

## ***Georgia - South Caucasus State on the crossroad of the three Civilizations***

*By: Nika Chitadze*

### **Role and place of Georgia in the modern geopolitical system**

Georgia, one of the oldest country in the world, has gone through long historical process of reconstruction and national development. Today it is an independent and sovereign country. According to geographical and geopolitical point of view, Georgia is a part of unique region, Caucasus, which is located on the crossroads of Eurasia. Historically, after the unification of Georgian tribes about 3 000 years ago, it has been raised heir of Colchis and Iberia, which was well- known even in the ancient period<sup>1</sup>.

### **Importance of the geopolitical location of the Georgia**

According to physical-geographical point of view, Georgia is located between the borders of Europe and Asia.

Georgia's territory, which borders in the north with Russia, in the east with Azerbaijan, and in the south with Armenia and Turkey, that share a south-eastern portion of its border with Iran, makes Georgia an attractive geopolitical-economic region, particularly since it is a country through which runs the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline that flows from the Caspian Sea to Europe. Georgia also has easy access to the Black Sea ports. However, it is Georgia's military strategic importance which historically was bringing and today brings Georgia into greater focus and attraction geopolitically than its neighbors.

According to general features of geopolitical location, Georgia has: 1. the central location in the Caucasus region; 2. Peripheral location towards European countries; 3. the neighborly location (border) – towards Turkey, Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, which borders our country. Also there is a second row (nearby) countries which directly border the neighboring states of Georgia and have some territorial closeness with the country. Their neighborhood role grows if first row neighbor's territory "space" is not big and it's "bandwidth" is good. We may consider that such neighbors are: Iran, Syria, Iraq and Greece (via Turkey). 4. Location on the sea, which directly connects Georgia not only with Black Sea Coast countries, but also opens suitable way to the world markets.<sup>2</sup>

Georgia's geopolitical situation is distinguished by very comfortable transport -geographical location. Its territory is an axis of Europe - Caucasus - Asia transport corridor (TRACECA),

---

<sup>1</sup> Braund, David (1994) *Georgia in Antiquity: a History of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia 550 BC – AD 562* Clarendon Press, Oxford ISBN 0-19-814473-3

<sup>2</sup> Nika Chitadze. *Geopolitics. (In Georgian)* ISBN 978-9941-17-328-8. Pp. 461

as well it is the shortest transit line which connects with the countries of Eurasia. At the same time, Georgia can contribute in the functioning of "Great Silk Road".

According to religious-geographical location, Georgia is surrounded by Islamic religious nations. Only way of connecting with the Christian world by land is through Russia, as our southern neighbor, Armenia, is isolated from Christian world itself. At the same time, Black Sea connects Georgia with Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, who are orthodox nations.

### **Transit function of the country**

From the end of the twentieth century until now Georgia has been an energy corridor connecting Asia and Europe, largely as a result of its geographical location and political will. Being such a strategically-important corridor has had both positive and negative aspects. Many of Georgia's current problems, particularly those of its territorial integrity, have been caused by this. (Although Georgia's importance as a transport corridor should in theory secure its safety it has been attacked by Russia for that very reason.)<sup>3</sup>

First of all it has to be realized the results of Soviet Union's collapse, which, itself resulted cardinal changes in world order. Georgia's geographical location is very perspective Transit Function carrier, but existing heritage was in need of reorganization. It was necessary to provide the legal framework, to improve communication systems, establishment of banking system and insurance conditions, to regulate environmental tariffs and a number of issues in order to improve Georgia's transit infrastructure to become an international transit corridor, which will be bearer of international standards requirements, which definitely will be the main guarantor of transit corridor's exploitation by Foreign countries.

Economic analysts very often mention, that the corridor has more of a security than an economic function. After the collapse of the Soviet system, Georgia could have either stayed in Russia's orbit as a satellite or taken a Western orientation and an independent stance. It chose the second option, not only leaving Russia's sphere of influence but competing with it as an east to west energy supplier, while Russia claimed it had the sole right to fulfill this function. Of course Moscow reacted to this and started taking all possible and impossible steps to damage Georgia's image as a transit country.

