

Advanced Research and Assessment Group

Chronology Series

08/27



A Russian Chronology: July - September 2008

Dr Mark A Smith

November 2008

Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

Russian Domestic Policy: A Chronology

July – September 2008

1 July 2008 The Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office brings new charges against the former owner of the Yukos oil company, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, and the former head of the Menatep group, Platon Lebedev. They are accused of embezzlement.

1 July 2008 The head of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office, Aleksandr Bastrykin, says Russian law-enforcement agencies have information about which Western European country the person who directly carried out the murder of *Novaya Gazeta* journalist Anna Politkovskaya has taken refuge in.

1 July 2008 Protective duties on wheat and barley, which were active for half a year, are cancelled. Grain will be exported at a zero rate of duties. The vice-president of the Russian Grain Union, Aleksandr Korbut, states:

I think it will have a positive impact on grain prices, as additional competition from exporting companies will emerge. Grain prices are falling now, which is logical: we have good stocks from last year and high expectations for crops...Another important point is that Russia will continue to strengthen its presence on the world grain market, and make its contribution to resolving the world food crisis.

According to the forecast of the Agriculture Ministry, exports of grain this year may total 15 million tonnes with a harvest of at least 85 million tonnes.

1 July 2008 The head of the Main Directorate for Combat Training of the Armed Forces, Lt-Gen Vladimir Shamanov, says a reorganization of garrisons on an Army and Navy scale in accordance with the new general military regulations will start in autumn 2008. A large-scale reorganization of garrisons according to the territorial principle was to commence on 1 July. However, some military districts and fleets have not been able to approve new garrison boundaries. The large-scale reorganization will start at the end of the summer training period. 70 territorial garrisons will be set up. Their boundaries will largely coincide with the borders of the constituent parts of the Russian Federation. There will also be 109 local garrisons.

1 July 2008 A large exercise of border troops and the army (Shield 2008) takes place in the North Caucasus. It stretches from the Caspian to the Black Sea and covers the territory of Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabarda-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia and Krasnodar Territory. It will last till 5 July.

1 July 2008 Vasily Likhachev, representative of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Ingushetia in the Federation Council blames the West for instability in Ingushetia:

As of now, no-one is satisfied with a stable economic development of the Russian Federation. Our enemies, including those in Washington, London, Brussels and other capitals, are extremely interested that on the territory of the Russian Federation (RF), which has taken a course of recognizing democratic values and standards, were sore spots, different types of critical mass, which would explode and weaken the RF.

I have an impression that with regard to Ingushetia as well as the RF, within the ideological centres of the US intelligence, along the line of MI5 and MI6, ideological centres of the European Union and the North Atlantic bloc, they have plans to actively work in the directions of Chechnya, Ingushetia and North Ossetia. We have to be honest to ourselves: the fate of Ingushetia, its security is the security of the RF, it is the security of the region under the name of North Caucasus.

2 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev sets out the details of a draft national plan to tackle corruption, at a session of the Legislative Council devoted to legislative provisions to counter corruption. He also says that there should be "two state officials at most" on the boards of directors of state-owned firms.

Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says independent directors are to replace officials on the board of directors of companies that are 100 per cent owned by the state. The need to replace officials with independent representatives on the board of directors of state companies was announced at the beginning of 2008.

2 July 2008 Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka says Russian prosecutors checked over 700,000 violations of social and labour rights in 2007.

2 July 2008 Regional human rights ombudsman Nurdi Nukhazhiyev says that a total of 4,825 people are listed as missing in the Chechen Republic in the period since 1994.

2 July 2008 The chairman of the Russian Federation Public Chamber commission for the affairs of veterans, military personnel and their family members, Aleksandr Kanshin, says about 600 officers and generals of Russia's force structures have been convicted of various crimes in 2007. He says the state is losing up to 30 per cent of the money it spends on the force structures as a result of kickbacks and middleman services. He says by the end of 2008 Russian force structures may have lost up to two military battalions in non-combat losses.

2 July 2008 The commander-in-chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky, says the basing system of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF) will be extended in connection with its increased activities in the southern marine direction. He meets in Novorossiysk with commanders and officers of the Novorossiysk naval base.

2 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs a resolution that radically reduces the list of international organizations whose grants attract tax breaks. All large private foundations disappeared from the list which earlier comprised 101 organizations, leaving only 12 inter-governmental associations.

3 July 2008 The Supreme Court rejects a case by the URF, which was challenging the results of the State Duma election held last December and demanding their cancellation.

3 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says the rouble could become a reserve currency. He states:

Our starting now to develop stock exchange trading in petroleum products and other fuels for roubles is precisely a step towards the transformation of the rouble into one of the possible regional reserve currencies, especially because the rouble's internal and external convertibility - the goal which we were setting for ourselves several years ago - has been achieved. The main thing now is for the rouble to be perceived as a safe instrument into which savings could be placed, by using which one can carry out appropriate transactions. This is perhaps an aim for a somewhat longer term, but in my opinion it is quite an achievable aim.

3 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree increasing the number of deputy interior ministers from three to five. A state secretary and the chief state road safety inspector have become the deputies of the interior minister.

Medvedev signs a decree relieving Veronika Milinchuk of the post of Russia's representative at the European Court of Human Rights and deputy justice minister.

3 July 2008 Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn is appointed chairman of the military-scientific committee of the General Staff and deputy chief of the General Staff. He replaces Colonel-General Aleksandr Skvortsov.

The commander of the Space Troops, Colonel-General Vladimir Popovkin, is appointed deputy defence minister for armaments. In his new post, Popovkin replaces Army Gen Nikolay Makarov, who was in June appointed chief of the General Staff. The head of Plesetsk cosmodrome, Major-General Oleg Ostapenko, is appointed commander of the Space Troops.

4 July 2008 The Party of Social Justice merges with Spravedlivaya Rossiya.

4 July 2008 The Moscow Basmannyy Court extends the period of detention of former Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Storchak until 9 October. Storchak is accused of attempting to embezzle 43.4m dollars from the state budget while settling Russian-Algerian debt.

4 July 2008 The first deputy commander of the Internal Troops of the Interior Ministry (MVD), Colonel-General Sergey Bunin, says it is intended to carry out a large-scale operation aimed at eliminating terrorists in the mountain area of Chechnya.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says he favours joint operations to combat illegal armed formations together with Russian MOD units, the Yug and Sever battalions and the special-purpose police regiment No.2 named after Ramzan Kadyrov.

4 July 2008 The head of the Russian Interior Ministry's financial-economic department, Svetlana Perova, says funding for the MVD will increase by 50 per cent by 2010 in comparison with 2008.

5 July 2008 The Council of the National Assembly - an alternative parliament of the opposition in Russia, organized by the Drugaya Rossiya coalition accepts 69 new members to the assembly and approves a plan of action and a date for the next meeting.

6 July 2008 A Union of Political Prisoners is set up at a congress of former political prisoners in Moscow.

6 July 2008 North Ossetian President Taymuraz Mamsurov says certain forces abroad are nurturing the idea of uniting North and South Ossetia into one independent country, which would subsequently have to decide with whom its future lies. He says: "They (the foreign envoys and representatives of international structures) try to flatter us, saying that Ossetians...should be in Europe. But (they say), since Europe itself has come to you via Georgia...you can correct a historical injustice - join NATO via Georgia, it's right next door."

7 July 2008 The board of directors of the TNK-BP management company votes against annulling the contract with TNK-BP Chief Executive Robert Dudley.

7 July 2008 It is reported that the head of the main operational directorate and deputy head of the General Staff Colonel-General Aleksandr Rukshin has been dismissed from military service. The armed forces' communications commander, deputy chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Yevgenny Karpov has also been dismissed.

Colonel-General Vasily Smirnov, deputy chief of the Armed Forces' General Staff, denies Russian media reports claiming that he has tendered his resignation.

Chief of the General Staff, General Nikolay Makarov presents the new commander of the Space Troops, Major-General Oleg Ostapenko, to officers and generals.

7 July 2008 Aleksey Miller, the chairman of Gazprom's Management Committee, is elected chairman of the board of directors of Gazprom Neft.

8 July 2008 Deputy Defence Minister for the financial and economic sphere Lyubov Kudelina says the funds allocated to Russia's national defence in 2009 will exceed R1,000 billion in accordance with a draft federal law:

The budget allocations within the 'national defence' section in 2009 will reach R1,016,664.6 million...Mobilization and citizens' training and the mobilization training of the country's economy will receive almost R9 billion, the nuclear weapons complex more than R17 billion. Almost R4 billion will be spent on the implementation of our international obligations in the sphere of military and technical cooperation, and about R240 billion will be allocated towards wages of servicemen and civil personnel of the Defence Ministry.

9 July 2008 The international arms exhibition opens in Nizhniy Tagil. It is being held for the sixth time.

9 July 2008 The Pacific Fleet begins exercises in the sea of Japan.

9 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says Russia should create a world financial regional centre.

9 July 2008 Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the Military Industrial Commission Sergey Ivanov is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. Ivanov says a development strategy for the conventional armaments industry for the next seven years has been drawn up. It will become a component part of the general development strategy for Russia's defence-industrial complex until 2020.

Deputy defence minister Colonel-General Vladimir Popovkin says Russia's defence complex has overcome the crisis which lasted for more than 15 years. The defence complex is now enjoying an upward trend. Popovkin says that by 2016 Russia will have an army of a new type with a strength of 1 million servicemen.

9 July 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin says the volume of oil production in 2008 will not fall. He says that in order to maintain extraction levels, work is under way to introduce tax incentives to stimulate oil extraction. He says the state will not fund either the Baltic Pipeline System - 2 (BPS-2) or the Eastern Siberia - Pacific oil pipeline.

10 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev approves the composition of the council under the head of state for the implementation of the priority national projects and demographic policy. The president is the chair of the council. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is his first deputy. The president's aide, Arkady Dvorkovich, and Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov have been named as deputy chairmen.

10 July 2008 Federation Council speaker and leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya Sergey Mironov proposes to supplement the law on political parties with norms that would ensure opposition activity for the parties.

10 July 2008 The commander of the troops of the North Caucasus Military District, Colonel-General Sergey Makarov, says the combined units and military units of the troops of the District are combat ready and ready to fulfil any combat tasks in order to ensure stability in the region. He states: "During exercises, the combined units and military units of the North Caucasus Military District practise, among other things, actions for the event of the escalation of the situation in the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zones."

10 July 2008 A Russian-Estonian-Finnish border guard exercise takes place in Gulf of Finland.

10 July 2008 State Secretary - Deputy Defence Minister Gen Nikolay Pankov says that all of Russia's Suvorov military schools will this autumn switch from the three-year to a seven-year training curriculum per Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov's decision.

10 July 2008 Seven top managers of TNK-BP, whose period of residence on the territory of the Russian Federation ran out this week, receive new visas.

11 July 2008 Vladimir Putin speaks in Severodvinsk at a working meeting on the development of Russia's oil and gas industry:

We have no doubt that now, in the middle and long term, we will fully meet the demands of the fast-growing Russian economy and fulfil all our obligations to our foreign partners. As before, we will behave responsibly. Our energy policy will be clear, transparent and liberal. We are not going to sink into economic egoism. We will continue to take into account the legitimate interests of our partners. At the same time, we will of course be guided by our own national interests. We are not going to conform to anybody. Let those who want to work with us conform to us, on open market principles of course.

11 July 2008 The congress of the Russian People's Democratic Union (RPDU), led by former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, is disrupted on its opening day by interruptions to the water and electricity supplies.

11 July 2008 The MVD wants to define the Internet as a mass media outlet. Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev has said that it is becoming increasingly urgent to criminalize the dissemination of extremist and terrorist ideas in the Internet. Deputy chairman of the Duma committee for information policy Boris Reznik says he is against Nurgaliyev's proposal.

11 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev nominates Roman Kopin as governor in the Chukotka Autonomous Area. This nomination is confirmed by the regional parliament on 13 July.

11 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin lays out his main objectives and concerns for the Russian energy sector at a meeting of key players in the oil and gas industry in Severodvinsk. He calls for an increase in competition and investment. He also urges Gazprom to improve access to its networks for other companies and speaks of the need to reduce red tape.

Gazprom head Aleksey Miller outlines the company's immediate and long-term projects and prospects.

11 July 2008 Igor Konyshev, head of the PR department of the Rosatom state corporation, says that Russia has uranium deposits that will last 100 years given the current pace of the industry's development.

11 July 2008 Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Kudrin says in the Federation Council that about R20 billion extra money will be allocated from the budget for the Defence Ministry and all power-wielding agencies to fulfil the defence order.

11 July 2008 Roskosmos approves a project plan for building a new cosmodrome, Vostochnyy, in Amur Region.

12 July 2008 RPDU leader Mikhail Kasyanov suggests that the Union of Right Forces, Yabloko and Vladimir Ryzhkov's Republican Party of Russia should form a coalition. He is speaking at the RPDU Congress. He is re-elected leader of the RPDU at the congress.

12 July 2008 The Movement Against Illegal Immigration (MAII) holds a congress. MAII head Aleksandr Belov says that the congress had ratified the 8 June Pact which had been adopted by some nationalist organizations. The document says that all nationalists are planning to unite.

12 July 2008 The head of the new state corporation Rostekhnologii Sergey Chemezov is interviewed on *Vesti TV* on the corporation.

14 July 2008 President Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree on the property of Rostekhnologii Corporation. The presidential decree contains a list of 420 enterprises to be handed over to Rostekhnologii as the government's contribution. It includes Oboronprom (Moscow), Sukhoi (Moscow), Bazalt (Moscow), Splav (Tula), KamAZ (Naberezhnye Chelny), Degtyarev Plant (Kovrov), Molniya Research and Production Association (Moscow), Technopromexport.

14 July 2008 Admiral Gennady Suchkov, a former commander of the Northern Fleet and adviser to the defence minister, says that Russia will strengthen its navy, mainly the Pacific Fleet. About 30 per cent of the country's 2009 defence budget has been allocated to the navy, including the funds allocated for building ships.

14 July 2008 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Vasily Smirnov says 277 citizens of foreign states are serving in the armed forces. 41 are Ukrainian citizens, 61 are Uzbek, and 67 Tajik citizens. About 800 foreigners applied.

14 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the state should substitute imports in competitive Russian industries.

14 July 2008 The Karachay-Cherkessia parliament adopts an anti-terrorist programme.

15 July 2008 First Deputy Interior Minister Mikhail Sukhodolsky says the MVD is establishing a centre for training members of special units.

15 July 2008 Rebel Chechen Prime Minister Akhmed Zakayev rules out negotiations with the Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov, in an interview with the rebel Chechenpress website.

15 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev issues a decree appointing Vladimir Zavershinsky as the Security Council secretary's aide.

15 July 2008 Colonel-General Vladimir Popovkin, Russia's deputy defence minister for armaments, says the governmental armament programme that will run until 2020 must be prepared before the end of 2010.

Popovkin says that the structure of military representatives' offices and the system of control over the quality of defence industry products in Russia will be changed radically.

15 July 2008 The Ground Troops' counterterrorism exercise Caucasus 2008 begins in the North Caucasus Military District.

15 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev calls for a strengthening of the independence of judges.

15 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin appoints Viktor Yeltsov acting head of the Federal Agency for State Border Control and Maintenance.

15 July 2008 The brother and nephew of the lawyer Ilyas Kimishev, who represents "Chechen cases" in the European Court of Human Rights, are kidnapped in the Shatoy District of Chechnya.

15 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the government cannot endlessly keep Russian internal waterways closed for foreign shipping companies to the detriment of consumers. He states:

We indeed are ready to create conditions that are as favourable as possible for our shipping companies. We will consider and solve these issues in dialogue with them. We count on an appropriate return, on an increase in investment and volume of cargo transport. However, I would like to emphasize one thing in particular: we cannot endlessly keep this market closed from competition to the detriment of consumers.

