

Country/entity	Georgia Abkhazia
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Rules Governing the Work of the Working Groups
Date	12 Jun 1997
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 heightened 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 Caucasus. 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 Russo-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 Tskhinvali, opened another front in the Kodori Gorge. A ceasefire was brokered on August

Stage	Pre-negotiation/process
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Abkhazia peace process
Parties	Georgia, Abkhazia
Third parties	-
Description	1. Defines status of working groups as exec bodies of the Coordinating Council, to work in the following areas: issues related to the lasting non-resumption of hostilities and security problems; refugees and IDPs; economic and social problems. 2. Working Groups to consist of reps of both sides, under the chair of the UNSRSG, with reps of Russian Federation (facilitator), the OSCE, and group of Friends of the UNSG. 5. The decisions of the Working Groups are adopted by consensus. They constitute recommendations to be submitted to the Coordinating Council. 6. Working groups to submit reports to the Coordinating Council. 7. Office of the SRSRSG to act as secretariat to working groups.

Agreement document [GE_970612_Rules governing the work of working groups.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 1, Status:
... Working Groups are established in the following areas:
- Refugees and internally displaced persons (Working Group II);

Page 2, 3. Meetings:
The meetings of the Working Qroups shall be convened by the SRSG, and take place as follows:
... - Working Groups II and III shall meet as necessary

Page 3, 4. Agenda.
The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.
Tbe following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:
... Working Group II: Refugees and IDPs:
- provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs;
demining in the whole zone of conflict to enable the return to normal conditions of life.

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 No specific mention.

**Traditional/
religious leaders** No specific mention.

**Public
administration** No specific mention.

Constitution No specific mention.

Power sharing

Political power sharing

Power sharing→Political power sharing→International involvement

Page 1, Membership and participants.

Members of the Working Groups shall be made up of representatives of the Georgian and Abkhaz parties, two from each side, and meet the chairmanship of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) or his authorized representatives, with the participation of representatives of the Russian Federation as facilitator and the for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as the group of Friends of the Secretary-General under the conditions defined in paragraph 3 of the Concluding Statement. Advisers and consultants may attend meetings of the Working Groups, if the parties so wish.

Power sharing→Political power sharing→Other

Page 1, Membership and participants.

Members of the Working Groups shall be made up of representatives of the Georgian and Abkhaz parties, two from each side, and meet the chairmanship of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) or his authorized representatives, with the participation of representatives of the Russian Federation as facilitator and the for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as the group of Friends of the Secretary-General under the conditions defined in paragraph 3 of the Concluding Statement. Advisers and consultants may attend meetings of the Working Groups, if the parties so wish.

Page 3, 5. Decisions:

The decisions of the Working Groups [are adopted by consensus. They] constitute recommendations, which shall be submitted to the Coordinating Council. When no consensus is reached for a recommendation on an issue discussed, the views of the parties on it are recorded in the report of the Working Groups to the Coordinating Council.

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 No specific mention.

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, 4. Agenda.
The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.
The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:
... Working Group III: Economic and Social Problems:
- energy, transport, communications;

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 Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Socio-economic development
Page 1, Status:
... Working Groups are established in the following areas:
... - Economic and social problems (Working Group III).

Page 2, 3. Meetings:
The meetings of the Working Qroups shall be convened by the SRSg, and take place as follows:

... - Working Groups II and III shall meet as necessary
Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Humanitarian assistance

Page 3, 4. Agenda.

The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.

The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:

... Working Group II: Refugees and IDPs:

- provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees and IDPs;
demining in the whole zone of conflict to enable the return to normal conditions of life.

Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Infrastructure and reconstruction

Page 3, 4. Agenda.

The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.

The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:

... Working Group III: Economic and Social Problems:

- energy, transport, communications;
- ecology;
- health care.

National economic plan No specific mention.

Natural resources No specific mention.

International funds No specific mention.

Business No specific mention.

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 Page 3, 4. Agenda.
The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.
The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:
... Working Group III: Economic and Social Problems:
... - ecology;

**Water or riparian
rights or access** No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees

No specific mention.

Ceasefire

Security sector→Ceasefire→Ceasefire provision

Page 1, Status:

... Working Groups are established in the following areas:

- Issues related to the lasting non-resumption of hostilities and security problems (Working Group I);

Page 2, 3. Meetings:

The meetings of the Working Groups shall be convened by the SRSG, and take place as follows:

- Working Group 1 shall meet as necessary, but at least once a week

Page 2, 4. Agenda.

The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.

The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:

Working Group I: (A) Lasting non-resumption of hostilities:

- examination of violations of the Agreement on the ceasefire and separation of forces of 14 May 1994, and

- recommendations of measures to avoid recurrence;

Page 2, 4. Agenda.

The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.

The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:

... (B) · Security problems:

- investigation of reports about acts of violence by armed groups and placement of mines

- recommendations of measures to be taken to halt any activity by illegal armed formations, terrorists and subversive groups and individuals including those penetrating the Abkhaz territory from outside.

Police

No specific mention.

Armed forces

No specific mention.

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	<p>Page 2, 4. Agenda.</p> <p>The agenda of the Working Groups is decided by the Coordinating Council.</p> <p>The following are the substantive issues to be discussed by the Working Groups:</p> <p>... (B) · Security problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investigation of reports about acts of violence by armed groups and placement of mines - recommendations of measures to be taken to halt any activity by illegal armed formations, terrorists and subversive groups and individuals including those penetrating the Abkhaz territory from outside

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general	No specific mention.
Amnesty/pardon	No specific mention.
Courts	No specific mention.
Mechanism	No specific mention.
Prisoner release	No specific mention.
Vetting	No specific mention.
Victims	No specific mention.
Missing persons	No specific mention.
Reparations	No specific mention.
Reconciliation	No specific mention.

Implementation

UN signatory Working Groups to consist of reps of both sides, under the chair of the UNSRSG.

Other international signatory No specific mention.

Referendum for agreement No specific mention.

International mission/force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism No specific mention.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source <https://peacemaker.un.org/georgia-coordination-council97>