The idea of Europe - Caucasus - Asia transport corridor in Georgia was born in 1992. In 1993, in the City of Brussels, European Commission invited South and Central Asia's eight country's Ministerial Conference where was risen idea of a trans-Caspian pipeline's development that followed adoption of a declaration, which was a base of regional program – TRACECA. This was precondition strategy to restore so-called "Great Silk Road".

Simultaneously to the TRACECA program has began elaboration of project, to export oil from Azerbaijan through Georgia on international markets. In 1996 an agreement was signed between Georgia and Azerbaijan about Baku - Supsa oil pipeline construction, which was completed in 1999 and the corridor received "energetic" aspect. Also there are two very important regional infrastructures - Baku - Tbilisi - Ceyhan oil pipeline and South

---

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/1939\\_september\\_14\\_2009/1939\\_econ\\_one.html](http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/1939_september_14_2009/1939_econ_one.html)

Caucasus gas pipeline "the Shah - Deniz" project. In the near future is planned to export Kazakhstan oil via BTC.

TRACECA's corridor is a connecting corridor of Europe - Caucasus – Asia, which produces traditional types of transportation vehicles. Transported product, for example in 2005 amounted 37.1 million ton, has increased amount of processed goods in Batumi and Poti ports, which in 2006-2007 was more than 14 million ton. Dynamic growth has been noticed on goods transported by rail cargoes, 84% of these goods are oil and oil products.<sup>4</sup>

Although the TRACECA Goods transportation is growing every year, still there are some signs which partially impede its perfect functioning. It is expressed in the following: one of the main reasons of Russia's aggression against Georgia is to destroy Georgia's transit potential.

Russia realizes that it might lose control of Central Asian states such as Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and others if these countries no longer need Russia to send their principal export, energy, to Europe. It is in their best interests, and in Europe's, that Georgia provides an alternative route from east to west. However, at the critical time in August 2008, the West did not show enough courage to protect its own interests by protecting Georgia.

### **Foreign policy aspects of Georgia**

Foreign policy is one of the main directions of Georgia's national security policy, aimed at establishing a favorable international security environment for Georgia. In order to achieve this goal, Georgia cooperates with the international community in bilateral and multilateral formats.

From the South two great imperial countries, Iran and Ottomans, were fighting to gain spheres of influence in Georgia and from the North was fighting Russian Empire. After the formation, Russian Empire has began territorial expansion and as one of the major direction has been chosen Caucasus. In this period, our southern neighbors encouraged North Caucasians to begin attacks on Georgia. This is the reason why Georgian kings decided to have alliance with Russian Empire. Their intention was to balance Christian and Muslim forces, with a help of Russia.

After the collapse of Russian Empire (USSR) in 1991, Georgia regained its long waited independence.

In today's interdependent world, national security and prosperity cannot be achieved in isolation from the rest of the world. For the security of Georgia, country needs more involvement in the global affairs. Independence and freedom depends on respect of the sovereignty of other states of the world. The well-being and economic prosperity of other states and regions will influence the welfare of Georgian citizens. And consolidation of democracy in Georgia can only be achieved through strengthening democratic

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Georgia.aspx>

developments on a global scale. Government of Georgia should pursue a foreign policy that is conscious of these principles and faithful to these beliefs.

To reach this vision, Georgian foreign policy of 21st century should strive to bring about international actions that advance the national interests of Georgia and Georgian citizens, as well as to make a contribution to building a world community in which there is enduring peace and security, an expanding democracy and lasting prosperity.

Nowadays, has begun process of old world's destruction and construction of new one. Georgia, which chooses development, independent and democratic way, which should find its place among world's civilized nations community, should be integrated into the modern system of international relations and at the same time maintain its own identity.

To achieve the above mentioned goal, Georgia should develop its own strategic political course, which will be based on genuine national interests. The way how Georgia will lead its domestic and foreign policy is very important, because its destiny and luck significantly depend on it.

Security is such a condition of the state when physical existence of citizens, identity and development are ensured. It is a state's supreme interest to achieve and maintain the above mentioned conditions.

Nation's physical existence implies to maintain the existing number of population by demographic structure, which ensures the preservation of their identity.