Transport Minister Igor Levitin says:

To implement a provision of the Russia-EU partnership and cooperation agreement, to implement a concept on the development of domestic water transport and to carry out decisions passed by the Maritime Board under the government, the ministry is carrying out work to prepare Russian internal waterways for the navigation of vessels under foreign flags.

We consider it sensible to make amendments to Russian legislation, if necessary, in the part regarding lifting a ban on the navigation of ships under foreign flags in internal waterways.

15 July 2008 The Foreign Ministry issues a statement on the TNK-BP issue.

16 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets the leadership of the Federation Council. He says that a strategy for Russia's social and economic development up to 2020 has to be approved within the next few months.

16 July 2008 The foreign investment control directorate is handed over to the deputy head of the Federal Antimonopoly Service (FAS).

16 July 2008 Chairman of the Yedinaya Rossiya Supreme Council Boris Gryzlov says that Yedinaya Rossiya needs to rid itself of careerists.

16 July 2008 The lawyers of former Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovsky submit his appeal for release on parole to Ingodinsky district court in Chita.

16 July 2008 The Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation forecasts that Russian arms and military hardware export sales will reach a new record of more than \$8 billion dollars. In 2007 the figure was \$7.4 billion.

16 July 2008 First Deputy Chief of the Main Personnel Directorate of the MOD Lt-Gen Nikolay Vasilyev says that 109 military departments will be retained at civilian higher education establishments. They will train about 3,000 officers a year.

17 July 2008 The parents of Mikhail Khodorkovsky appeal to Dmitry Medvedev with a request to release their son.

Editor-in-chief of the *Zavtra* newspaper Aleksandr Prokhanov claims that Mikhail Khodorkovsky will probably be released in October.

A court in Chita extends Platon Lebedev's prison term to 2 November.

17 July 2008 RIA Novosti reports that a letter written by Viktor Vekselberg, the chairman of the board of directors of TNK-BP Management, to the head of the Federal Migration Service, Konstantin Romodanovsky says that TNK-BP cannot provide an employment contract for Robert Dudley. Dudley insists he has a valid employment contract without a time limitation. The Russian shareholders in TNK-BP - the Alfa consortium, Access and Renova - consider BP's interpretation of issues concerning the employment contract of TNK-BP employee Robert Dudley to be inappropriate.

17 July 2008 First Deputy Interior Ministry Mikhail Sukhodolsky says that a drop in crime was recorded in Russia for the first half of 2008.

17 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev addresses the presidium of the State Council to discuss the development of IT and e-government in the country.

17 July 2008 FAS head Igor Artemyev says that the FAS cannot accept applications from foreign companies to participate in strategic sectors of the Russian Federation until an official application form is drawn up. A total of 42 sectors are regarded as strategic, including the nuclear industry, arms production and sales, fishing, space exploration, geological exploration, some broadcasting companies and printed media with circulation of no fewer than 1m copies, as well as printing and publishing companies capable of printing 200 million pages per month. Exploration and extraction of mineral resources at subsurface areas of federal importance are also regarded as strategic sectors.

17 July 2008 The chairman of the Chechen electoral commission, Ismail Baykhanov, says the election to the Chechen parliament of the second convocation will be held on 12 October.

17 July 2008 The board of directors of Transneft elect Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko its chairman.

17 July 2008 The navy states that the Russian Northern Fleet's missile cruiser *Marshal Ustinov* will arrive in the Arctic region near Spitsbergen to join anti-submarine ship *Severomorsk*: "The ships of the Northern Fleet will call at Arctic regions as often as necessary. All actions carried out by Russian warships are in strict compliance with international law, including the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea."

18 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says at a meeting with First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin that:

The continental shelf is our national wealth. Therefore, the law itself is of a special nature. The procedure which it sets out is special. There are no competitions or auctions, which are usually used in practice. There is a targeted decision by the government. This has been done consciously - we discussed this - in order to use this national wealth in a rational way.

Medvedev signs a law that sets new rules for developing sub-surface assets in the continental shelf.

18 July 2008 The Simonovsky district court says that former Yukos vice-president Vasily Aleksanyan will remain in custody until 23 October.

18 July 2008 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says inflation in Russia may exceed the planned 10.5-per-cent mark in 2008, but by an insignificant figure.

Shuvalov expresses support for the process of merging regions: "The number of constituent parts in the Russian Federation is not rational from the point of view of administration. I do not know of any specific plans for unifications, but it is a correct process and it needs to be organized."

18 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the government is going to control the process of purchases of grain from the new harvest, as well as prices for grain.

18 July 2008 Head of TNK-BP Robert Dudley sends a letter to staff, in which the conflict situation in the oil company is explained. He accuses his opponents of a campaign of misinformation.

19 July 2008 Robert Dudley is issued with a temporary 10-day visa, while the problem of his longer-term employment visa is being resolved.

19 July 2008 A rally in support of political prisoners takes place in central Moscow. It is organised by the United Civil Front.

21 July 2008 First Deputy Head of the President's Administration Vladislav Surkov says that the implementation of Strategy 2020 should result not simply in the introduction of new technologies and a rise in productivity but in radical changes in Russian society. He says that there is no longer a threat of colour revolutions in Russia. He credits the Nashi movement for helping to defeat this threat.

21 July 2008 Russian uranium holding Atomredmetzoloto increased the extraction of uranium in 2007 by 7 per cent to 3,413,000 tonnes. A total of 3,190,000 tonnes of uranium was extracted in 2006. In 2008 it plans to extract 3,880,000 tonnes of uranium, which will be a 10 per cent increase over 2007. Atomredmetzoloto is fully owned by Atomenergoprom.

21 July 2008 The mufti of the Republic of Kabarda-Balkaria, Anas Pshikhachev, blames certain western forces for destabilising the situation in Kabarda-Balkaria.

21 July 2008 An anti-terror drill commences in Dagestan. It includes the ships of the Caspian Flotilla and a marine unit.

21 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs a resolution on the new rate of duty for oil and oil products. From 1 August 2008, export duty on oil will be \$495.9 per tonne. The current rate is \$398.1 per tonne. Export duty on light oil products will increase from 1 August from \$280.5 to \$346.4 per tonne and on heavy oil products from \$151.1 to \$186.6 a tonne.

22 July 2008 The Union of Journalists of Russia calls on Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka to take under personal control the investigation into the beating of Rostislav Bogushevskiy, a freelance journalist writing for the *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper. A statement received by *Ekho Moskvy* says that the "crime was committed in the most cynical way" and "provoked a strong public reaction".

22 July 2008 Two high-ranking employees of the Ministry of Defence have been arrested. They were accepting bribes to advance their subordinates up the career ladder. They are the head of the financial and economic service of the radiological, chemical and biological defence troops of the Defence Ministry, Yevgenny Nikolayevich Lebedev, and one of his colleagues, Yevgenny Vasilyevich Lukin, deputy head of the management headquarters of the head of the radiological, chemical and biological defence troops.

22 July 2008 Leonid Reznikov is elected president of the Atomstroyexport closed joint-stock company. He replaces Sergey Shmatko who became the Russian energy minister.

22 July 2008 Education and Science Minister Andrey Fursenko says that "a quarter of our people are incompetent in maths, and almost the same proportion are functionally illiterate in Russian. This is the real picture. Unified state exams, for all their shortcomings and gaps, did unfortunately show, or confirm, the lamentable state of general education in Russia."

22 July 2008 Chief state public health officer and head of Rospotrebnadzor

Gennady Onishchenko describes the actions of foreign tobacco manufacturers in the Russian Federation as "nicotine genocide" of the Russian people and said that "a court of law should pass judgment on these actions". He particularly blames US corporations.

22 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs a directive approving the blueprint of the federal targeted-development programme to improve the system of manning sergeant and soldier posts with servicemen on contract. The programme covers the period between 2009 and 2015. According to the blueprint, by 2016 the number of servicemen on contract is to increase by 64,200 to 107,700.

22 July 2008 A squadron of ships of the BSF puts to sea from Novorossiysk to practise a set of combat training tasks within the framework of the Caucasus 2008 exercise.

22 July 2008 The consortium of Russian shareholders in TNK-BP - the Alfa consortium, Access and Renova – says that it believes that the withdrawal by BP of foreign specialists from Russia will not affect TNK-BP's profitability.

23 July 2008 The arbitration court in Tyumen Region upholds a lawsuit filed by the company Tetlis against TNK-BP, and declares an agreement with BP regarding the provision of services by seconded foreign staff to be invalid.

23 July 2008 The first public liaison office of Yedinaya Rossiya chairman (and Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin opens in Nizhny Novgorod. The decision to organize these public liaison offices in regional centres was taken on 2 July 2008 at a session of the party's supreme council.

23 July 2008 A TV show titled "Islamic Evolution" broadcast by Russian *Ren TV* shows Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov as set on bringing about Islamization of Chechnya.

23 July 2008 *Vesti TV* reports that the FAS last week instituted proceedings against Russia's five oil majors (Gazprom Neft, LUKoil, Rosneft, TNK-BP and Surgutneftegaz), accusing them of abusing their collective dominant position in the market.

23 July 2008 Konstantin Romodanovsky, head of the Federal Migration Service says TNK-BP head Robert Dudley staying in Russia without a valid labour contract that will entitle him to have a working visa is not a law violation; it is an internal matter for TNK-BP. Dudley was granted a transit visa on 19 July that gives him the right to stay in Russia until 29 July.

23 July 2008 Central Electoral Commission (CEC) member Igor Borisov says the CEC possesses information that employees of Western special services work as members of OSCE's international observer missions.

24 July 2008 TNK-BP head Robert Dudley says he will leave Russia: "In view of the uncertainty of the situation with my employment visa and the incessant persecution of the company and me personally, I have taken the decision to leave the Russian Federation and to fulfil my duties temporarily from outside the country."

24 July 2008 A Levada-Tsentr poll shows 70 per cent approve of Dmitry Medvedev's work as president. 36 per cent expressed their confidence in the

president. 54 per cent trust Vladimir Putin, and 80 per cent of those polled are happy with his work as prime minister.

24 July 2008 The first vice-president of the Academy of Problems of Security, Defence and Law Enforcement, former chief of the Main Staff of the Strategic Missile Troops (and a consultant to the commander of the Strategic Missile Troops), Colonel-General Viktor Yesin, says Russia will respond to the deployment of the US missile defence system in Europe by equipping Topol-M missiles with manoeuvrable warheads. He says another technical measure "could be the revival of the programme of creating orbital ballistic missiles capable of reaching the territory of the USA in circumvention of the existing and potential missile defence systems through the South Pole". Other measures could be the deployment of the Iskander high-precision missile systems with ballistic and cruise missiles in Kaliningrad region, the stationing of Tu-22M3 long-range bombers, equipped with high-precision weapons, on front-line airfields, as well as Russia's withdrawal from the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty.

Yesin says Russia cannot create its own ABM system because it does not have enough money.

24 July 2008 Vladimir Putin criticises Mechel's pricing policy. It sells metals abroad for a quarter of the price it sells within Russia.

24 July 2008 Aleksandr Bastrykin, chief of the Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecution Service, says that the number of reported corruption-related crimes is increasing and vows to fight corruption regardless of rank and position. He says compared with 2007, the number of such crimes has increased by 11 per cent. Bastrykin says that in the first six months of 2008, investigating bodies of the Investigations Committee had concluded 2,403 criminal cases on bribes, and 96 per cent of these cases, concerning a total of 2,500 people, had been sent to courts.

Bastrykin expresses concern over the increased number of extremist crimes in Moscow. He says the general crime rate in Russia is down by 9 per cent but the number of extremist crimes grew by 67 per cent (from 150 to 250) in Russia and by 165 per cent (from 37 to 98) in the Central Federal District in the first half of 2008.

24 July 2008 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov criticizes official efforts to prevent the spread of terrorism and separatism in the republic as ineffective.

25 July 2008 Mechel responds to Vladimir Putin's criticism.

25 July 2008 The directorate of the Investigations Committee under the Russian Federation Prosecutor's Office says the number of deserters in Russia is decreasing.

25 July 2008 Federal Migration Service (FMS) spokesman Konstantin Poltoranin says there are no obstacles to TNK-BP head Robert Dudley returning to Russia.

26 July 2008 It is reported that the prosecutor's office of Moscow's central administrative district has sent a notification to TNK-BP president Robert Dudley saying he is being summoned on 28 July to discuss administrative violations at TNK-BP. The Moscow prosecutor's office has said that there is no need for Robert Dudley to attend to answer questions.

26 July 2008 The Vostok-2008 exercise takes place between 26 July and 1 August under the command of Chief of the General Staff General Nikolay Makarov.

27 July 2008 The C-in-C of the Russian Navy Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky says five to six aircraft carrier groups are to be created in future in the Northern and Pacific fleets: "Everything should work as a system, including aircraft carriers. We have named it a naval aircraft carrier system, which will be deployed at the Northern and Pacific fleets. Construction of these systems will begin after 2012."

28 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin accuses Mechel of tax evasion. As a result of this Mechel loses another third of its value on the Russian stock exchange.

28 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the state must have a neutral approach towards all the participants of the market. He says that the Cabinet of Ministers must take a considered approach to tackling issues of regulating price formation on the market. He has in mind pricing by monopolies.

28 July 2008 *Ekho Moskvy* reports that the Interfax complex news analysis system SCAN notes that on 21-27 July President Medvedev was mentioned in 1,222 reports in various Russian media. On 21-27 July Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was mentioned in 1,170 reports.

28 July 2008 Duma speaker and Yedinaya Rossiya chairman Boris Gryzlov says that Yedinaya Rossiya will hold its 10th congress on 20 November. Yedinaya Rossiya will re-elect two governing bodies of the party, the presidium of the General Council and the General Council. Yedinaya Rossiya will also discuss a draft of Strategy 2020.

28 July 2008 The Ministry of Economic Development raises its forecast for the maximum level of inflation in Russia this year from 10.5 per cent to 11.8 per cent. Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich has said that Russia's inflation rate this year will not be higher than it was in 2007, when it stood at 11.9 per cent. Some analysts say that inflation is higher, at about 14 per cent.

28 July 2008 The chairman of the Federation Council commission on national naval policy, former commander of the Northern Fleet Admiral Vyacheslav Popov says new naval aircraft carrier systems (NACS) in the Northern and Pacific fleets will definitely include nuclear aircraft carriers. "Aircraft carriers will obviously become the main element of the future NACS in the Northern and Pacific fleets and they will certainly be nuclear ones. And they really must not be individual ships, but precisely systems."

28 July 2008 Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says the operation of the Russian-British company, TNK-BP, on Russian territory is not connected with any political risks.

The FMS says that TNK-BP can be granted permission to employ additional foreign staff. It says there is no obstacle for its head Robert Dudley to return to Russia.

The consortium of Russian shareholders in TNK-BP, "Alfa-grupp", Access Industries and Renova sends a letter to BP's representative in TNK-BP, Alistair Graham, in which they ask him to disclose the whereabouts of the company's head, Robert Dudley.

29 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that Moscow should become a global financial centre. He meets the chairman of Sberbank, German Gref. Medvedev states:

We all deal with the stock market a lot. It is currently one of the most attractive markets in the world, for exactly the reason you talked about - the crisis in global financial markets and certain problems with liquidity.

That is why we will continue developing the stock market in this country, and this is a task for all of us. The president and the state as a whole should be involved in it by issuing relevant normative acts; the government should be involved in it by implementing relevant decisions and normative acts and by carrying out supervision. And finally, public companies themselves as well as associations of public companies, that is corporate associations, should be involved, so that their activities are in line with high corporate standards, and are transparent and understandable for the market, to prevent manipulation with share prices. In this case the result will be very good. I think that the prospects for the development of our stock market are very bright.

At the same time, the development of the stock market will, no doubt, have an influence on the entire financial market. We all remember that we have a special task to turn Russia, and, correspondingly, Moscow, into one of the world's financial centres.

