian and Abkhaz nationalists demanded independence from the Soviet Union. Tensions began following clashes at Sukhumi University between pro-Unity protestors and Abkhaz nationalists in April-July 1989. However, the conflict remained a legal conflict up until August 1992 following the 1991 elections, wherein Abkhazians felt they were under-represented. War broke out between Abkhaz separatists, supported by Russian forces and hired fighters from the North Caucus. Within Abkhazia, Abkhaz separatists were generally supported by ethnically Armenian and Russian residents. Within Georgia the conflict was exacerbated following conflict in South Ossetia from 1989 onwards in addition to political strife between the supporters of the ousted president, Zviad Gamsakurdia, and the post-coup government led by Eduard Shevardnadze.

Significant human rights abuses occurred, particularly after the capture of Sukhumi in September 1993, after which Georgian residents, which consisted of 45 per cent of the population in 1989, were faced with mass expulsion and ethnic cleansing. Russian Peacekeepers acting under the umbrella of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), were deployed on the Abkhazia-Georgia line following a ceasefire in 1994. Atrocities towards ethnic Georgian's continued with over 1,500 deaths post-conflict. In 1998 fighting re-erupted following a flare up of fighting in South Ossetia. Again it was resolved with a ceasefire agreement. However, as of 2016 the conflict remains unresolved.

The Russio-Georgian War (South Ossetia) (1989 -)
Following heightened nationalist awareness among Ossetians and policies undertaken at the expense of ethnic minorities by the Georgian government led by President Gamsakurdia, calls for Ossetian Independence increased. After clashes broke out in Tskhinvali during a pro-Georgia protest, the conflict began to militarize. When President Gamsakurdia maintained his position after elections in 1990, which were boycotted by South Ossetia, Ossetians organised elections for their own parliament. The central Georgian government reacted by abolishing the autonomous status previously held by South Ossetia. The formation of ethnic militias and increased attacks on civilians escalated on both sides and in December 1990 a state of emergency and an economic blockade were declared. Fighting was haphazard as fighters on both sides were poorly equipped and disciplined. The Georgian National Guard was primarily formed of volunteers due to a lack of resources and as a result fighters often acted out of self-interest. Assaults on Tskhinvali by Georgian forces were repulsed on several occasions, and Georgian forces were also noted to expel Ossetian residents and destroy villages out of revenge and as a means to re-claim territory.

The Sochi agreement (1992) established a ceasefire and security corridor, as well as divided the territory between Georgian and Ossetian administration. Relations deteriorated drastically in April 2008, and following shelling of Georgian villages on August 1, the Georgian military responded in force retaking most of Tskhinvali by August 7. Russian forces intervened on behalf of Ossetian separatists and after retaking Tskihvali, opened another front in the Kordori Gorge. A ceasefire was brokered on August

Stage	Pre-negotiation/process
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Abkhazia peace process
Parties	The delegation of the Georgian side was led by Mr. Vazha Lordkipanidze (Signed, and the delegation of the Abkhaz side was led by Mr. Sergei Bagapsh (signed)
Third parties	UNSRSG Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. Liviu Bota (signed); Russian Federation (facilitator), Group of Friends participated;
Description	Agreed to address issue of exchange of hostages and prisoners, to support joint investigations of incidents threatening stability, and to ensure implementation of 24 Sept 1998 Protocol. Provided for the revival of activities of working groups within framework of Coordinating Council, and the development of mechanisms for exchange of information, especially between mass media and law–enforcement organs.

Agreement document	GR_990316_Istanbul Statement of the Georgian and Abkhaz Sides on Confidence-Building Measures.pdf (opens in new tab) | Download PDF

Groups

Children/youth	No specific mention.
Disabled persons	No specific mention.
Elderly/age	No specific mention.
Migrant workers	No specific mention.
Racial/ethnic/ national group	No specific mention.
Religious groups	No specific mention.
Indigenous people	No specific mention.
Other groups	No specific mention.

Refugees/displaced persons	Groups→Refugees/displaced persons→Substantive Page 2, The sides agreed as follows: ... To revive the activities of the working groups within the framework of the Coordinating Council. ... b) To convene within one week Working Group II for the consideration and agreement of urgent measures regarding the issue of the return of refugees and displaced persons, and the establishment of conditions for their safety. The Working Group will also hear information from the parties regarding the situation in the Gali region.
Social class	No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender	No specific mention.
Men and boys	No specific mention.
LGBTI	No specific mention.
Family	No specific mention.

State definition

Nature of state (general)	No specific mention.
State configuration	No specific mention.
Self determination	No specific mention.
Referendum	No specific mention.
State symbols	No specific mention.
Independence/ secession	No specific mention.
Accession/ unification	No specific mention.
Border delimitation	No specific mention.
Cross-border provision	No specific mention.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed)	No specific mention.
Elections	No specific mention.
Electoral commission	No specific mention.
Political parties reform	No specific mention.
Civil society	Page 1, The delegations comprised prominent individuals from the sides, including representatives of the intelligentsia, directors of major industrial and agricultural enterprises, elders, military who have participated in the armed conflict, and others.
Traditional/ religious leaders	Page 1, The delegations comprised prominent individuals from the sides, including representatives of the intelligentsia, directors of major industrial and agricultural enterprises, elders, military who have participated in the armed conflict, and others.

Public administration	No specific mention.
Constitution	No specific mention.