National identity is a combination of peculiarities, which is stipulated during the centuries of historical, geographical, and genetic factors.

National development means - to move towards appropriate condition of national interests, according the factors based on geopolitical location, cultural features and on global ideologies.<sup>5</sup>

Georgia needs to establish and develop bilateral beneficial and friendly relations with other countries as in the region as well as abroad. At the same time it is in the interests of Georgia's foreign political relations to balance a power, whose interests focus on Caucasus and primarily on Georgia.

It is necessary to determine the political course towards the Great Powers. This concerns both country's immediate neighbors (Russia, Turkey) and countries located near to its territory (Ukraine, Iran), as well geographically distant countries (the United States, Western European, East-Asian countries), as a course of modern integration processes, development of transportation and communication systems, stipulate certain interests of these countries about recent developments in the region.

---

<sup>5</sup> Definition of "national security" from the [Macmillan Dictionary \(online version\)](#), Macmillan Publishers Limited. Accessed 22 September 2010

Along with settlement of interdependence with Great Powers, a great attention should be paid to relations with neighboring small states (Armenia, Azerbaijan), as well as to seek strategic partners (e.g., Israel).

Security's foreign policy aspects are always prioritized in national security system. According the modern understanding, country's security cannot be ensured only through military power.

Unfortunately, till today, world is arranged so that the civilized international relations, during which violence is excluded in state relations, concerns only limited area of our planet yet. Conflicts have not yet extinct; moreover, new conflicts are given birth.

Georgia is located in the region which is full of such conflicts. Unfortunately the above-mentioned forms of civilized international relations are still weak here and in the future new threat of aggression is not excluded.

For this reason, in Georgia's national security system aspects of military security are very important. Military security unifies the state defense capabilities, i.e. ability of the armed forces of the country to prevent or repulse an attack of foreign military forces.

Together with political and military aspects, national security's major element is economic security. Today's economic security situation in Georgia is difficult.

While speaking about foreign policy aspects, it should be paid attention to foreign policy of Georgia. In 1992, main task of Georgia's foreign policy was - international recognition and diplomatic relations with foreign countries and it can be said that it was performed successfully. Today, Georgia is a member of 37 international organizations and has established diplomatic relations with more than 100 countries. From 1992 till today, one of the major priority tasks of foreign policy is: proper formation of public opinion about conflict process in Abkhazia and Samachablo (former "South Ossetia"), also about country's de-occupation and regained territorial integrity and to ensure realization and adoption of international political decisions.<sup>6</sup>

The leading principle of Georgia's foreign policy is - to develop friendly relations, as well partnership with foreign countries.

Georgia's foreign - political orientation is determined by many factors. From the above mentioned tasks and goals, foreign policy is focused on integration in European and Euro - Atlantic structures.

The main result which was achieved in foreign policy lately is that Georgia become closer to European and Euro - Atlantic structures.

Cooperation with international organizations has been activated. It should be noted that these relations gain a new look:

---

<sup>6</sup> [www.mfa.gov.ge](http://www.mfa.gov.ge)