29 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin discusses the achievements of the nuclear industry and plans for its future development at a meeting in the town of Elektrostal near Moscow. He says "it is planned to allocate a formidable amount of money - almost R1,000 billion (\$43.83 billion) - until 2015 from the state budget, I want to emphasize that it is specifically from the state budget, for the development of nuclear power and the nuclear industry."

29 July 2008 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that it is unlikely that Mechel will suffer the same fate as Yukos.

29 July 2008 The government approves the federal targeted programme "Socioeconomic development of the Chechen Republic in 2008-2011". The total amount of funding for the programme is R120,576,850,000 (\$5.16 billion).

Lema Gudayev, head of the Chechen president's information and analytical directorate, denies reports that an attempt has been made on the life of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov.

29 July 2008 The MOD will spend R87 billion (about \$3.7 billion) on building facilities for troops and receive over 32,000 flats for servicemen in 2008.

30 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev calls on Russian business to invest more in innovation. He says the state would commission only major innovation projects and calls for creating conditions for businessmen to make this kind of investment interesting to them.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and head of the Federal Antimonopoly Service Igor Artyemyev discuss price increases by market players. They discuss cartel collusion, which will be made a criminal offence.

30 July 2008 A Levada Centre opinion poll states that 62 per cent say that Russia needs opposition parties, 46 per cent believe they already exist. Those in favour of an opposition are usually supporters of the Communist Party of Russia (CPRF), the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Spravedlivaya Rossiya, the Union of Right Forces and Yabloko; Yedinaya Rossiya supporters say they are against it. CPRF

supporters said that the opposition already exists, while supporters of the Union of Right Forces, Yabloko and Spravedlivaya Rossiya tended to hold the opposite view. About 42-45 per cent of respondents said that Russia should have a two- to three-party system, while 32 per cent spoke in favour of a one-party system.

30 July 2008 Konstantin Goloskokov, activist of the Nashi youth movement, files a request to the Prosecutor-General's Office asking it to check whether the report Countering Political Corruption by Transparency International-R (branch in Russia) contains libel against the Yedinaya Rossiya Party.

30 July 2008 A government order which contains new criteria defining small and medium-sized businesses comes into force. The new criteria contain the notion of a micro-business - a commercial enterprise with annual revenues of up to R60 million not including value-added tax. Businesses with annual revenues of up to R400 million may be called small enterprises; and medium businesses are those with the annual revenues up to R1 billion.

30 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev submits for the consideration of the People's Assembly of the Karachay-Cherkess Republic the candidacy of Boris Ebzeyev as president of the Republic.

30 July 2008 The Russian Federal Labour and Employment Service demands that employees of TNK-BP who are guilty of violating labour legislation be charged for administrative offences.

31 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev calls for tough measures against the regional authorities that are trying to undermine the new federal legislation aimed at helping small business. He is speaking in the town of Gagarin (Smolensk Region) at a meeting on conditions for small and medium-sized business.

Small business must not be viewed by us as a simple fiscal source. Generally, no business should be viewed this way, because behind it there are people, sometimes large numbers of employees. However, speaking of small business - if you will, I will end on emotive words - this is, in essence, the way for the rebirth of our country. The ambitious numbers that we name - 70 per cent - they are actually high. Even if we manage to involve 40 to 50 per cent of people in real business, we will have a totally different country. This is, indeed, one of our most realistic hopes. Therefore, we continue to work on this and I will keep all these issues under my personal control.

He tells the law-enforcement agencies and the authorities should to stop harassing business.

We need our country to have a normal investment climate. And that is a task for absolutely everyone here: for the representatives of the authorities as a whole, for the law-enforcement agencies, and for business. Everyone has a part to play in creating a business climate. If we don't tackle this together, we'll achieve nothing.

In order to stop a number of outrages, I would like to inform you that today I have signed a plan to counter corruption. We will start work on it in the near future. That is all wanted to say to begin our talk.

Sergey Naryshkin, head of the presidential administration, says that the plan to fight corruption signed by Dmitry Medvedev envisages that all federal and regional

authorities will present their anticorruption plans by 1 October.

Medvedev signs a plan to fight corruption. Head of research at the Institute of National Strategy Nikita Krichevsky says that every year 14 million corruption crimes are committed in Russia.

31 July 2008 The executive director of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau, Natalya Rykova, says that there has been a sharp increase in the number of ethnically motivated crimes in Russia. 170 attacks on the grounds of racial and ethnic intolerance were carried out in Russia in the first half of the year. As a result, 80 people died and about 200 were injured. In 2007 about 50 people died from crimes committed on ethnic grounds and more than 200 were injured. People originating from Central Asia were the ones who mostly became victims of attacks.

31 July 2008 The Moscow prosecutor's office denies information which has appeared in the mass media that the checking of the observation of employment and other legislation in TNK-BP is continuing.

The Federal Labour and Employment Service requests information from TNK-BP about its foreign employees.

31 July 2008 Deputy Defence Minister Army General Nikolay Pankov says that the MOD will create core military higher educational establishments, similar to the federal universities. "There will be no major changes in the military education system. The total number of universities will remain the same. However, today we are trying to designate core higher education establishments so that others can become elements of this system."

31 July 2008 Lt-Gen Sergey Razygrayev is appointed to the post of commander of the Special Command Troops, aide to the commander-in-chief of the Air Force, Lt-Col Vladimir Drik.

August 2008

1 August 2008 The Moscow City Court finds Leonid Nevzlin, a former major shareholder in Yukos (now living in Israel), guilty of organizing murders and attempted murders. He receives a life sentence.

1 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev introduces the eighth post of deputy defence minister. According to the president's decree of 9 November 2007 N1477, the defence minister is allowed to have seven deputies.

Airborne Troops' commander Lt-Gen Valery Yevtukhovich says the Airborne Troops will have been reformed and provided with new standard types of weapons and equipment by 2010.

URF leader Nikita Belykh says top military officials "are not interested" in carrying out an armed forces reform. The Defence Ministry has prepared a draft Strategy for Building the Armed Forces to 2030 under which conscription will be preserved.

Interfax publishes extracts from a draft Blueprint for the Development of Russian Armed Forces until 2030 prepared by the Defence Ministry is published. It expresses concern over US military power.

Independent military expert Pavel Felgengauer says that in the next few years the Russian armed forces will experience severe shortages of personnel. He is speaking on *Ekho Moskvy* radio, commenting on the Russian Defence Ministry's recent draft blueprint.

1 August 2008 Vyacheslav Volodin, secretary of Yedinaya Rossiya General Council Presidium, welcomes Dmitry Medvedev's anti-corruption plan.

1 August 2008 A Levada Poll carried out on 18-22 July gives the following results: 47 per cent believe that Putin and Medvedev equally share power in the country. 36 per cent believe that the country is governed by Putin. In April 27 per cent said so. 8 per cent believe that country is governed by Medvedev. In April 22 per cent said so. In total, 1,600 people were polled.

2 August 2008 Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says that the conflict around the TNK-BP oil company is a result of disagreement between Russian and British shareholders and the Russian government will not interfere in it.

2 August 2008 The North Ossetian Ministry of Emergencies says it has started preparations for accepting refugees from the breakaway Georgian region of South Ossetia

3 August 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov is re-elected chairman of the Russian Railways board of directors.

3 August 2008 Writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn dies

3 August 2008 A rally in support of South Ossetia takes place on Teatralnaya Square in Vladikavkaz upon the initiative of the council of elders of the Styr Nykhas all-Ossetian public movement. Kamal Khodov, member of the council of elders of the Styr Nykhas union, says "the time has come to draw up a list of volunteers in order to determine who will take part in defending our land in the south".

4 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says at a meeting of the government's presidium that a terrorist threat remains in Russia. The ministers discuss the federal targeted-programme on counteracting terrorism as one of the key items on the agenda.

Putin instructs Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin to control the work for improving the antimonopoly legislation. The package of documents should be ready by mid-September.

4 August 2008 TNK-BP announces the resignation of its chief financial officer, James Owen. Owen says that substantial disagreements between shareholders make it impossible for him to independently discharge his duties as the chief financial officer.

The Federal Migration Service says it has issued more than 60 working visas for expatriate employees of TNK-BP.

4 August 2008 Army General Vladimir Boldyrev is appointed commander-in-chief of the Ground Troops. Previously he commanded the Volga Urals Military District. Boldyrev replaces Aleksey Maslov, who is appointed Russia's main military representative to NATO.

4 August 2008 The North Caucasus Military District information and public relations service states that the Caucasus-2008 large-scale joint exercise using forces and means for resolving antiterrorist tasks has been completed. The report is posted on the MOD web site.

5 August 2008 The National Antiterrorist Committee's federal targeted-development programme Antiterror is approved by the Russian government. It will run from 2009-2012.

5 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Vladimir Lukyanov head of the Interior Ministry's logistics department. Lukyanov was deputy head of the ministry's economic security department. Medvedev dismisses the deputy director of the Russian Federation State Courier Communications Service, Petr Kurchatov, and the deputy director of the Russian Federation Federal Migration Service, Aleksandr Ledenev.

The president also makes two appointments in the Federal Penal Service: Sergey Smirnov, who was in charge of the directorate for the Southern Federal District, is appointed head of the security directorate, while Vladimir Konetskikh is appointed head of the directorate for Khabarovsk Territory.

Aleksandr Lebedev is released from the post of deputy director of the Federal Migration Service.

5 August 2008 Air Force Commander-in-Chief Colonel-General Aleksandr Zelin has a press conference in which he discusses the development of the air force. He says the Russian Air Force is considering patrolling the Indian Ocean.

Yekaterina Priyetzheva, adviser to the defence minister says the military will have a new Internet information site, which will appear in July 2009.

6 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets the head of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs Vasily Yakemenko. Yakemenko presents information from the latest research on how many young Russians are educated in Russia and how many go to study abroad. Yakemenko says:

We are composing a database of young scientists and post-graduates - those who are working abroad at the moment. Today we have a database of several thousand people - not just those who are there and who have particular positions in scientific research centres and universities, but those who are prepared to return. I think that in a few months' times we will be able to discuss specific conditions for these people's return with them.

6 August 2008 The secretary of the presidium of the general council of Yedinaya Rossiya Vyacheslav Volodin says Yedinaya Rossiya has completed its "audit" of membership, with 4 per cent of the party members deemed dropouts as a result. As of 1 July, 80,313 people have lost touch with the party. The party has around 2 million members.

6 August 2008 Chechen Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says Sulim Yamadayev, commander of the Vostok battalion of the 42nd Motor Rifle Division of the Russian Defence Ministry, has been put on the federal wanted list.

6 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin appoints Dmitry Bezdelov head of the Federal Agency of the Russian Federation for State Border Development and

Maintenance (Rosgranitsa).

6 August 2008 A VTsIOM poll shows that 79 per cent would not like to leave Russia and live in another country. Nine per cent of respondents are thinking about this and want to change their place of residence. Another 9 per cent were planning to leave the homeland in the past, but have since changed their mind; 1 per cent of the respondents lived in another country, but came back; while 2 per cent found it difficult to give an answer. The number of people in the 18-24 age bracket who do not want to leave the country amounts to 69 per cent; their proportion is 91 per cent among people over 60. But the number of those who want to leave is much higher among young people (20 per cent) than among the elderly (2 per cent).

7 August 2008 A bomb explodes on a beach in Sochi's Lazarevsky district. Dmitry Medvedev instructs his plenipotentiary envoy to the Southern Federal District, Vladimir Ustinov, to take all necessary measures and personally control the investigation of the explosion.

8 August 2008 Head of the State Duma security committee Vladimir Vasilyev says that the number of terrorist acts in Russia falls by 50 per cent every year. He says in 2005 there were 257 terrorist acts in the country, in 2006 there were 112, and in 2007, 48.

8 August 2008 A Moscow court fines TNK-BP chief executive Robert Dudley R500 for breaking the Russian labour code.

10 August 2008 The United Civil Front leader in St Petersburg, Olga Kurnosova, says several opposition websites have been subjected to strong hacker attacks. In her opinion, the websites were broken into because they had published objective information on what is happening in the South Ossetian conflict zone.

11 August 2008 Federal Security Service (FSB) head Aleksandr Bortnikov reports to Dmitry Medvedev on the security situation in the Northern Caucasus.

Bortnikov says nine Georgian agents have been arrested in Russia.

11 August 2008 A tactical exercise of antiaircraft battalions of the Moscow Military District begins in Krasnodar Territory. The exercise will last until 15 August.

11 August 2008 The government commission for budget projections approves the draft federal budget for 2009. The document is expected to be endorsed at a government session on 21 August and forwarded to the Duma.

Spending on healthcare will rise 19.1 per cent to R357 billion, on education by 24.9 per cent to R432.2 billion and on national defence by 23.1 per cent to R1,266.8 billion. Funding for national security will go up by 30.6 per cent to R1,085.3 billion.

11 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia will transfer 64,000 conscript sergeants and ordinary seamen to contract service by 2015.

14 August 2008 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says the war in South Ossetia will drive the further re-equipment of the Russian army: "We are the victors, but we must not rest on our laurels. We must draw the most serious of conclusions on the re-equipment of our army...This means a serious discussion on their condition, mobility, various types of communications."

14 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs an order approving the make-up of the presidential council for the development of local self-government and the presidium of this council.

14 August 2008 The Presnensky district court of Moscow rules to disqualify TNK-BP head Robert Dudley on grounds of non-compliance with a decision of the State Labour Inspectorate.

15 August 2008 Deputy head of the Moscow State Labour Inspectorate Mikhail Malyuga says the Moscow State Labour Inspectorate has issued an order and initiated administrative proceedings in connection with new violations of labour legislation at TNK-BP.

18 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that state enterprises which do not become part of holding companies in key industries and are inefficiently coping with their functions must be privatised.

18 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says in a speech in Vladikavkaz that the performance of Russia's armed forces in the recent conflict in South Ossetia showed that they have overcome the "crisis of the 1990s" but still need to be modernized:

We did not intend, in this situation, and we did not expect such a brazen, mad escapade undertaken by the Georgian authorities. But the fact that our peacekeepers, reinforced with your participation, managed to act at times firmly and toughly is a sign that you have very good combat readiness, that our armed forces have overcome the crisis of the 1990s...The results of the peacekeeping operation in South Ossetia have served as a basis for modernizing our Armed Forces.

Medvedev orders Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov to draw up a programme for re-arming the Russian armed forces taking into account the experience of the South Ossetian operation.

18 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs a decree relieving Dmitry Akhanov of his duties as head of the Federal Energy Agency (Rosenergo). It was reported earlier that Rosenergo had been abolished by a presidential decree. At present the Energy Ministry is in charge of energy issues.

18 August 2008 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says the leadership of Chechnya guarantees safety for all emigre ex-ministers of the Chechen republic of Ichkeria and members of illegal armed formations not associated with grave crimes.

19 August 2008 Viktor Kulishov is appointed deputy director of the FSB and deputy chairman of the National Antiterrorist Committee. The head of the Federal Service for Control over the Trafficking of Narcotics, Viktor Ivanov, is also appointed a member of the National Antiterrorist Committee.

19 August 2008 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that all the personnel of the armed forces' permanent readiness units will go over to contract service by 2015. The non-commissioned officers of all units too will be transferred to contract service by 2015. In addition, all the sailors on compulsory service in the navy will go over to contract service in 2009. In 2009, R28 billion will be allocated to the programme for introducing contract service, and R24 billion and 32 billion in the next two years.

19 August 2008 The FAS finishes its investigation of the Mechel affair. The company will be fined R790 million.

20 August 2008 A representative of the General Staff, Major-General Ivan Borodinichik, says that the General Staff is expecting that the government will soon approve a federal all-purpose programme to improve the system of filling the posts of non-commissioned officers and men, as well as seamen and petty officers of shipboard personnel with contract servicemen. The funds for the programme are about 240 billion roubles for seven years.

20 August 2008 Three pro-democracy organizations, URF, RPDU and the Republican Party, which has been wound up by a court order, have announced that they will fight political battles together. The Yabloko party, which also took part in the initial consultations, did not agree with the final text of the statement.