Power sharing

Political power sharing	No specific mention.
Territorial power sharing	No specific mention.
Economic power sharing	No specific mention.
Military power sharing	No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

Human rights/RoL general	No specific mention.
Bill of rights/similar	No specific mention.
Treaty incorporation	No specific mention.
Civil and political rights	No specific mention.
Socio-economic rights	3.c. working group to develop proposals or range of socio-economic issues (to be financed with support of UNDP)

Rights related issues

Citizenship	No specific mention.
Democracy	No specific mention.
Detention procedures	No specific mention.

Media and communication	Rights related issues→Media and communication→Media roles Page 3, To develop and establish mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, including, inter alia: a) To exchange information between representatives of the mass media of the sides, including the exchange of television groups to create reports, including interviews with high-level individuals. These materials will be broadcast by the respective local television stations. b) The Abkhaz side will be able to receive three hundreds copies of each issue of Svobodnaia Gruziia and the Georgian side will receive an equal number of copies of Respublica Abkhazia, on the basis of funding and logistical support from the United Nations. c) Transmission from each side to the other of their respective press service reports will be facilitated by the United Nations. d) To hold a meeting of Georgian and Abkhaz journalists in Tbilisi in July 1999, and in Pitsunda in August 1999, to exchange information. e) To request the BBC to sponsor training courses for Georgian and Abkhaz journalists in London. The law-enforcement organs of the two sides will exchange available information on any preparations for illegal acts and will consult on measures to be taken jointly to prevent them. Direct communication links should be utilized for this purpose.
Mobility/access	No specific mention.
Protection measures	No specific mention.
Other	No specific mention.

Rights institutions

NHRI	No specific mention.
Regional or international human rights institutions	No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law	No specific mention.
State of emergency provisions	No specific mention.

Judiciary and courts	No specific mention.
Prisons and detention	No specific mention.
Traditional Laws	No specific mention.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction	No specific mention.
National economic plan	No specific mention.
Natural resources	No specific mention.
International funds	Page 2, The sides agreed as follows: ... To revive the activities of the working groups within the framework of the Coordinating Council. ... c) To convene within one week Working Group III. It will address the question of interaction with the Standing Working Group of the Joint Bilateral Coordination Commission for Practical Questions. This Standing Working Group will promote the establishment of economic ties between economic entities and draw up specific proposals and submit them for discussion by the Coordination Commission. It will also address projects which serve the interests of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides, including those designed to ensure uninterrupted functioning of the Inguri dam and power plant, and also the restoration of films with assistance of UNDP and other international and national organizations. Financing of this Working Group will be implemented with support from UNDP. To insure implementation of the commitment of the sides, provided for by the Protocol of 24 September 1998, on questions of stabilization of the situation along the line of separation of forces. Page 3, To develop and establish mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, including, inter alia: ... The United Nations will provide logistical support as necessary, in the implementation of these measures. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General will report to the Secretary-General of the UN, who will then inform the Security Council on the outcome of this Meeting.
Business	Page 1, The delegations comprised prominent individuals from the sides, including representatives of the intelligentsia, directors of major industrial and agricultural enterprises, elders, military who have participated in the armed conflict, and others.

Taxation	No specific mention.
Banks	No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights	No specific mention.
Pastoralist/ nomadism rights	No specific mention.
Cultural heritage	No specific mention.
Environment	No specific mention.
Water or riparian rights or access	No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees	No specific mention.
Ceasefire	No specific mention.
Police	Page 3, To develop and establish mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, including, inter alia: ... The law-enforcement organs of the two sides will exchange available information on any preparations for illegal acts and will consult on measures to be taken jointly to prevent them. Direct communication links should be utilized for this purpose.
Armed forces	Page 1, The delegations comprised prominent individuals from the sides, including representatives of the intelligentsia, directors of major industrial and agricultural enterprises, elders, military who have participated in the armed conflict, and others.
DDR	No specific mention.
Intelligence services	No specific mention.
Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces	No specific mention.

Withdrawal of foreign forces	No specific mention.
Corruption	No specific mention.
Crime/organised crime	No specific mention.
Drugs	No specific mention.
Terrorism	No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general	No specific mention.
Amnesty/pardon	No specific mention.
Courts	No specific mention.
Mechanism	No specific mention.
Prisoner release	Page 1, The sides agreed as follows: Within one week to hold a special meeting of plenipotentiary representatives to address the issue of the exchange of hostages and prisoners.
Vetting	No specific mention.
Victims	No specific mention.
Missing persons	Page 3, To develop and establish mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, including, inter alia: ... Representatives of the respective Commissions for Missing-in-Action cases of the two sides will meet within one month, to review the situation. They will meet regularly within the framework of the Coordinating Council.
Reparations	No specific mention.
Reconciliation	No specific mention.

Implementation

UN signatory	UNSRSG Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. Liviu Bota (signed)
Other international signatory	OSCE and Russia participated in the meeting.
Referendum for agreement	No specific mention.
International mission/force/ similar	Page 1, The sides agreed as follows: To support and cooperate with the Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG in conducting joint investigation of incidents which may represent a threat stability in the conflict zone.
Enforcement mechanism	Page 2, The sides agreed as follows: ... To revive the activities of the working groups within the framework of the Coordinating Council. a) To convene within one week Working Group I. It will consider measures to implement the agreements achieved by the sides regarding ensuring security along the entire line of the separation of forces.