1. Cooperation with NATO is gaining more and more concept. As it is known, Georgia seeks to become a member of NATO. On October 29, 2004, NATO approved Georgia's Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). Implementation of IPAP is essential for NATO membership. IPAP encompasses complex reforms in political, defense, security, economic and other fields, which are necessary to develop Georgia into a stable democracy and a reliable partner for NATO. From 2006, both sides become on a level of intensified dialogue. In 2008 was created NATO-Georgia commission, and nowadays Georgia is implementing the Annual National Program in the framework of cooperation of Georgia with North Atlantic Alliance. Of course it is also very important that, nearly a thousand of Georgian troops are sent in Kosovo and in Afghanistan, where they fight side by side with NATO - Member states armed forces. With this action Georgia proved its readiness to share the responsibility of the collective security.<sup>7</sup>
2. Georgia takes active part in a transport and energy projects of the Caspian and Black Sea region.
3. Georgia's membership in World Trade Organization is very important, as it get involved more actively in the global economy. Today Georgia's foreign trade volume is over 5 billion dollars. (it is a member of this organization since 2000)
4. It is extremely important to develop Georgia's relation with European Union. In June 2004, Georgia was included in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), which represents an important mechanism for further movement with the European Union. The ENP provides opportunities to ensure the "four freedoms" of movement (goods, services, capital and persons), to increase efficiency of state institutions, and enhance scientific-educational cooperation with the EU. Moreover, there is an opportunity for cooperation in the fields of political dialogue, border protection, crisis management and the rule of law. In 2006 the two sides signed an action plan. After the August 2008 events, (Russian egression on Georgian territories) EU's observers has began patrolling operations in the occupied regions of the country. At the same time it is important to be mentioned, that since 2009 Georgia, together with 5 post-soviet Republics is a member of EU Eastern Partnership Program. According the data's of 2010 Georgia's foreign trade with EU countries accounts more than 20%.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of Russia's anti-Georgian propaganda in the international arena, Georgia, is increasingly seen as a necessary and reliable partner. Along with ongoing positive change in the country, this was determined first of all because of profitable transport-geopolitical location. Transportation - communication corridor in the crossroads of Eurasia, which, from the very beginning became the most important task of Georgia's our foreign policy and today Black Sea region, is in the centre of attention of leading countries, and of big companies.

## **New Security Environment in Georgia after Georgia-Russia War**

---

<sup>7</sup> *Information on NATO-Georgia Relations". Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of Georgia. 2007. [http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?sec\\_id=89&lang\\_id=ENG](http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?sec_id=89&lang_id=ENG). Retrieved 2008-08-28*

<sup>8</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia\\_%E2%80%93\\_European\\_Union\\_relations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_%E2%80%93_European_Union_relations)

The war in August 2008 changed the political situation in Georgia dramatically. It is clear, that there are no Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetia conflicts any longer, as they effectively mutated into a wider confrontation between Russia and Georgia. The problem of Georgia's territorial integrity has become the question of national statehood and sovereignty as the Georgian central government controls less territory today than it did before the escalation of conflict, when its control was spreading on the important parts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Georgia's image as an "efficient state" was shattered and the country may plunge into new internal political turmoil. Georgia's future depends on international security guarantees and support as ever before.

### *Implication of the war for the breakaway regions*

After the events in August 2008 crisis, it has become clear that a direct negotiation process between the conflicting parties is highly unlikely. It is especially relevant to South Ossetia, as its de-facto authorities are closely connected (and depended) with Russian military circles, while unification with North Ossetia seems a more attractive option for local residents than does independence. So, the de facto annexation of South Ossetia may soon become de jure and the region will be simply incorporated into the Russian Federation. At the same time, it is a paradox that South Ossetia has become independent while North Ossetia – where historically Ossetian statehood existed, remains part of Russia. It will be interesting to see how Moscow will sort out this problem.

With regard of Abkhazia, part of its ruling elite is strongly supports the idea of independence and despite the close ties, opposes Russia's full hegemony in the region, giving the Georgian government some room for manoeuvre. But unless the international community is strongly involved in Abkhazia, Moscow will easily get rid of the pro-independence Abkhaz elite. It is important to remember in this regard that ethnic Abkhaz do not form a majority in Abkhazia – there are about 30% of ethnic Abkhaz in this separatist region.<sup>9</sup>

### *Influence of the war on Georgia's foreign policy*

After the August 2008 events, the western democratic community found itself in a strange predicament. On the one hand, the west has pledged to take active part in the conflict resolution process; on the other hand, opportunities for western involvement are limited, since both conflict zones remain under the full Russian control and, given the current rhetoric, Moscow will hardly agree to an international peacekeeping operation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. So the prospects for the internationalization of the conflict settlement process and entrance of the EU monitors inside of the conflict zones seem as dim as ever.

The impact of the August 2008 crisis on the European and Euro-Atlantic prospects is not immediately clear. On the one hand, it is obvious that the Russian aggression turned the Georgian

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.cipdd.org>. *Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development*.

problem into an international security issue. Russia's repeated statements that it will block Georgia's (and Ukraine) joining to NATO, whatever it costs, might motivate NATO member-states to stand up to Moscow's blackmail and support the integration process. Besides, against the backdrop of political decisions, some questions need to be answered – How should the expansion go ahead before the conflicts are settled? What measures are necessary to ensure a strong western presence in the conflict zones?