21 August 2008 Vladimir Putin says the rate of inflation is too high. By mid-August prices grew by 9.5 per cent on January. GDP grew by 8 per cent January-June 2008.

21 August 2008 The government approves the draft federal budget for three years. The revenues of the state in 2009 are planned to amount to nearly R11,000 billion while the surplus would amount to nearly R2,000 billion. The expenditure will grow to R9,000 billion.

With regard to 2010 the revenues have been planned at about R12,000 billion. In 2011, the revenues are planned at reach R13,000 billion. The expenditure side of the three-year budget is as follows: in 2010 it would be a little over R10,000 billion and in 2011 it would increase by R1,000 billion.

22 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin discusses the concept for Russia's long-term development at a government meeting. He says that:

Within a decade, the real earnings of citizens should grow two, two and a half times. The quota of innovative industrial product, in total volume the output should be increased to 25 per cent, at the moment we have only 6 per cent.

There should be reform in public health, modernization of the pension system, the programme for development of the infrastructure should be implemented, the efficient integration of Russia into the world trade system should be ensured. But of course all of this can only be done on the basis of a strong economy. A key indicator - the growth of labour productivity must be increased by three, four times.

22 August 2008 A court denies a parole appeal by the former head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

22 August 2008 The commander of the Vostok battalion in Chechnya, Sulim Yamadayev, has been dismissed from military service and transferred to the reserve.

The decision putting Yamadayev on the federal wanted list is annulled.

22 August 2008 Moscow's Presnensky inter-district prosecutor's office submits an objection to a ruling by a court in the same district about the imposition of an administrative penalty against Robert Dudley.

Dudley complains about Rostrud to the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office and to a number of other agencies.

22 August 2008 Aleksandr Brindikov, head of the group of advisers to the Rosoboronexport director-general and president of the League of assistance to defence enterprises, gives a negative assessment of the modernization of Russian defence industries.

Vladislav Putilin, first deputy chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission under the Russian government says: "We are currently drawing up a new arms programme for the period 2010-2020." He says the new programme should take off in 2011.

25 August 2008 The government submits for the consideration of the Duma the draft federal budget until 2011. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin states:

In 2003 I spoke of the need to ensure the doubling of GDP. At the time, a great many people believed that this objective could not be met, that it was impossible. Well, earlier today I was given the analysis of what had been happening in the national economy so far. By the end of 2009 - or in the first quarter, in the first half of 2010 at the very least - this objective will be met. There is no longer any doubt about it. In this sense, competent, economically fine-tuned work in the budget sphere is very important, and I hope and expect that our joint work will be efficient.

25 August 2008 TNK-BP's executive vice president for refining and sales business, Antony Considine, announces his resignation.

26 August 2008 Strategic Missile Troops spokesman Col Aleksandr Vovk says they are expected to carry out several combat-training and test launches of ICBMs before the end of the year. He says no missile launches are planned in the near future with Topol-M silo-based and mobile systems.

26 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin approves a list of critical technologies that come under the law on the rules for foreign investment in strategic industries. The list includes 35 technologies that have important socio-economic significance or important significance for the defence of the country and the security of the state. The list of critical technologies includes cell technologies, nanotechnologies, technologies of bio-engineering, hydrogen energy, new and renewable sources of energy. The list also includes technologies of processing, storing, transferring and protecting information, the creation of intellectual systems of navigation, processing of composite and ceramic materials, of crystalline materials, polymers and elastomers. Technologies of environmentally safe development of deposits and extraction of mineral resources are also included.

The law "On rules for making foreign investment in economic entities that have strategic significance for ensuring the defence of the country or security of the state" came into force in May. The strategic industries include 42 types of activity: in particular, nuclear, production and sale of weapons, fisheries, space activities, geological investigation of mineral resources, certain TV and radio broadcasting companies and printed mass media with print-run no less than one million copies as well as polygraphic systems capable of ensure the printing of no less than 200 million printed pages per month. The strategic industries also include prospecting and extraction of mineral deposits in the areas of mineral deposits of federal

significance.

27 August 2008 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says that any attempts to raise the question of Chechnya's sovereignty in the wake of the latest events in the Caucasus can be considered only as a provocation.

28 August 2008 The Strategic Missile Troops test a Topol (RS-12M) ICBM. It was launched from Plesetsk cosmodrome. It is reported that it struck the notional target at a Kamchatka range with high accuracy.

28 August 2008 Aleksandr Bortnikov, FSB director and head of the National Antiterrorist Committee, meets with regional heads of antiterrorist commissions and operational headquarters of the Volga Federal District held in Nizhny Novgorod. He says Georgian special services are operating in southern Russia.

28 August 2008 The Strategic Missile Troops test a Topol (RS-12M) ICBM. It was launched from Plesetsk cosmodrome. It is reported that it struck the notional target at a Kamchatka range with high accuracy.

28 August 2008 Aleksandr Bortnikov, FSB director and head of the National Antiterrorist Committee, meets regional heads of antiterrorist commissions and operational headquarters of the Volga Federal District in Nizhny Novgorod. He says Georgian special services are operating in southern Russia. Bortnikov says:

We have information that chiefs of bandit groups, including Al Qaeda members, are planning to use the aggravated situation at the southern borders of our country to plot terrorist attacks. The bandits continue planning terrorist attacks, most of which have been foiled in the course of special preventive operations in Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabarda-Balkaria and the Chechen Republic.

31 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin demands that there be no delays with the construction of the East Siberia-Pacific Ocean oil pipeline, the first section of which (from Tayshet to Skovorodino) is planned to be put into operation in 2009.

31 August 2008 The investigations committee under the Prosecutor's Office has launched a criminal case in connection with the death today of the owner of the ingushetiya.ru website, Magomed Yevloyev. The case is launched under Article 109 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code (causing death through carelessness). Yevloyev had been detained by officials from the republic's Interior Ministry on arrival at Magas airport "in order for him to be taken to a police station to give evidence in a criminal case". According to preliminary information, while Yevloyev and police officials were travelling in a car, a shot was fired accidentally from a pistol belonging to one of the policemen, with the bullet hitting Yevloyev in the head. The ingushetiya.ru website had been closed at the request of the Prosecutor's Office, which had concluded that ingushetiya.ru had called on the republic's residents to attend an unauthorized rally in January 2008.

September 2008

1 September 2008 Lawyer Kaloy Akhilgov says that the death of Magomed Yevloyev is first degree murder.

1 September 2008 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev and Chechen President

Ramzan Kadyrov attend a ceremony in Groznyy to mark the opening of a Suvorov Military School.

1 September 2008 The Centre-2008 strategic exercise for ground troops commences in the Volga and Urals federal districts. Some 12,000 service personnel and over 1,000 tanks, armoured vehicles and field guns will be involved. The exercise will run to 27 September.

1 September 2008 Vladimir Vasilyev, chairman of the Duma Committee on Security says it has information that Al Qaeda, which is interested in escalating conflict in the Caucasus, intends to use the situation surrounding South Ossetia to that end.

1 September 2008 Oleg Baklanov, a former USSR minister of mechanical engineering, says Russia is two decades behind the leading foreign countries in the development of rocket and space technology and space exploration. He states:

We have wasted 20 years in space exploration. To catch up, we need to carry out a fundamental review of all that has happened in the space industry in recent years. If the funding of the Russian space effort remains as it is at present for a further 5-10 years, we shall lose our experienced personnel for good, and, in the future, we shall have to start our space technology from scratch.

2 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the Russian government will be moving even further towards reducing the tax burden.

4 September 2008 The Ingush opposition holds a protest rally in Moscow over the death of Magomed Yevloyev.

4 September 2008 The Russian and UK shareholders of TNK-BP, which is owned by BP and the Russian consortium AAR (Alfa Group, Access Industries and Renova) on a parity basis sign a memorandum of understanding.

5 September 2008 Novyy Region news agency reports that the Kuk Bure (Grey Wolves) public movement, which represents the Bashkir living in Bashkortostan and Russia, demands that the Kremlin guarantee the right to self-determination for the people of the republic. The leaders of the organization are calling on the federal authorities "to stop the destruction of the Bashkir language by removing ethnic studies from the school curriculum and to provide conditions for the Bashkir people to fully exercise their right to self-determination within the borders of the Republic of Bashkortostan". If the demands are not met, public associations of all Russia's ethnic republics (Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, Yakutia and others) intend to hold a mass protest.

5 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs an order dismissing Konstantin Pulikovskiy from his post as head of the Federal Service for Ecological, Technological and Nuclear Monitoring. The new head of Rostekhnadzor is to be Nikolay Kutynin, the deputy head of the service.

5 September 2008 Viktor Remishevskiy, deputy head of Roskosmos says he hopes that Russia and the USA will continue to cooperate in space research.

8 September 2008 Command post exercises start in the Volga-Urals Military District. They are being held under the framework of the operational-strategic

Centre-2008 manoeuvres of the Ground Troops, which began on 1 September. They will last until 15 September.

8 September 2008 Yedinaya Rossiya Chairman Vladimir Putin's public liaison offices have opened and started work in all the 83 constituent parts of the Russian Federation.

9 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets businessman Alisher Usmanov. He says the Russian government will provide political support for Russian business when taking a decision on investing outside the Russian Federation.

9 September 2008 Anatoly Chubays, ex-head of the now defunct United Energy Systems says that Russia's policy in the gas sector has to be retargeted towards the domestic market, otherwise the country will face a serious gas shortage.

9 September 2008 Viktor Ozerov, Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Security and Defence Issues, says additional budget allocations for national defence amounted to R28.5 billion for 2008. The extra funding has brought the total 2008 Russian military budget up to R1.017 billion. Vladimir Vasilyev, the head of the Duma Security Committee, says that in 2009, spending on national security and law-enforcement agencies will be increased by 31.3 per cent as compared to 2008, to reach R1,085.9 billion.

10 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets the head of the Federal Service for Financial Markets, Vladimir Milovidov. He says:

We cannot change the situation on the American market, for example. Let the Americans get to grips with their mortgage system and their other instruments themselves. Although, if one puts it simply, they have left almost everyone in a fix.

However, it is completely clear that there are two points we need to think about. First, despite all kinds of difficulties, a number of Russian assets and Russian companies are still undervalued. There is clearly potential for growth here. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that since our market is growing, volatility is an inherent attribute, as they say. That is, there are rather significant fluctuations in valuations. There are both disadvantages and advantages to this.

10 September 2008 The commander of Strategic Missile Troops, Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov, says that the new ICBM RS-24 will be equipped with multiple independently targetable warheads. The RS-24 in this configuration was first tested on 29 May 2007 and is to replace the older SS-18 and SS-19 missiles until 2050. It was created in response to the US missile shield to be deployed in Europe. In June 2008, the chief engineer of Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology, Yury Solomonov, announced that RS-24 was an advanced version of the Topol-M missile that would finish tests in 2008 and most likely be deployed in 2009.

Solovtsov says that Russian ICBMs could be aimed at the US missile defence facilities in Poland, the Czech Republic and other countries.

The Duma holds a closed session with Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov.

A source in the MOD informs Interfax-AVN that one of the main conclusions of

recent military operations in South Ossetia is that Russia's land forces should switch from divisional to the brigade system of forming units. It is planned that over 40 motorized infantry brigades will be created on the basis of the existing motorized infantry divisions in the land forces. The divisional system will be kept in the Airborne Troops.

10 September 2008 Public Health Deputy Minister Yury Voronin states that by 2020, the population of Russia might grow to 146 million; however, the share of economically active people will probably fall to 53 per cent. Currently, economically active people account for 63 per cent of the population.

10 September 2008 *Ren TV* reports that protests against rising fuel prices took place in all Russian regions.

11 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia will be rearming its army taking into account the results of the conflict with Georgia. He states:

We need modern, efficient armed forces and this is one of the state's key tasks according to the documents that were adopted earlier. A special decision was taken some time ago to considerably increase monetary allowance for best officers who are in the units of permanent readiness or who have appropriately proved themselves during military exercises. This is the most important decision. And we should now focus on the issues of re-equipping armaments. We will be doing this both consistently and thoroughly and proceeding from those considerations, proceeding from those problems, which, among other occasions, occurred recently. Without any doubt the crisis in the Caucasus, Georgia's aggression and its continued militarization will also affect these decisions. In any event this puts the task that I have just formulated into the range of the state's highest priorities for the next few years.

We shall, of course, need to increase the combat readiness and training of our Armed Forces in general. We shall carry out exercises, visits and we shall be engaged in these activities not just in the Russian Federation - something that is already being done on a regular basis - but also in countries which are among our closest allies - I mean our partners in the CSTO. We shall work on these issues with other states which want to widen military and military-technical cooperation with the Russian Federation. Therefore, I have taken the decision to carry out our strategic aviation's flight to Venezuela at the invitation of that state's leadership. There will also be naval exercises, a naval component. Exercises will be held in other places as well. This will clearly benefit the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. And we shall definitely be engaged in this.

11 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that the current situation in Russia's financial market is temporary:

The centre located in our country might become a large and universal financial platform in the region in future and in the long term it might successfully compete on global financial markets. Apart from that, no less important for us, and in the current situation it might be even more important, is that it will enable us to modernize the whole financial infrastructure in the country and it should become a tool for attracting additional resources to the country, to the economy, and not only foreign, but also domestic.

However, there are obvious problems. We should bear in mind that the open

capital market - we are experiencing this fully now - contains quite a few risks, and the possibility of an unbalanced inflow or outflow of funds might create problems both with banking liquidity and with the increase of inflation risks; it might warm up the economy excessively.

The government will soon approve the strategy of the development of the financial market. It is clear that it should help to qualitatively improve the domestic financial system. I believe that these measures should be approved as soon as possible and they should help increase the attractiveness of the Russian financial market. On the whole, the situation remains quite normal. We understand that budget surplus still remains and the economy shows quite good growth rates, as I have already said. I talked about it yesterday when we discussed the situation on the stock market. Nevertheless, the government and the Central Bank should do everything in their power to ensure the inflow of additional funds to the financial market. This is absolutely clear today. And we must do it without fail.

12 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says he is about to authorize the allocation of additional R45 billion for the federal space programme within the next three years.

12 September 2008 The Cabinet of Ministers' press service says the government has approved subsidies to the tune of R7,104 million to a number of regions to support measures for ensuring balanced 2008 budgets. The Republic of Altay will get R200 million, Ingushetia - R400 million, Mariy-El - R250 million, Sakha (Yakutia) - R200 million. Kamchatka Territory will get R419.837 million and Maritime Territory R474.234 million in subsidies. The budget of Stavropol Territory will get R814 million from the federal coffers, Archangelsk Region R871.558 million, and Murmansk Region R1,474.647 million. Chukotka Autonomous Area will get the largest sum - R2 billion - to balance its budget in 2008.

12 September 2008 Sergey Ivanov makes the following comment about the defence industry:

The general situation in Russia's defence industry has been rather favourable for the past few years. The output of all defence plants doubled late last year as against 2000...Dynamics of the past seven to eight years have been positive in all spheres but military shipbuilding...The amount of civilian and double-use products of defence plants has reached 45 per cent of their total output. That's a positive tendency, especially as defence plants are increasingly involved in the high-tech innovative economy.

13 September 2008 Army General Vladimir Boldyrev, Ground Troops chief commander, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda* on Russian ground forces.

Boldyrev says that following the military operations in South Ossetia, the Russian military command, "in addition to updating the armaments of armoured vehicles, will take the most radical measures to update the communication equipment of the tank troops and drastically improve their command and control system".

The deputy chief of the General Staff, Anatoly Nogovitsyn, says that Russia's plans to carry out combat training for the subunits of the North Caucasus Military District are exclusively defensive:

Various preparations are under way. There are peacekeeping and operational

plans, and we are working on them. These plans are of a strictly defensive nature. We have no plans to invade or occupy any countries. We have enough land. The Russian Federation is not planning to seize anything. It is not planning or practising offensive operations.