The rapid deployment of EU observers in the buffer zones around Abkhazia and South Ossetia is quite a realistic short-term goal that the west can achieve in Georgia. It is feasible as long as Russia is unlikely to pull out its troops from Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the near future. In addition, it is a vital precondition for getting the political and economic process in Georgia back to normal, rebuilding its war-damaged infrastructure, and facilitating the country's European integration.<sup>10</sup>

### *Main Threats and challenges to the National Security of Georgia*

*Political Threats:* Among the main threat should be mentioned about ***Internal conflicts and occupation by Russian Federation about 18% of the territory of Georgia in August 2008***. This factor endanger Georgia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-violability of borders and jeopardize establishment of constitutional order on the whole territory of the country. Illegal arms and drugs trade, trafficking and other transnational crimes have found fertile ground on the occupied territories. Moreover, Russian occupants and representatives of the separatist regimes systematically violate human rights on the uncontrolled territories, especially in the occupied regions, which are mostly populated by ethnic Georgians in Gali district of Abkhazia and Akhagori district of South Ossetia. Moreover, these territories can be used by terrorist groups for achieving their aims.

After Georgia-Russia war, ***Russian Federation's military forces*** are present on the territory of two historic regions of Georgia (Abkhazia and South Ossetia) without any political or legal ground. Their presence has a negative impact on the security environment and stability of Georgia and the entire region.

***International terrorism*** is a serious threat to the national security of Georgia, especially considering that Georgia finds itself in the region close to the terrorist bases of the North Caucasus and Middle East. Moreover, existence of the territories uncontrolled by Georgian government creates favorable conditions for the activities of international terrorist groups. International terrorism is especially problematic for Georgia, taking into consideration that despite implementation of some reforms after "Rose Revolution", single national crisis management system in final shape has not yet been developed.

***Poor control of the state borders*** represents a major problem for the national security. Illegal cross-border movement of the citizens of other countries, additional deployment of the occupational forces

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cipdd.org>. *Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development*.



in two occupied territories of Georgia and entrance illegal arms and drugs trade, as well as systematic violation of Georgia's air and maritime borders after August 2008 events often take place.

***Possible actions directed against the infrastructure of strategic importance*** especially after Georgia-Russia war pose threat to the stability of the country and efficient functioning of national institutions. It is especially important to protect oil and gas pipelines and objects of energy and transport infrastructure at the territory of Georgia from terrorists and illegal armed formations, which are deployed at the occupied territories of Georgia. Moreover, attempts of occupational and separatist forces to damage of domestic and international transport networks, as well as of the institutions of strategic importance represents a threat to national security.

***Deepening of political confrontation among the political forces, extremism, intolerance and xenophobic trends in the society*** endanger constitutional order of Georgia, national unity, protection of human rights, promotion of the values of liberal democracy and state stability in general.

***Military Threats:*** Despite the occupation of the 18% of the Georgian territory in August 2008, due to the readiness for further resistance of the Armed Forces of Georgia and pressure from the International Democratic community, Russia has not managed to implement its final goal – to occupy whole Georgia and overthrow government in the country. Accordingly it still exists the ***Possibility of second military aggression*** against Georgia from Russian side, which will pose an immense threat to the independence, territorial integrity, liberty, national unity, welfare and peace of the country.

***Lacking of some defense capabilities,*** especially anti-aircraft systems jeopardizes national security.

***Conflicts in the neighboring countries*** represent potential source for Georgia's destabilization, illegal movement of armament, activation of terrorism, possible involvement of the country in the conflict and the mass influx of refugees to the territory of Georgia.

Among the **New Challenges** should be pointed out about:

New forms of terrorism, such as bio-terrorism;

Possible proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, its components and technologies necessary for its development;

Illegal arms and drugs trade, trafficking, smuggling and other transnational organized crime; Information related challenges.

#### *Main Directions of Georgia's National Security Policy of Georgia after Georgia-Russia War*

National Security Policy of Georgia is based on fundamental national values of Georgia, serves the realization of Georgia's national interests and addresses threats and challenges before the national security.

*Strengthening of public administration and consolidation of democratic institutions.* For the avoiding further political confrontation between the Government and oppositional forces of Georgia, it is necessary to build democratic and free society and to create a transparent and accountable system of governance based on the rule of law.

For this purpose it is necessary to clearly distribute functions between executive, legislative and judiciary branches of the government, to reform all three branches, foster democratic principles of governance and establish a culture of changing government through constitutional procedure.

Political system should become open for all citizens, what envisages their participation in the decision-making and implementation process, constant public control over the decision-making institutions and strengthening of the sense of accountability towards the society in the government.

Eradication of corruption, which after “rose revolution” exists in the “nepotism” form, is a necessary precondition for strengthen public administration and democratic institutions of the country.

*Enhancement of defense capabilities* Taking into account the fact, that possibility of the implementation next aggression against Georgia by from Russian Federation still exists, the first priority in defense planning is to achieve maximum deterrence to avoid an attack on the country. In the event that aggression fails to be deterred, the primary military objective is the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. Territorial integrity of Georgia must be maintained consistent with international law and along internationally recognized borders. Timely discovery of the sources of a threat, accurate analysis of the intelligence reports and effective interagency coordination are very important to effectively ensuring defense measures are taken. Based on the threats emanating from Russian combat forces, including those present in occupied regions, and taking account of the “lessons learned” during the August 2008 Russian aggression, re-balancing of Georgian Armed forces training is necessary to ensure greater emphasis on developing both conventional and unconventional defense capabilities while maintaining the capability to participate in international peace support and stability operations.

When facing military aggression, the Armed Forces, as well as other state agencies will use all means possible to provide active resistance and will act in close coordination, while all resources of the state will be mobilized to reinforce its defensive capability. Under the concept of “total and unconditional defense”, rapid mobilization of reserve forces, combined with the coordinated actions of the Armed Forces and other state agencies will enable the country to inflict considerable damage and to hinder the enemy in achieving its strategic objectives.

*Restoration of constitutional order on the whole territory of Georgia.* As it is known, after Russian aggression, Georgia has lost control over the part of territories in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where before the war jurisdiction of Tbilisi was spread. At this stage, country is unable to control 18% of its territories. Despite the starting negotiation process in the framework of Geneva format, restoration of the jurisdiction of Georgia on the above mentioned territories through peaceful negotiations is impossible on this stage since the central government of Georgia demands recognition of Georgia’s territorial integrity from de facto leadership of the occupied regions in return of acquisition of broad autonomy rights within unified Georgia. However, the “leadership” of both regions exclusively insists on the independence during the negotiations and does not consent

to recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as part of the territory of Georgia in any way. Especially after the recognition of the two above-mentioned regions by Russia in August 2008.

As the events of August 2008 have shown, the issues of conflict resolution and restoration of territorial integrity may not be solved through military means either Georgia will have difficulty in carrying out large military operations on the territories, where Russian occupation forces are deployed.

The only way for the restoration of the existing conflicts and de-occupation of Georgia is the economic development of the country. Economic development of Georgia will increase interest towards Georgia in the “disobedient” regions which ultimately may cause their consent to participate in various economic projects in return of restoration of Georgia’s territorial integrity.

#### *Interests of Georgia to join NATO*

Georgia views NATO as an organization of collective defence that is the central mechanism for providing security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. Georgia’s cooperation with NATO contributes to strengthening of democratic values in the country, accomplishment of democratic reforms, especially in the field of defence, as well as establishment of a secure and stable environment. Membership of NATO would not only endow Georgia with an unprecedented degree of military and political security, but would allow it to contribute to strengthening the security of Europe, particularly the Black Sea region. Georgia has already proved its readiness to share the responsibility of the collective security by sending its troops to Kosovo and Afghanistan”.

It can be asked the question, what specifically does NATO membership signify for Georgia?

The first view is that NATO membership is very effective tool for political and security reform. The second is that NATO is a club in which membership can and does favor state building. In this second view NATO membership is seen as a destination, to which a country can arrive only if it has completed a process of state building. The aspiration to join NATO raises the question “Where is Georgia headed”? The answer is toward assimilation with the Euro-Atlantic family of politically likeminded states.