15 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that it is pointless for other states to impose sanctions on Russia because of Georgia. He is addressing a session of the board of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. He also states that Russia is committed to protecting the interests of its business both inside the country and abroad, and if somebody tries to block Russia's access to a market, there will be certain consequences. He says there will be no change in economic policy, and that Russia still desires to join the WTO.

Despite what happened in August, despite the military decisions, the principles of economic policy will not change. There should be no change in priorities. We do not need either militarization, or governmentalization of the economy. But we certainly do need order. And the state will ensure order, while sticking to the basic values and rights and freedoms that are stipulated in our constitution and the main laws. I believe that the main task nowadays is the one I talked about some time ago: defending the right to private property and strengthening courts in our country.

15 September 2008 Yabloko leader Sergey Mitrokhin makes the following statement on talks with the URF:

We are holding consultations with everybody, including the Union of Right Forces. In our view, this unification should not be a goal in itself but should strengthen the democrats. To achieve this, the democrats should acknowledge their responsibility for the defeat of democracy in Russia. They should rethink their ideology and strategy. Yabloko has more than once put forward scenarios of this rethink and is doing this now. We are continuing our work, and I'm convinced that before the next election we will create a serious rejuvenated and strong union of democratic forces, perhaps even as a party.

URF leader Nikita Belykh says the advent of a new democratic party may be announced in October.

Russian People's Democratic Union leader Mikhail Kasyanov says he believes that it is unnecessary for the liberal opposition to merge into one political party but supports the idea of a coalition. He says that, in addition to his own organization, the coalition could include URF, Yabloko, United Civil Front and the Republican Party.

15 September 2008 The chairman of the Yedinaya Rossiya Supreme Council, Boris Gryzlov says that the Agrarian Party of Russia is to be represented in the Yedinaya Rossiya governing bodies.

15 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that the government must ensure additional liquidity on the market in the conditions of its shortage. Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that the maximum limit of surplus funds of the federal budget that can be placed on deposit at commercial banks was increased from R668 billion to R1,232 billion.

Vladimir Putin makes the following comment about Russia's financial position at a meeting of the government presidium:

The budget for this year is being implemented normally, in time and as planned. Budget surplus in the first half of the year was R1,400 billion [56 billion dollars at the current rate of exchange]; the reserve fund has reached R3,100 billion; the national welfare fund, R770 billion.

This means that the budget system has accumulated a substantial safety margin, which makes it possible to minimize the negative impact of the instability of the global capital market and fluctuations in the prices of raw materials.

15 September 2008 The first deputy chief of the FSB directorate for Ingushetia, Colonel Aleksandr Nagovitsyn, is killed in Ingushetia.

15 September 2008 Major-General Oleg Maydanovich is appointed as the chief of the Plesetsk launch centre in Arkhangelsk region. Prior to the appointment, Maydanovich had been in charge of the Baykonur launch centre in Kazakhstan.

Major-General Aleksandr Yakushin is appointed first deputy commander and chief of staff of the Space Troops. He replaces Lt-Gen Aleksandr Kvasnikov.

16 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin responds to reports from the stock exchanges:

We have no doubts that we will go through these difficult developments in the world economy safely. Today alone, the Finance Ministry placed R150 billion on the Russian financial market to maintain liquidity, and the Central Bank placed R325 billion. Tomorrow the Finance Ministry intends to more than double the offered sum and place R350 billion.

Right now, the finance minister and the chairman of the Central Bank are discussing further joint actions with the heads of Russia's major banks. I repeat that we have no doubts that the safety cushions created in the Russian economy in recent years will do their job.

We are also now studying the possibility of using long-term instruments on the part of the Central Bank to influence the situation. We have already done it in the past. Our actions will be neat and well-calculated.

First Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov summons Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin, Chairman of the Central Bank Sergey Ignatyev, Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina and the head of the Federal Service for Financial Markets, Vladimir Milovidov. They have an emergency meeting to discuss the situation on the financial markets.

16 September 2008 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says the 2009 Russian federal budget will be deficit-free if oil prices stay at 70 dollars per barrel. He is addressing the Duma Budget Committee. Kudrin says that in 2012-2014 Russia may go over to a deficit budget in accordance with the budget strategy until 2023. He says that the year 2008 is a turning point in terms of the volumes of oil and gas revenues. These revenues will start falling as of 2009. This will be caused, first of all, not by falling oil prices but a reduction of the share of the oil and gas sector in GDP.

Kudrin says that even if oil prices have an annual rise of 30 dollars this will not

overtake the downward tendency of oil and gas revenues. He says that the share of the oil in gas sector in GDP will diminish from 11.2 per cent in 2008 to 9.1 in 2009, 7.7 per cent in 2010 and 6.9 per cent in 2011.

16 September 2008 The Prosecutor-General's Office begins checks into the activities of Aeroflot and its subsidiaries.

16 September 2008 Interfax-AVN reports that the draft federal budget provides for the disbursement of R4,148.7 billion (over \$160 billion at the current rate of exchange) under the National Defence heading. The plan is to allocate R1,277.5 billion for defence in 2009; R1,390.7 billion in 2010; and R1,480.5 in 2011. Russia's military spending would keep increasing in real terms over the next three years. In 2009, for instance, the year-on-year rise will be 25.7 per cent; in 2010, 8.9 per cent; and in 2011, military spending will be 6.5 per cent higher than in 2010.

16 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree "On the Oboronservis open-type joint-stock company". The decree provides for the inclusion of the Oboronservis, after its state registration, on the list of strategic enterprises and strategic joint-stock companies approved by the Russian president's decree of 4 August 2004.

16 September 2008 Vasily Akimkin, the MOD's chief medical officer, says that the MOD is calling for obligatory HIV testing of conscripts.

17 September 2008 The Security Council approves the principles of state policy in the Arctic to 2020 and beyond and adopts a plan to implement them. An action plan has been prepared by the Russian Academy of Sciences, with the participation of ministries, agencies and the staff of the president's plenipotentiary representatives, to implement the policy.

Dmitry Medvedev makes the following statement on the Arctic:

This region is literally of strategic importance to our country. Its development is directly linked to the solution of long-term tasks of the state's development and its competitiveness on global markets. According to the data that we have, some 20 per cent of Russia's GDP and 22 per cent of Russia's exports are produced in this region. Rare and precious metals are extracted in the Arctic region. Major oil and gas provinces, such as Western Siberian, Timano-Pechorskaya and Eastern Siberian, are located there.

Our first, main task is to make the Arctic a resource base for Russia in the 21st century. To solve this task, a whole number of special issues should be solved. The main issue is to ensure adequate protection of Russia's interests in the region. We also need a solid normative and legal base regulating Russia's activities in the Arctic. First of all, the federal law on the southern border of Russia's Arctic zone should be finalized and approved. The treaty and legal documentation of the external boundary of the continental shelf is also on the immediate agenda.

This task is very important. I will specially stress, this is our obligation, simply our duty before our descendants. We must reliably and for a long-term period ensure Russia's long-term interests in the Arctic.

Medvedev says that the Northern Sea Route has to be developed as a strategic national thoroughfare. He says the network of ports should be expanded, and cargo

vessels sailing under the Russian flag should be used.

17 September 2008 The Russian Central Bank holds an unscheduled meeting at which it decides to lower the levels of the compulsory reserves for banks. The total estimated funds that will be freed from compulsory reserves amount to about R300 billion.

17 September 2008 At an extraordinary session, the People's Assembly of Karachay-Cherkessia endorses the candidacy of Vladimir Kayshev for the post of the republic's prime minister.

18 September 2008 First deputy speaker Oleg Morozov says that defence spending will increase.

18 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia is happy with the current level of oil prices. Putin also says that Russia would lower export duties on oil.

Putin says that he does not consider it necessary to use reserve funds to support the national financial market. He is speaking at an international investment forum in Sochi. Putin says that the task of doubling GDP will be fulfilled by the end of 2009 or in 2010. In 2003 the Russian leadership set the task of doubling GDP in 10 years.

I wish to stress that despite some political events that are of the most acute or perhaps even of a crisis character, there will be no change of Russia's economic development model. Our policy remains unchanged. There will be no closure of the market or a mobilization model of the economy. We will not be taking any politically motivated decisions or steps in economic relations.

Programme documents will soon be approved setting the objectives and tasks of the country's economic development for the long-term future, until 2020.

Putin says that Russia will not change its current policy that restricts foreign investment in "strategic" industries, although some investment could be permitted if foreign enterprises obtained the requisite permits after going through a series of procedures.

18 September 2008 An extraordinary meeting of the economic bloc of the government with the president takes place in the Kremlin. Dmitry Medvedev issues a statement on the situation on the country's financial markets. He also promises additional funds to support the Russian stock market. He says: "I suggest the government envisage the possibility of using up to R500 billion to support the stability of the stock market, including reserving R250 billion in the budget. This needs to be done immediately."

Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin also outlines various other measures.

Kudrin announces that Dmitry Medvedev has suggested to reserve in the budget up to R500 billion to support the stock market.

18 September 2008 A Russian strategic submarine missile cruiser carries out a test launch of the Bulava missile from a submerged position. Training warheads reached the target in the area of the combat field of the Kura testing ground.

19 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev gives a major speech to representatives of public organisations in the Kremlin on Russian economic and political development.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin outlines five major economic tasks facing the government. He is speaking at the 7th economic forum in Sochi.

- *First, our absolute priority is to abolish institutional barriers to investment.*
- *Second, the tax system must work as a booster for the economy rather than an instrument servicing the state's fiscal interests.*
- *Third, latest events showed once again: Russia needs a powerful and independent financial system.*
- *The fourth task is to attract more foreign investors.*
- *The fifth task is to increase the energy efficiency of the economy.*

Putin says the Russian economy is much more developed than it was before and it has a much higher safety margin:

If we talk about Russia, compared to the previous years, we have an absolutely different level of the development of the economy and financial system; both the state and the domestic business have a different, qualitatively higher safety margin. All fundamental indicators of the Russian economy remain within the normal range, including the surplus of foreign trade and budget surplus. Our currency reserves, as is well known, are over \$550 billion dollars. Apart from that, the volume of the Reserve Fund is about \$140 billion dollars and the Social Welfare Fund is \$32 billion dollars.

He says Russia's economic policy remains unchanged and those who are trying to start a new cold war are threatening its modernization plans. He says the current financial crisis is another step towards a multipolar world.

Head of the MICEX exchange Aleksey Rybnikov says the crisis on the Russian stock market has been counteracted.

Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says he is confident that the rouble will remain stable. Even if oil prices fall to \$30 dollars per barrel, Russia will be able to exist quite comfortably. GDP will grow 8 per cent this year. Zhukov is at the 7th International Investment Forum Sochi-2008.

Lev Yakobson, deputy principal of the Higher School of Economics, says that there is no deep financial crisis in Russia: "The world financial system will have to be revised. The role which the USA has played and is still playing in this world financial system will inevitably be revised. On the other hand, no-one is interested in this role disappearing. Simply this role will need to be enhanced by the role played by other countries."

CPRF activists stage a protest in central Moscow against the government's social and economic policies, in particular against the adoption of a draft budget for 2009-2011.

19 September 2008 Deputy Defence Minister Vladimir Popovkin attends a sitting, behind closed doors, of the Duma Committee on Defence and Security, where "he

delivered a report on the main parameters of the army's and navy's re-equipment for the next three years". The two issues discussed are, first, the armed forces' table of organization and equipment plus servicemen's social security; and, second, re-equipment.

The chairman of the Duma defence committee, Viktor Zavarzin says that in October the Duma defence committee will hear a report by the chief of the General Staff on the strategy of the army's and navy's development to 2020.

20 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev approves the plan of the Russian-Belarusian joint military exercise, Stability-2008. The manoeuvres will start on 22 September and will continue for a month in different regions of the Russia-Belarus union state.

22 September 2008 Gazeta.ru news website reports that former Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovsky has given an interview to *Le Figaro*.

22 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Anatoly Chubais director-general of the Nanotechnology Corporation.

22 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin is to head a government commission for developing the electricity industry.

22 September 2008 Rospotrebnadzor suspends the sale of nearly 25 tonnes of US-produced chicken thighs in Altay Territory. The department's directorate for Altay Territory had carried out 67 control and monitoring events at enterprises selling poultry meat and poultry products. As a result, excess in content of proportion of liquid by weight when meat is defrosted was found in 22 cases in samples that were chosen.

23 September 2008 General Staff Major-General Andrey Kolesov says that more than 200,000 young men will be drafted into military service in Russia this autumn. Kolesov says that the demographic situation in Russia is extremely unfavourable. About 870,000 young men were registered as prospective conscripts this January-March, as compared to 1.2 million four years ago. The number of prospective conscripts will continue to decline to 590,000 by 2016. Kolesov also says that it is quite possible that the number of available conscripts will fall short by 2011.

Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says that the MOD is not considering the possible extension of the military service period for conscripts.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin calls for seriously increasing incomes of servicemen. He discusses the issue with representatives of the Spravedlivaya Rossiya faction in the Duma.

Lt-Gen Vladimir Shamanov, the commander of the Main Directorate for Combat Training and Service of the Troops says the gap in financial remuneration between the Armed Forces and other power-wielding structures should be eliminated.

Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says the Northern Fleet squadron led by the *Pyotr Veliky* heavy missile-carrying cruiser will visit more than 25 states during its oceanic voyage.

23 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev visits the Chukotka Autonomous Area. He discusses the development of the Russian Far East.

23 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets representatives of the Spravedlivaya Rossiya party. They discuss social policy and a wide range of issues, from humanization of the criminal legislation to the fate of cultural heritage sites. The prime minister and members of parliament also discuss issues of health care of the population.

24 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev visits Magadan.

24 September 2008 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says at a coordination meeting of heads of law enforcement agencies in Moscow that the fight against corruption in Russia has not yielded results so far.

24 September 2008 Commander-in-Chief of the Internal Troops Army General Nikolay Rogozhkin issues an order setting up a Special Centre of the Internal Troops on the basis of two spetsnaz detachments, Vityaz and Rus.

24 September 2008 Lt-Gen Vladimir Shamanov, chief of the MOD's combat training service, says that taking into account the record of the recent "five-day war" in the Caucasus, the MOD central bodies have started to compile a list of modern battlefield weapons and hardware that the armed forces need to have. Shamanov says:

We are talking about the minimum set of modern battlefield weapons and hardware necessary for a unit up to a battalion to carry out combat actions at the tactical level. The emphasis will also be placed on providing the troops with modern geo-positioning and communications systems integrated with battlefield fire control systems.

He also says: "First, there is poor interoperability between the Ground Forces and Air Forces, second, problems in providing stable communication during combat actions, and third, low resolution of reconnaissance systems."

25 September 2008 Lema Gudayev, an aide to Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov denies that he was involved in the killing of Ruslan Yamadayev in Moscow.

25 September 2008 Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia is confident with regard to the world financial crisis:

It is true that a systemic disruption has taken place in world finance. This is due to the unsatisfactory economic and financial policy in the world's leading economies, including the US economy...Russia has faced the crisis as a stronger nation, with large reserves, with a good and an effectively-functioning economy, with a double positive balance - the positive budget balance and the positive foreign trade balance, and with ongoing expansion of our economy...In terms of purchasing power parity, the volume of the economy, we are the world's seventh economy. All this and the rather stable political and social situation show that we are feeling confident.

25 September 2008 Members of the federal political council of the URF deny reports on some news websites that their presidium will announce the dissolution of the party on 26 September.

Vladimir Putin welcomes plans for Yedinaya Rossiya to merge with the Agrarian Party.

An extraordinary congress of the Party of Social Justice takes place in Sochi and passes a resolution to disband the party. The party's former members will join Spravedlivaya Rossiya.

25 September 2008 Adviser to the interior minister Anatoly Kulikov says that revenues of corrupt officials exceed a third of the national budget. The Indem Foundation estimates the amount of money which businessmen spend on bribing officials at \$33.5 billion, and grassroots corruption at \$3 billion.

25 September 2008 Former prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov is interviewed on the Russian economy. He is pessimistic about its short-term prospects. This is published on the Gazeta.ru news website.

26 September 2008 Nikita Belykh officially announces that he is stepping down as chairman of the political council of the URF and leaving the party. Leonid Gozman will be acting leader of the SPS.

A VTsIOM poll on political parties gives the following results:

In September, 57 per cent of people believed that Yedinaya Rossiya is the only influential party in the country, compared with 42 per cent two years ago. According to the poll, 15 per cent of the respondents believe Russia has a strong multi-party system, with several strong parties. Ten per cent disagree (as opposed to 25 per cent in 2006). Another 17 per cent said they did not know.

30 per cent believe that Russia needs no multi-party system or strong political parties at all. However, 38 per cent believe modern society cannot be built without a multi-party system. Thirty-two per cent said they didn't know.

The share of those who think that Russian society needs political parties has fallen by 10 per cent compared with 2006 (from 48 to 38 per cent). The number of those who think our country does not need a multi-party system remains the same. The share of those who did not know has grown by 11 per cent.

The poll showed that 32 per cent believe that political parties are not very important for Russia, and 27 per cent believe political parties play an important part in Russian society. Another 23 per cent believe political parties have practically no significance in Russia (5 per cent down on 2006). The idea that political parties in Russia have practically no significance was mainly supported by respondents who are not planning to vote in elections (39 per cent).

26 September 2008 A source in Rosatom states that Russia's uranium stocks will last for 60 years.

26 September 2008 The Russian Public Chamber's commission for the affairs of veterans issues a report on the armed forces. It states that the worsening state of health of Russia's young people may cause a 35-per-cent fall in the number of 18-19-year-old conscripts by 2025. It states:

After collating all the data on the population of call-up age, it can be stated that, if the existing trends are maintained, no more than 40-45 per cent of the total number of persons of call-up age will be able to perform their military service in the near future and that, by 2025, the number of 18-19-year-old conscripts will fall by 35 per cent.

It notes that the most critical years will be 2018 and 2019, when the number of 18-year-olds liable for call-up will stand at 637,000 and 633,000 respectively (the figure today is 1,075,200). According to Rosstat, some 40 per cent of children are born ill. "In effect, a time bomb is being planted beneath our country's future, its moral and physical health, its social and, consequently, military security."

Major-General Aleksandr Valyayev, a representative of the armed forces' General Staff says that over 200,000 young men will be called up for military service in the armed forces and other, security agency troops during the autumn call-up, which begins on 1 October.

The call-up of citizens for military service from this autumn onwards will increase considerably, amounting to 219,000 persons. In the spring of this year, we drafted 133,200 persons into the army and navy.

We shall be able to maintain the strength of the armed forces numerically, but the problem of the quality of the new intake remains a pressing one. For health reasons alone, some 30 per cent of conscripts are unfit for military service as such, and over 50 per cent of those called up have limitations arising from their state of health and cannot be sent off to serve in the Air Defence Troops, the marines or other units that are kept in a state of constant readiness.

26 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets commanders of military districts in Orenburg. He says that he has approved parameters of the effective combat strength of the Armed Forces until 2020:

By 2020 a guaranteed solution to nuclear deterrence in various military-political conditions and in different military and political situations must be ensured along with comprehensively equipping army formations with new types of weapons and means of intelligence gathering. In addition, we must achieve superiority in the air, in delivering precision strikes at ground and sea targets as well as in the operational deployment of troops. The serial construction of warships has been included in our plans, first if all, nuclear powered submarines with cruise missiles and multirole submarines. A system of aerospace defence will be developed.

He also states:

Five factors need to be developed for effectively dealing with military tasks.

- *Firstly, this is about improving the organizational and staff structure and the troop deployment system. In simple words, directly speaking, all military units must be put on permanent combat readiness.*
- *The second task is to raise the effectiveness of the system of management of the armed forces. Without this, it is impossible to expect to be successful in contemporary wars or other armed conflicts.*
- *The third position is to improve the system for preparing the personnel, military education and military sciences. This is what we were doing previously and what has now become a totally essential task.*
- *Finally, the fourth is that we need an army equipped with the most modern weapons. We will be according priority attention to this issue. Totally new,*

high-technology armament prototypes will become especially significant.

- *Finally, the last but not the least point which I would like to raise is the social wellbeing of the armed forces, starting from pay, housing conditions, living conditions and ending with various other issues.*

28 September 2008 The deputy chief of government staff, Mikhail Kopeykin, says the government plans to provide \$2.5 million to Vneshekonombank to enable it to meet the obligations of Svyaz-bank.

29 September 2008 Vladimir Putin announces new measures to ease the effects of the international financial crisis on the Russian economy. Putin states:

- *Firstly, any Russian bank or company will be able to ask Vneshekonombank to receive a loan to repay debts to foreign creditors regarding credits secured before 25 September this year. The conditions for a loan should of course be market ones. For this purpose, the Central Bank will put deposits in Vneshekonombank to the amount of the loans issued by Vneshekonombank and the total limit of this sum will not - at least for the time being - exceed \$50 billion.*
- *Secondly, it is being proposed to allow the Central Bank to issue loans to commercial organizations without security deposits. This will make it possible to support the banking market with the needed liquidity within a short timescale.*
- *Thirdly, to support the market of inter-bank loans the Bank of Russia will be given the right to conclude agreements with some banking institutions on compensation of part of losses incurred as a result of issuing loans to other financial institutions of Russia, if such losses occur.*
- *And fourthly, as we agreed earlier, R250 billion will be earmarked in the budget for this and following years to support the stock market.*

Putin says the European financial system has caught the US "infection."

So far the American authorities have not been able to deal with the economic problems and the apparent financial crisis in the United States of America. We can state, with regret again, that this infection seems to have spread to the European financial system as well. In these conditions, our banks and companies, Russian banks and companies that used to obtain credits and, to a certain extent, are still obtaining credits in the West, in these conditions they will find it extremely difficult to extend old or obtain new credits from Western financial institutions.

29 September 2008 The former USSR president, Mikhail Gorbachev, and banker-cum-politician Aleksandr Lebedev say they are setting up a new opposition party. The new political project is tentatively called "Independent Democratic Party of Russia" and the organizers hope that the new party will take part in the 2011 Duma elections.

29 September 2008 Rosatom state corporation head Sergey Kiriyenko says in a speech at the 52nd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency that Russia "is planning to commission 26 large nuclear power-generating units over the next 12 years".

Rosatom head Sergey Kiriyenko says he plans to complete all "bureaucratic procedures" within months in order to create a stock of nuclear fuel at the international uranium enrichment centre in Angarsk in 2009. He welcomes the readiness of the USA and the European Union to provide 50 million and 35 million US dollars respectively for the creation of an international bank of nuclear fuel.

29 September 2008 The Memorial Russian centre claims that more than 100 people have been killed and 10 have gone missing in Chechnya and Ingushetia this year.

Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says the Russian police will strengthen cooperation with human rights activists in the regions.

29 September 2008 The commander-in-chief of the Ground Troops, Army General Vladimir Boldyrev, issues a statement on the state of the ground forces following the Georgia conflict.

30 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev addresses Russian commanders at the Kremlin.

Recent events compel us to strengthen the security of our country and to be guided in this by real assessments of the existing threats. It is on these approaches that the updated parameters of the effective combat strength of the armed forces which I approved on 15 September will be based. Basically speaking, they are the new modern look of the armed forces. We must fully meet all these parameters by 2020.

30 September 2008 Head of the Presidential Administration Sergey Naryshkin announces that the presidential council for combating corruption has considered a new set of anti-corruption legislation, according to which members of the government and their families will be required to declare their assets and income.

30 September 2008 RPDU leader Mikhail Kasyanov states that his organization may merge with Yabloko.

30 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin approves the long-term programme of operations of Rosatom for 2009-2015 with a total funding of R2,084 billion, according to a government resolution dated 20 September. Funding from the state corporation's own resources amounts to R1,264 billion, and from the federal budget, to R820 billion. The Rosatom programme of operations will replace the federal target programme "Atomic energy industry development in 2007-2010 and for the longer term until the year 2015", which will cease on 1 January 2009.

30 September 2008 The MOD begins a large-scale reorganization of directorates and services of the General Staff, which will be completed by 1 March 2009. Total reductions will be close to 50 per cent.

30 September 2008 Chairman of the Duma defence committee Viktor Zavarzin says defence spending will increase by nearly 50 per cent over the next three years. In 2009 it will increase by 25.7 per cent, from R1,016.7 billion to R1,277.5 billion and will account for 14 per cent of total budget spending. By 2011, defence spending would have increased by 45.6 per cent compared with 2008.

Lt-Gen Vadim Volkovitsky is appointed Chief of the Air Force Staff and First Deputy

Commander of the Air Force.

The deputy head of the General Staff, Colonel-General Vasily Smirnov says that over 219,000 people will be conscripted into military service in autumn 2008. He says there are 295 foreign nationals currently serving in the Russian army (22 from Azerbaijan, 22 from Armenia, eight from Belarus, one from Georgia, 12 from Kazakhstan, 11 from Kyrgyzstan, 17 from Moldova, 89 from Tajikistan, 66 from Uzbekistan, nine from Turkmenistan and nine from Ukraine), all in detachments switched to contract manning.

A regional commission for scrapping chemical weapons in Kirov Region has examined the readiness of the Maradykovsky chemical weapons disposal site to launch its second phase in March 2009.

RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY: A CHRONOLOGY

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2008

1 July 2008 President Dmitry Medvedev has talks in Moscow with Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis. Davis will head for St Petersburg to open a conference of prosecutor-generals of European countries.

1 July 2008 Medvedev appoints Justice Minister Aleksandr Kononov his special representative for cooperation with the European Union in the field of freedom, security and justice.

1 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference in Vienna that a long-term and predictable all-European security system be set up:

We are sure it is time to rise above bloc solidarity and think about the fate of one big Europe, its future. We are ready for joint work aimed at setting up a long-term and predictable all-European security system...Europe is splitting, some states or whole groups of states are being isolated and our common security is endangered...To carry out a substantial dialogue on security issues with a view to reaching concrete agreements, we suggest that an international forum be convened at the highest level with the participation of all states and leading organizations in the Euro-Atlantic space, including the OSCE, NATO, the EU, the CIS and the CSTO.

1 July 2008 Sergey Mironov, the Federation Council's speaker and leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya, says that as a new leadership has come to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the organization's work should be depoliticized. Slovenian diplomat Janez Lenarcic is appointed as the new head of ODIHR.

1 July 2008 The Foreign Ministry (MFA) says it hopes for the assistance of the Jordanian and Israeli authorities in the soonest delivery of the Russian humanitarian aid to Palestinians. Russian aid is currently waiting in Amman.

1 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs a federal law which ratifies the Russian-Syrian

intergovernmental agreement on the settlement of the Syrian debt for former Soviet loans of 29 May 2005, and a supplement to the agreement of 17 January 2007. The State Duma adopted the law on 6 June 2008, and the Federation Council approved it on 18 June 2008. The agreement fully settles the Syrian debts as of 1 January 2005, with due account of Russian financial liabilities. Syria is exempt from paying 73 per cent of the debt amounting to 13.36 billion dollars. The remaining 27 per cent or 3.61 billion dollars shall be paid in the following way: 1.5 billion dollars within 10 years starting from 1 July 2005, and 2.11 billion dollars in one-time transfer denominated in the Syrian national currency to an account opened for the Russian government at the Syrian Central Bank.

1 July 2008 Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov calls for a cessation rather than an extension of the Russian-Ukrainian treaty of friendship and cooperation.

1 July 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says he hopes that Ukraine won't join NATO.

1 July 2008 Colonel-General Oleg Latypov, deputy head of the MOD's Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation has been nominated for the post of the first deputy head of the CSTO Joint Staff.

1 July 2008 The MFA's ambassador-at-large and head of the Russian part of the Russian-Georgian-South Ossetian Joint Control Commission Yury Popov proposes to hold a meeting of the Joint Control Commission for resolving the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict to discuss a deterioration of the situation in the conflict zone. He proposes that peacekeeping forces in the region have a radar station, which would discover when aircraft penetrate the conflict zone illegally and would monitor compliance with existing agreements.

1 July 2008 The chairman of the Duma international affairs commission, Konstantin Kosachev, criticises statements by the Estonian president Toomas Hendrik Ilves at the World Congress of the Finno-Ugric Peoples in Khanty-Mansiysk as impermissible and scandalous. He says Ilves' calls for Finno-Ugric peoples' self-determination is an attack against the territorial integrity of Russia.

1 July 2008 First deputy speaker of the Duma Oleg Morozov criticises the call by the Lithuanian parliament that the Russian government recognise the post-war period as one of Soviet occupation of Lithuania. He says: "It is completely obvious that the Latvian [presumably means Lithuanian] state in its current form only came about thanks to the direct involvement of the Soviet Union."

1 July 2008 The MFA defends the decision to create a Serb parliament in Kosovo following Kosovo's declaration of independence.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that the unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo has created a most dangerous precedent of overstepping the framework of the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act. He is addressing the opening ceremony of the OSCE Annual Security Review conference in Vienna.

1 July 2008 Rosneft head Sergey Bogdanchikov says that the price of oil supplied to China may be reviewed.

1 July 2008 The MFA says it wants the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to become universal and calls on all countries to join it.

1 July 2008 Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's permanent representative at NATO, says Russia and Belarus should unite in response to NATO expansion within the framework of the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

1 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev criticises US plans for a third positioning area of its missile defence system in Eastern Europe and NATO enlargement in general. On European security he states:

It would be much better to get down to the creation of a new treaty basis for ensuring security in Europe, including by way of holding a large European summit and subsequent conclusion of a relevant pact on European security, in which all the European states would take part, as well as all the bloc-based and non-bloc-based organizations. This is much better than the creation of another, third one, fourth or fifth positioning area of missile defence.

And if one deals with missile defence, then it is better to do this jointly and not by way of building separate, exclusive relations with individual European countries, because in any case global security on the European continent and in general everywhere in the world can only be ensured when there is a joint system of monitoring and response to the challenges that exist and to dangers that come from a number of regions. We are ready for such talks.

Medvedev is interviewed by Western journalists. He says he is going to continue the policies of his predecessor, Vladimir Putin, though he may change some emphases, and will have his own style. He also insists that it was he who was taking decisions now, though sometimes he consulted Putin. He says Russia should remain a presidential republic if it is to survive as a single state:

With all respect for the parliamentary form of democracy, the emergence of a parliamentary democracy on the territory of the Russian Federation will spell the death of Russia as a country. Russia, for decades, or perhaps for hundreds of years, must remain a presidential republic in order to survive as a single state.

Medvedev criticises UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon over his proposals concerning changes to the UN presence in Kosovo.

Medvedev makes the following comments on Iran:

Like other countries, we cannot be indifferent to the development of non-transparent nuclear programmes. But we always try to work using positive moments, so to speak. Therefore, I believed and continue to believe (our position on this has not changed) that a system of so-called positive incentives is needed in relation to the so-called problem programmes and the relevant states. We should not just say: we will pass a resolution and you will have to follow it, no matter what. And if you do not follow it we will think about tough international sanctions, and then about military operations. This is very dangerous, while a system based on incentives is much clearer, and, most importantly, is easier to explain, easier to offer to our difficult counterparts in the negotiations.

As regards the situation concerning Iran, in some ways there is progress, in other ways there is no movement. Unfortunately, so far the efforts by the states that are part of the relevant formats, and by the IAEA, have not brought

about any breakthrough decisions, but this process should continue. We should motivate the Iranian leadership to demonstrate the transparency of the nuclear programme. In that case a discussion about its future will be possible. The Iranian leadership should take a number of steps and decisions that have already been agreed under the auspices of the IAEA. In that case tension over this programme will subside. But we should continue to advance positive incentives. In any case, we should understand where these processes are moving. We should not take decisions running counter to the common course.