It is important to note that Georgia has a somewhat different road to travel toward NATO membership than the Baltic Republics or other Eastern European countries had. Although the Baltic States were administered by the USSR, they were perceived internationally as having legitimate claims to statehood throughout the Soviet period. Georgia, in contradistinction, had to invent a modern statehood in the context of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the rampant conflict and confusion that was left in its wake.

For Georgia, NATO signifies a necessary tool to aid in building not just any state, but a democratic state. The standards for joining NATO are different now than they were in the 1950s. Georgia understands that the NATO integration requires real democratic development. Therefore, the democratic character of the state is paramount.

Georgia naturally suffers from an insecurity complex, especially after Georgia-Russia war in August 2008. It seeks a secure environment for its own existence and for the life and development of its citizens. NATO, primarily a security institution, addresses these needs and is considered as an umbrella or safe haven for small and week countries who alone cannot overcome security threats.

Other aspect why Georgia strives to NATO is to develop economic stability, NATO brings stability and security in the region and so it brings economic development. NATO also gives the framework for the International Security operations. In which Georgia is already involved.

Georgia has shown convincing performance in both reforming its military forces and contributing to international security. It has developed into a full fledged democratic society. Georgia is ready to take its place as an essential member of the Euro-Atlantic community.

As for Georgia, it's clear from stated ambitions of the government that Georgia is taking a path targeted at integration with the European Union and NATO. To foster closer cooperation and to guide the relationship between NATO and the Caucasus and Central Asia, it has been appointed the Special Representative of the Secretary General of NATO for the Caucasus and Central Asia.

As NATO is making efforts to promote closer relationships with its partners, these partners also need to make their own efforts. For example, partners can participate in NATO peacekeeping operations and make progress in their own society on the values that NATO promotes, such as defense reform, defense restructuring, and fighting corruption. Georgia should be commended for a variety of initiatives on its part to work with NATO and to contribute to the relationship. Georgia has a long and winding road ahead of it if it wants to achieve integration into NATO.

Georgia's NATO membership will inevitably open and widen the path for the membership of the other countries of the South Caucasus, Armenia and Azerbaijan. These countries give increasingly frequent signals of readiness to participate in transatlantic cooperation at a much more advanced level than the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program currently offers.

#### *Integration into the European Union*

Historically Georgia represents a geographic, political and cultural part of the European space. Integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political, economic and security systems is a firm will of Georgian people.

Georgia considers accession to the European Union to be an important guarantee for economic and political development and a precondition for security.

At present, main legal framework of relationship between Georgia and the EU is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed in 1996. Since June 2004, Georgia is a member of the European Neighborhood Policy, what represents a precondition for the future approximation of Georgia with the EU. In November of 2006, Georgia and EU signed Action Plan, which takes into consideration cooperation in various spheres, including political, legal, security, economic, social, cultural etc. In May 2009, Georgia together with other five post-soviet states joined "Eastern Partnership Program". It is a priority for Georgia to develop and an Action Plan within the European Neighborhood Policy and to timely and efficiently implement all priorities in the framework of the

“Eastern Partnership Program”. In July 2010, EU and Georgia started the negotiation process on the signing the Associate Agreement.

The Russian-Georgian conflict will increase the engagement of the European Union in Georgia. Consequently, it will be able to play a greater role in the South Caucasus. The European Union’s large-scale economic and political support for Georgia and closer EU-Georgia ties will help the country recover from the conflict quickly, while the EU’s international prestige will grow considerably.

Diversification of the energy sources has become an urgent theme for the European Union, an aspect reflected in the final resolution of the EU summit on September 1, 2008. The Russian-Georgian war high-lighted the danger of Russia’s intentions to monopolise energy transits from Asia to Europe. It is very likely, therefore, that the west will begin lobbying for alternative gas and oil pipelines more actively.

#### *Relations with the United States of America*

Bilateral cooperation and strengthening of partnership with the United States is of a great significance for Georgia, especially after war with Russia. From the very day of declaring Georgia’s independence, United States has been actively supporting its statehood, democracy, defense capabilities, and economic development.