If we are in talks with Iran under various formats we should not take steps that incite the Iranian leadership and are aimed at the introduction of additional sanctions. I cannot understand at all why the European Union took this sort of decisions recently. And I said this to Mr Barroso and Mr Solana during our recent meeting in Khanty-Mansiysk. Either we talk to them or we try to pinch our negotiating partners over various little matters.

2 July 2008 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visits Turkey.

Lavrov calls on Georgia to stop carrying out provocations in Abkhazia and abide by existing agreements about a peaceful settlement to the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict.

Lavrov warns against a "flower revolution" in Mongolia following riots there after the parliamentary elections.

2 July 2008 The Duma issues a statement on Russo-Lithuanian relations. It calls for the Lithuanian government to reconsider its policy aimed at the deterioration of relations with the Russian Federation. It expresses concern that Lithuania may become part of the US missile defence system in Europe.

2 July 2008 A meeting of the council of defence ministers of CIS states takes place in Bishkek.

2 July 2008 The MFA says Russia's position regarding Russian sovereignty over the southern Kuril Islands is unquestionable, but Moscow is ready to continue seeking a resolution of the issue of border demarcation together with Japan.

3 July 2008 New US Ambassador to Russia John Beyrle takes up his post in Moscow.

3 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev visits Azerbaijan. The presidents of Azerbaijan and Russia, Ilham Aliyev and Dmitry Medvedev, sign a declaration on friendship and strategic partnership.

Gazprom reaches agreement with Azerbaijani partners on Azerbaijani gas purchase conditions. Gazprom head Aleksey Miller says that a relevant agreement had been reached in the course of Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Azerbaijan. Miller says Gazprom is ready to make major gas purchases from Azerbaijan. Miller forecasts that the price of Russian gas for Europe will rise to some \$500 per 1,000 cubic metres.

Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says that with Turkmenistan's transition to European prices for gas, the issue of possible redirection of routes of energy supplies from this country to bypass Russia will drop off the agenda: "In this situation, it is one thing to build the Caspian Coastal Pipeline jointly with Russia, and it is another thing to build an absolutely new branch on new territories associated with new risks."

4 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev visits Turkmenistan.

Aleksey Miller confirms that Gazprom will buy gas from Turkmenistan "in increasing volumes and at market prices".

4 July 2008 Russian ambassador to London Yury Fedotov says Russia is yet to receive "an intelligible response" from the UK to its request for the extradition of Boris Berezovsky, Chechen emissary Akhmed Zakayev and two dozen other Russian nationals currently living in the UK. He also says that Russia is ready to conduct its own investigation into the Litvinenko case if the British side stops politicizing it and presents the necessary materials. He also says the resumption of the British Council's work in Russia in full is only possible after reciprocal moves by the British side, in particular in cooperation with Russia in the fight against terrorism.

4 July 2008 The Joint Peacekeeping Force (JPF) in the zone of Georgian-Ossetian conflict is put on high alert in view of the night-time shelling of Tskhinvali in South Ossetia. Commander of the JPF Major-General Marat Kulakhmetov says that he may ask for the peacekeeping contingent there to be strengthened if the situation in the region deteriorates.

Sergey Lavrov calls upon Georgia to sign a document guaranteeing non-use of force in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Yury Popov, special envoy of the MFA and co-chairman of the Joint Control Commission for the Georgian-Ossetian settlement, says that the latest developments in South Ossetia might lead to a full-scale military conflict. Russia calls on all the sides involved in the conflict to urgently convene a meeting of the Joint Control Commission.

An MFA statement claims that the shelling of Tskhinvali has been planned by the Georgian side:

The actions by Tbilisi indicate that an act of open aggression against South Ossetia, which is internationally recognized in resolving the conflict, has taken place. It is indicative that Georgia refused to take part in a joint investigation of the incidents. Recent armed incidents are leading to a serious escalation of the standoff in the conflict zone with the use of force.

The Russian envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin accuses the West of condoning Georgian conduct towards South Ossetia.

4 July 2008 The MFA condemns Sweden for not extraditing Aslan Adayev, who is suspected of terrorism, to Russia.

4 July 2008 The first round of talks on a new agreement on strategic partnership between Russia and the EU takes place in Brussels.

5 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev visits Kazakhstan to mark Astana's 10th anniversary.

5 July 2008 The MOD issues a statement on alleged plans by Tbilisi to solve the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict by force. The president of Abkhazia, Sergey Bagapsh, says that the Abkhaz special services had obtained a Georgian plan to seize Abkhazia, which was scheduled to take place in spring 2008.

6 July 2008 A spokesman for the command of the JPF (aide to JPF commander

Vladimir Ivanov) accuses the Georgian side of violating agreements and hindering monitoring in the conflict zone.

6 July 2008 Konstantin Zatulin, first deputy chairman of the Duma Committee for CIS and ties with compatriots, says that any possible abrogation of the Ukraine-Russia friendship and cooperation treaty will not result in the withdrawal of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF) from Crimea.

7 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev attends the G8 summit on Hokkaido, Japan.

7 July 2008 US President George W Bush and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agree at the G8 summit on the need for North Korea and Iran to give up their nuclear programmes. They also discuss Georgia and missile defence.

7 July 2008 The Duma chairman Boris Gryzlov says that bilateral meetings which have already taken place at the G8 summit on Hokkaido between Dmitry Medvedev and the leaders of other countries prove that Russian foreign policy remains unchanged.

7 July 2008 Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the Duma international affairs committee, says there are no "insurmountable problems" in relations with the EU. He says Russia and the EU might introduce visa-free travel in two or three years' time but denies Russia wants to join the EU.

7 July 2008 The command of the Collective Peacekeeping Force [CPF] in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict takes measures to enhance the combat readiness of the Russian peacekeeping contingent units.

7 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko and Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Heikki Talvitie have talks in Moscow. Grushko says that Russia hopes that Finland's presidency of the OSCE will help reduce the tension in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

7 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad discuss by telephone conversation various aspects of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, as well as cooperation in the energy sector, including in atomic energy.

7 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov addresses an international conference "Compatriots - Descendants of Great Russians" in Moscow.

8 July 2008 Former Federal Security Service (FSB) Director Nikolay Kovalev expresses surprise over the allegations of an anonymous officer of the British special services about the involvement of the Russian state in the murder of Aleksandr Litvinenko. The FSB refuses to comment.

The Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office says that it does not have information about any involvement of the special services in the poisoning of Aleksandr Litvinenko.

8 July 2008 The chief of the MFA's international cooperation department Yevgenny Buzhinsky says that Russia's assessment of the missile threat has not changed:

Firstly, Our assessment of the missile threat has not changed. Analysis of the situation in the Middle East indicates that political and technological conditions

for the creation of long-range weapons that might threaten the US do not exist. As for the missile risks and threats for the countries of NATO's southern flank, they also look fantastic from a military-technical perspective...

American assessment of the missile threat apparently is exaggerated and 'adjusted' to validating the specific task - instilling fear in the Europeans of the non-existent danger and thus securing the fulfilment of its own anti-missile plans....

Secondly, the anti-Russian design of the US' missile defence components in Europe has not been abolished so far. Potential possibilities of the missile defence are determined not by declarations, but by technical possibilities, location and architecture of the system. At present, we do not see any changes in the concept of building it. For this reason Russia's concerns remain.

8 July 2008 The head of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev makes the following comments on US missile defence plans in Europe:

Russia's reaction has been well-known for a long time. We do not see any sense in this system. We do not agree to the concept whereby security is being divided between the states that are covered by this umbrella [missile defence], and the state that are left beyond its borders. Most importantly, we are offering alternatives. We are saying that the security system, resistance to new challenges and threats may be of a global nature. Russia is ready to participate in this system, it is ready not in theory but in practice. We have our own stations, we certainly have anti-ballistic missiles, that can be used jointly but - alas! - the Americans are acting on the basis of their own national security, while the Czechs and Poles, apparently, are acting on the assumption of trans-Atlantic solidarity.

He says the signing of the US-Czech treaty on stationing a US radar base on Czech soil "is probably not the end of the story," as the majority of public opinion in the Czech republic is opposed to the stationing.

Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says that by allowing US antimissile defence facilities to be deployed in their territories, the leaders of Eastern European countries accept responsibility for breaking the global strategic balance. Mironov says that in its drive to neutralize Russia's nuclear containment forces, the USA hopes to start exerting direct military-political pressure on our country by 2012-15. He states that: "The depreciation of Russia's nuclear potential should, according to US plans, coincide in time with the beginning of a head-in rivalry between global economic leaders for the access to hydrocarbons deposits in the Middle East and Arctic".

The MFA issues a statement on the signing of the US-Czech agreement:

If the agreements with the USA, which are subject to ratification by the Czech parliament, will acquire legally binding force anyway and if the deployment of the American strategic missile defence system actually starts near our borders, we will have to respond with military-technical rather than diplomatic methods. There is no doubt whatsoever that bringing the elements of the USA's strategic arsenal closer to Russian territory may be used for weakening our deterrent potential. Obviously, in this situation the Russian side will undertake appropriate measures to compensate for the originating potential threats to its national security. But that is not our choice.

8 July 2008 Gennady Gudkov, Deputy Chairman of the Duma Committee on Security, says that Russian special services should give Abkhazia concrete help to prevent further terrorist acts.

8 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has bilateral talks with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda at the G8 summit in Hokkaido.

8 July 2008 Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says there has been no significant progress in resolving the Russian-Japanese territorial issue.

8 July 2008 Vladimir Chizhov, Russia's permanent representative at the European Union, is interviewed in *Vremya Novostey*. He says that in order to entirely cancel visas between the Russian Federation and the EU, next-generation biometric passports should be introduced, and border facilities enhanced. He states: "A dialogue on visa-free travel is in progress. In the period since agreements have been in place on simplified visa rules and on readmission between Russia and the EU, which came into force on 1 July 2007, readmissions have not become of a mass nature. Unfortunately, this is not enough for visa-free travel.

8 July 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov has talks in Moscow with his Yemeni counterpart Muhammad Nasir Ahmad Ali. They discuss the development of bilateral military and technical cooperation.

9 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev gives a press conference at the end of the G8 summit.

Medvedev has talks with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak at the G8 summit.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Borodavkin says Russia is clearly fulfilling its obligations to deliver fuel oil to North Korea.

9 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak says the Russian side has assessed as positive Tehran's response to proposals from the group of Six (China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the United States): "I think that the prerequisites are now in place for starting a search for a mutually acceptable solution that would be in the long-term interests of both Iran and the international community."

9 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the Exacerbation of the Situation in the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian Zones of Conflict.

9 July 2008 A Gazprom report says that the company has made an offer to Libya to buy all of its oil, gas and liquefied natural gas output.

9 July 2008 Jordanian foreign minister Salah-al-Din al Bashir arrives in Moscow on a two-day visit.

9 July 2008 Russo-Kazakh military exercises (Joint Action 2008) take place.

10 July 2008 President of Abkhazia Sergey Bagapsh visits Moscow for consultations with the Russian authorities and will also meet the president of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoyty. Sergey Lavrov has talks with Bagapsh. He says an agreement on non-use of force needs to be signed urgently in order to prevent the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict from being resumed. Lavrov criticises US Secretary of

State Condoleezza Rice for making statement about making NATO admission documents available to Georgia.

The MFA states that aircraft of the Russian Air Force have carried out a brief flight over South Ossetia in order to defuse the situation in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone. It states:

To ascertain the situation, aircraft of the Russian Air Force carried out a brief flight over the territory of South Ossetia. As the future development of events has shown, this step has already made it possible to cool down hotheads in Tbilisi and prevent the development of the situation according to a violent scenario, the possibility of which was more than real.

The chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Konstantin Kosachev, questions Georgia's right to claim sovereignty over its breakaway provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He says Georgia's historical claims have no foundation in fact.

Russia's acting permanent representative at the OSCE, Vladimir Voronkov, urges Georgia "to end acts of provocation with regard to South Ossetia and to resume joint work in the Joint Control Commission". He says Georgia should sign a document on non-use of force in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

The commander of the troops of the North Caucasus Military District (NCMD), Colonel-General Sergey Makarov, says the combined units and military units of the troops of the District are combat ready and ready to fulfil any combat tasks in order to ensure stability in the region. "During exercises, the combined units and military units of the North Caucasus Military District practise, among other things, actions for the event of the escalation of the situation in the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zones."

10 July 2008 The Russian authorities accuse a British diplomat (Christopher Bower) at the Embassy in Moscow of espionage.

10 July 2008 The deputy chair of the Federation Council's international affairs committee, Vasily Likhachev, says the Russian side's reaction to the deployment of a US ballistic missile defence system in East Europe will be commensurate to "the direct threat to our security".

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak says that the statements US leadership have made during the talks with Russia on the deployment of antiballistic missile systems in Eastern Europe are at odds with the real situation. He says that transparency measures suggested by the USA in relation to ABM systems in Europe are technically possible, but Russia still does not understand what precisely is proposed.

10 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister and State Secretary Grigory Karasin and acting First Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine Yury Kostenko have talks in Moscow.

10 July 2008 The MFA calls into question the impartiality of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which acquitted Bosnian war criminal Naser Oric, and has confirmed Moscow's position that the tribunal should terminate its work.

10 July 2008 A group of military observers from the JPF together with a representative of the OSCE mission carry out a monitoring of the ground in the zone of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict and have found an equipped dugout which sheltered Georgian policemen armed with small weapons.

11 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia favours resolving any problems linked to Iran "via negotiations and political and diplomatic methods". He says that talk of an Iranian missile threat is just a pretext for deploying US missile defences in Europe. He states:

Regarding missile defence, the tests that have taken place in Iran only confirm the fact that Iran currently has missiles with a range of up to 2,000 kilometres. This confirms what we said earlier: that the current idea of deploying the third positional zone of the USA's missile defence in Europe, by its parameters, is not needed to monitor or react to these specific missiles of this range...We remain convinced about the imagined nature of talk about the Iranian missile threat as a motive for deploying this third positional zone.

11 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks in Moscow with his Jordanian counterpart Salah-al-Din al Bashir. He says Russia and Jordan agree on the need to give a fresh boost to the Middle East peace process, as well as on the need for national reconciliation in Iraq and for an increase in diplomatic efforts regarding the Iran nuclear dossier.

Lavrov says that the time for the international Middle East peace conference in Moscow will be set in September: "Let us not forget that not only the Palestinian-Israeli negotiating process was discussed there, but also the Syrian and Lebanese tracks in the context that a final settlement can only be a comprehensive one. The agenda of the forthcoming Moscow conference will be set along these lines."

11 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says Russia will insist on strict adherence to the UN Security Council resolutions regarding winding up the ICTY.

11 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks with South Ossetian president Eduard Kokoyty in Moscow.

The MFA issues a statement on the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

11 July 2008 The NCMD states that the Russian peacekeeping contingent in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zone has raised its level of combat readiness due to heightened tensions in the area.

11 July 2008 The MFA ambassador at large, Yury Popov, says Georgia has refused to take part in a meeting of the Joint Control Commission for the settlement of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict in Moscow at the end of July.

11 July 2008 Russia's permanent representative to the EU Vladimir Chizhov states: "The EU countries no longer fear our tanks, they fear Gazprom. The EU countries' energy needs are growing rather fast, so if we are talking about legitimate concerns, they are more worried whether potential suppliers, including Russia, have enough oil and gas to cover these needs."

12 July 2008 Russia and China veto a UN Security Council draft resolution that envisaged the introduction of sanctions against Zimbabwe. Russia's permanent representative to the UN Vitaly Churkin says that the proposal to introduce

sanctions against Zimbabwe is an attempt to interfere in the country's internal affairs. The MFA issues a statement on the issue.

12 July 2008 Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Borodavkin says he believes the results of the six-party consultations on North Korea in Beijing are positive.