United States of America represents the strategic ally of Georgia, and cooperation with Washington will remain one of the main direction of the Foreign policy of Georgia.

After the signing the Charter on *Strategic Partnership*, USA-Georgia relations will become more intensive.

If Washington’s policy is successful in Georgia, i.e. if Russian troops are pulled out from occupation zone, Georgia’s government system and national economy remain functional, and democratic processes continue unabated, US influence in the region will increase substantially, nearby countries will be more willing to cooperate with the US, and prospects of alternative energy transit projects will improve.

### **Conclusion**

The main purpose of the topic was a detailed analyze of Georgia's geopolitical location, also detailed review of Georgia’s energy and national security sector. Besides, purpose of the topic was to discuss Georgia’s relations with various states. Particularly, with those states whom Georgia has intensive relationship, among them especially should be noted Georgia’s relations with U.S.A., EU and NATO.

The next main purpose of the topic was to pay attention on the main threats and challenges before the country; the detailed analyze of the fact what caused Russia's aggressive policy against Georgia, as before as well in the period of August 2008.

There was also discussed role and place of Georgia in the modern world. In spite of the fact that Georgia is considered as a small country, (its total area is 69.7 thousand square kilometers) still, whole South Caucasus region and Georgia are under world’s leading

countries geopolitical interests, which is resulted by its foreign policy orientation, geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-strategic location.

In a modern world, i.e., after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia managed to restore its state independence and to determine its role and place. In spite of the fact that Georgia experienced serious attacked in August 2008, its state independence survived. Thus, Georgia as a state, as a subject of international law, continues existing.

Naturally, development of reforms in a various spheres is very important. Taking into account the fact that almost 20% of Georgian territories are occupied, first of all should be mentioned sphere of defense and security, also energy security, as in future through the territory of Georgia can be realized particular regional and global energy projects.

As well, Georgia should determine its foreign policy orientation, which should be certainly related to Georgia's further integration into European and Euro Atlantic structures in future, because every attempt from the Georgian side to restore dialogue with Russian government did not bring any real and positive results.

It is obvious that European Union, the United States and NATO are real partners for Georgia. They can appear as one of the guarantors of Georgia's independence. For this reason Georgia should maintain its pro-Western foreign policy.

To strengthen the defense and security sphere, process of reforms has to continue that will result further democratization in the defense and security sphere, which will strengthen democratic institutions in various fields and will promote the development.

Georgia's national security's one of the top priority and Georgian people's desire is to restore country's territorial integrity, on which has been paid particular attention in the research.

Thus, it is important to note that, one of the main guarantees for Georgia to restore its territorial integrity peacefully is connected with strengthening socio - economic development and democratic institutions, which will increase the interest of population of occupied territories towards Georgia and towards restoration of the territory.

#### **Bibliography:**

Braund, David (1994) *Georgia in Antiquity: a History of Colchis and Transcaucasian Iberia 550 BC – AD 562* Clarendon Press, Oxford [ISBN 0-19-814473-3](#)

*Nika Chitadze. Geopolitics. (In Georgian) ISBN 978-9941-17-328-8. Pp. 461*

After August 2008: Consequences of the Russian-Georgian War. Materials of the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development. ISBN 978-99928-37-22-1. Tbilisi, September 2008.

Eugene B. Rumer, Jeffrey Simon. Toward a Euro-Atlantic Strategy for the Black Sea Region. Institute for National Strategic Studies. National Defense University. Washington, April 2006.

Edited by Gennady Chufrin. The Security of the Caspian Sea Region. ISBN 0-19-925020-0. SIPRI. Oxford University Press, 2001.

Nika Chitadze. NATO's Role in South Caucasus Regional Security. Published by American University for Humanities (Tbilisi, Campus). ISBN 978-99940-69-82-8. Tbilisi, 2007.

Web-sides:

[www.mfa.gov.ge](http://www.mfa.gov.ge) (National Security Concept of Georgia)

[www.mod.gov.ge](http://www.mod.gov.ge) (Georgia National Military Strategy-Draft Document)