12 July 2008 The new foreign policy concept is published.

13 July 2008 Georgian *Rustavi TV* reports that Russian peacekeepers have opened four additional checkpoints near Upper Abkhazia without Tbilisi's consent. Two of them are in Kvemo Kvabchara and the others in Tsebelda and Lata.

13 July 2008 Gazprom and the National Iranian Oil Company sign a memorandum of mutual understanding following a visit of a Gazprom delegation to Iran. Gazprom head Aleksey Miller meets Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad in Tehran. Miller says Gazprom is ready to actively cooperate in Iran's big oil and gas projects in South and North Pars, Azadegan and the Caspian Sea.

13 July 2008 A British military delegation headed by First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Jonathon Band arrives on a visit to Moscow on 13 July. Band's visit will continue until 19 July.

14 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak says the USA is yet to specify its proposals to Russia concerning greater transparency as regards the issue of setting up in East Europe of the third US national missile defence system deployment area. Kislyak states that the Sochi declaration adopted following the meeting between the presidents of the USA and Russia in Sochi contained a clause that joint work on and coordination of measures for ensuring the transparency of the USA's missile defence system will be positive as regards achieving mutual understanding on this issue. Kislyak says that in response to the deployment of US missile defence components in Europe, Russia will take measures to protect its deterrent potential.

Kislyak says Russia is satisfied with the consensus found by the G8 at the summit on Hokkaido on nuclear nonproliferation and settlement of political crises on the planet.

Kislyak says that Russia does not link the delivery of oil and gas to Europe with the deployment of ABM components in the Czech Republic.

Mikhail Barkov, vice-president of Transneft, says the reduction of oil supplies from Russia to the Czech Republic is associated with economic, not political, reasons. He states that two Russian companies reduced supplies in this direction because their crude oil can be processed in Russia with more profit. He says that in the very near future this reduction would be compensated for by another Russian company.

14 July 2008 The secretary-general of the Supreme National Security Council of Saudi Arabia, Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan, visits Moscow for talks with Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin. A Russo-Saudi military-technical cooperation agreement is signed.

14 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict. It calls on the UN to make a clear signal to the sides involved in the conflict to resume the negotiation process.

14 July 2008 President Dmitry Medvedev signs a law on settling Tajikistan's debt through transfer to Russia of the Nurek optical and electronic facility (a space control system) and investment into the Sangtuda-1 hydroelectric power station.

15 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev addresses all Russian ambassadors at the MFA on Russian foreign policy. He says Russia is concerned that there is no modern system of collective security. He says the time has come to revise the main international agreements in this sphere, in particular the Helsinki Final Act and documents on Russia-NATO cooperation. He criticises US plans to deploy missile defence systems in Eastern Europe as damaging the foundations of strategic security. He criticises attempts to revise the history of WW2 in some states, and says the unilateral declaration of the independence of Kosovo is a crude violation of international law.

15 July 2008 Russian ambassador to London Yury Fedotov expresses regret that an anti-Russian campaign has been launched in Britain.

The MFA issues a statement on the TNK-BP issue.

15 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that both sides in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone should undertake a commitment not to use force.

15 July 2008 Russia's permanent representative to the UN Vitaly Churkin says there is concern that the demands of the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for the arrest of the Sudanese president Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir might have a negative impact on the peacekeeping operation in Darfur.

16 July 2008 Italian President Giorgio Napolitano visits Moscow for talks with Dmitry Medvedev, who repeats his call for a European security treaty.

16 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice discuss by telephone the Iranian nuclear programme and the problems of Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian settlement processes.

16 July 2008 Aleksandr Cherednik, head of the information and public relations service of the Airborne Troops denies reports that a combined regiment from the Pskov 76th Air Assault Division is preparing to be transferred to Abkhazia.

16 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiev in Moscow.

16 July 2008 Gazprom deputy chairman Aleksandr Ananenkov has talks with Beltransgaz director-general Uladzimir Mayoraw in Moscow. Gazprom retains the right to go to court if Belarus keeps on failing to fulfil its obligation to pay for Russian gas in full.

17 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Deputy Minister of Regional Development Kamil Iskhakov Russia's permanent representative at the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

17 July 2008 Russian envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says in an interview with *Kaliningradskaya Pravda* that in response to US plans to deploy its missile defence system in the Czech Republic and Poland, Russia may consider building up its military presence in Kaliningrad Region.

17 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks in Moscow with Serbian counterpart Vuk Jeremic. They confirm their commitment to Russo-Serb energy agreements. He says Moscow will support any Kosovo solution acceptable to Belgrade.

17 July 2008 The sixth session of the joint Russian-Iranian commission for the Islam-Orthodoxy dialogue takes place in Moscow. The head of the Iranian delegation is the chairman of the organization of culture and Islamic relations, Ayatollah Akbar Rashidi. The head of the Russian side in the joint commission is the Bishop of Baku and the Caspian Aleksandr.

17 July 2008 Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Hilmi Guler has talks with Gazprom head Aleksandr Medvedev.

18 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says Germany's plan for the settlement of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict is a step in the right direction. He says, however, it is still too early to talk about signing an agreement on the return of refugees. German foreign minister Frank Walter Steinmeier has visited the region.

Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that Steinmeier's plan for a settlement to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict is an attempt to combine the uncombinable. Rogozin says that Russia "will not allow anyone to start a war" in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He warns that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili "has not abandoned plans to solve his territorial problem by military means". Rogozin also describes the idea of Georgia and Ukraine joining NATO as "a red line" in Russia's relations with the alliance.

18 July 2008 The MFA expresses concerned about the nature of the US-Ukrainian military exercise Sea Breeze, which is taking place along the Black Sea coast of Ukraine. It sees the exercise as anti-Russian.

18 July 2008 Gazprom files four lawsuits at the International Commercial Arbitration Court against Moldovagaz regarding the recovery of debts for gas delivered worth a total of \$101 million.

19 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev and Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad have a telephone conversation. Medvedev calls on Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak says in Geneva that Russia hopes that in two weeks' time Iran will be able to give a response to the proposals of the Six on the Iranian nuclear programme. With the other political directors from the Six, Kislyak takes part in a meeting between the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Sa'id Jalili.

19 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says he is in favour of settling the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict through the adoption of joint documents containing undertakings not to use force. Medvedev discusses the issue with German foreign minister Steinmeier, who is in Moscow on a working visit. Medvedev says Georgian forces must be withdrawn from Kodori gorge.

19 July 2008 The MFA issues a commentary on Iraq. The MFA believes that reaching agreements about a timetable for withdrawing forces from Iraq would facilitate stabilization in that country, and strengthen security in the region.

21 July 2008 The MFA accuses British Foreign Secretary David Miliband of distorting Russia's position on Zimbabwe.

21 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov and Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi sign a border treaty for the eastern part of the Russo-Chinese border along the Amur river. The entire Tarabarov Island (Yinlong Island) will be Chinese, a part of the Bolshoy Ussuriysky Island (Heixiazi Island) is no longer Russian.

21 July 2008 Aide to the commander of the JPF Vladimir Ivanov says that the observation posts of the JPF have once again detected illegal flights of aircraft over the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone.

21 July 2008 The MOD says that the Russian Railway Troops battalion that was deployed in Abkhazia on 31 May 2008 to repair railways will withdraw from the republic in the near future.

21 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin instructs the government to take control over the delivery of Russian crude oil to the Czech Republic in order to eliminate failures in delivery.

21 July 2008 The former commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force, General Petr Deynekin, says that the possible deployment of Russian aviation, such as long-range aviation, in Cuba may be a good response to the plans to deploy NATO military bases near Russian borders. A report in *Izvestiya* states that Russian military aircraft may return to Cuba.

21 July 2008 An anti-terror drill commences in Dagestan. It includes the ships of the Caspian Flotilla and a marine unit.

22 July 2008 Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez visits Moscow for talks with Dmitry Medvedev. They discuss energy cooperation. Medvedev states:

Russia and Venezuela are two very major oil and gas powers, and, among other issues, ensuring energy security depends on our concerted actions too. We will work in a mutual, concerted and correct manner. Our cooperation is not directed against some states. It is a mutually beneficial cooperation in which both the people of Russia and the people of Venezuela are interested. And I think that this cooperation benefits not only our countries but also those states that are cooperating with us.

They also discuss military-technical cooperation. Chavez says he would welcome Russian military bases in Venezuela. TNK-BP, Lukoil and Gazprom sign a number of agreements with Venezuelan partners.

22 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev believes that the issue of establishing an organization in the gas sector similar to OPEC is not closed. He says: "No decision has been taken on this theme, but it would be wrong to consider this issue closed or exhausted". Earlier in July 2008, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs said it supported the establishment of a "gas OPEC" and suggested that its headquarters should be in Moscow.

22 July 2008 The MFA says it hopes that the trial of Radovan Karadzic, former leader of the Bosnian Serbs, will be impartial.

Deputy chairman of the Duma international affairs committee and chairman of the

subcommittee on European cooperation Andrey Klimov says that the Duma international affairs committee does not rule out that in autumn the Duma may ask the Russian leadership raise the issue of curbing the activity of the ICTY.

22 July 2008 Russia's permanent representative to the UN Vitaly Churkin accuses western powers of a "pro-Georgian bias". He is commenting on an extraordinary meeting called at the request of Georgia in connection with Russian aircraft flying over Abkhazia on 9 July.

22 July 2008 The MFA criticises the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry for stating that it has prepared a draft law on the withdrawal of the Russian BSF from Crimea.

22 July 2008 It is reported that Russian Ground Troops commander General Aleksey Maslov is to be appointed Russia's chief military representative at NATO. Vice-Admiral Valentin Kuznetsov is currently Russia's chief military representative at NATO. He was appointed to this post in 2002.

22 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the talks between Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and the leaders of two factions of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara.

22 July 2008 CSTO joint command-staff exercise Rubezh-2008 starts in Armenia.

23 July 2008 Venezuelan officials have discussions with Gazprom in Moscow. The Venezuelan side is interested in Gazprom taking part in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project on the development of the Mariscal Sucre and Plataforma Deltana fields and construction of an LNG plant in Venezuela.

23 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov calls for the process of preparing a treaty to replace START to be speeded up as START I will expire at the end of 2009. Lavrov also calls on the United States to work out specific steps aimed at strengthening confidence-building measures in the sphere of missile defence.

23 July 2008 A VTsIOM poll reports that around 50 per cent of Russians polled in mid-June just have a positive view of the USA, as five years ago. The number of those who have a negative view of this country has decreased over this time from 40 to 29 per cent. At the same time the number of those who found it difficult to answer the question increased (from 12 to 22 per cent). It was the Russian youth that viewed the USA in the most positive way: 59 per cent of those polled, aged between 18 and 24, said they held positive views of the country.

Elderly Russians view the USA significantly more negatively - only 34 per cent of those polled aged 60 and over said that on the whole, they viewed the USA positively. One can hear negative answers more often in the same age group: 38 per cent of elderly Russian citizens do not have warm feelings towards the USA. The least number of people having anti-American sentiments can be found among middle-age Russians (the 25-44 age bracket) - 25-26 per cent and 30 per cent among 44-59 year olds. The higher the education level of those polled the more positively they view the USA: 55 per cent of Russians have a positive view of the USA on the whole, with 39 per cent of them among those polled with elementary education. Meanwhile, the number of those who assess relations between Moscow and Washington in a positive rather than negative way has dropped over the last five years - from 64 per cent in 2003 to 54 in 2008.

The poll was conducted in 153 settlements in 46 regions, territories and republics

of Russia.

23 July 2008 Central Electoral Commission (CEC) member Igor Borisov says the CEC possesses information that employees of Western special services work as members of OSCE's international observer missions.

23 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). It calls for it to be reformed.

23 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says the trial of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic must be non-political.

Mikhail Margelov, head of the Federation Council International Affairs Committee says that Serbia is the whipping boy of the ICTY in the Hague.

23 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says he hopes that Tehran will react positively to the proposals of the six international mediators on the Iranian nuclear problem. He says there has been progress on the North Korean nuclear problem.

23 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov attends the ASEAN forum in Singapore. Lavrov says that Russia is prepared to consider the establishment of a full-fledged representative office of ASEAN on its territory, and is in favour of holding a second Russia-ASEAN summit.

23 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov calls for urgent decisions regarding the non-use of force and says that steps have to be taken to normalize the situation in the Kodori Gorge if the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict is to be resolved.

24 July 2008 Serbian tabloid *Vecernje novosti* reports the arrival of Russian humanitarian aid in Serbia for Kosovo Serbs.

24 July 2008 The German authorities hand over some materials of a criminal case relating to the investigation into Aleksandr Litvinenko's murder. The materials have been given to a working group from the Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office which is visiting Hamburg.

24 July 2008 The MOD denies reports that Russia intends to deploy its strategic bombers in Cuba.

24 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that setting harsh deadlines for Iran, which should give its response to the proposal of the sextet of intermediaries for the settlement of Iran's nuclear problem, would not be expedient but neither should things be dragged out. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that Iran would be given two weeks to respond to the proposal of the sextet. Lavrov says that a conclusive solution to the nuclear problem of Iran still requires many political and diplomatic efforts but there is no other way to settle this issue.

Atomstroyexport says it will resume deliveries of equipment for the Iranian Bushehr nuclear power plant via Azerbaijan no earlier than autumn.

Colonel-General Viktor Yesin, first vice-president of the Security, Defence and Law-and-Order Academy says Iran will be able to create intercontinental missiles no sooner than after eight-ten years:

Iran continues developing its programme and, in the very near future, we

should expect that missiles with a medium range of up to 4,000 kilometres will be created. The recently tested Shihab-3 missile is different from Korean counterparts. Its engine has been developed by Iranian specialists. As regards intercontinental missiles, they will appear in Iran no sooner than after eight-ten years.

24 July 2008 The MOD says that the Russian Railway Troops battalion deployed in Abkhazia on 31 May has completed work to repair the railway groundwork in Abkhazia. They will leave Abkhazia in early August.

24 July 2008 Sergey Lavrov speaks against creating "narrow" military and political structures in Asia-Pacific and calls for collective efforts to ensure security in the region:

The Russian position is unchanged: any activity aimed at creating new international and regional alliances and mechanisms should strengthen the strategic balance, take into account the partners' legal interests with regard to security and be based on universally recognized norms and principles of international law...We believe a proposal to launch a new, permanent mechanism of intersessional meetings on nonproliferation and disarmament within the framework of the ARF is a positive one. This will be not only a useful contribution to strengthening the regime of nonproliferation in the Asia-Pacific region, but will serve as a clear demonstration of the forum's viability.

24 July 2008 The CEC refutes information that it is allegedly aware of representatives of Western special services participating in election monitoring in a number of countries.

25 July 2008 The *Izvestiya* editorial board says that it was fed "disinformation" on the alleged Cuba bomber base plan. Ilshat Baychurin, acting chief of the Ministry of Defence Press Service and Information Directorate, says that "the disinformation about Moscow's intention to station strategic bombers in Cuba was instigated by certain circles in those countries that are themselves deploying military bases and facilities around Russia".

25 July 2008 Ukrainian ambassador to Moscow K I Hryshchenko is invited to the MFA for a conversation with First Deputy Foreign Minister A I Denisov. They discuss several topical aspects of bilateral relations which cause concern to the Russian side such as the celebrations of the 1020th anniversary of the baptism of Rus and the BSF.

The MFA accuses Ukraine of breaking agreements by denying Duma deputy Konstantin Zatulin entry to the country.

25 July 2008 The secretary-general of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Nikolay Bordyuzha, says the setting up of a military grouping in the Central Asian region within the framework of the CSTO will become an instrument of deterrence. He is addressing representatives of the CSTO member states at the level of deputy foreign, defence and finance ministers and deputy secretaries of security councils.

25 July 2008 Vitaly Churkin, Russia's permanent representative at the UN says:

Russia fully understands the European Union's desire to play a more important role in Kosovo affairs. However, this desire must not be implemented unilaterally, as is happening now, but on the basis of the UN Security Council's

Resolution 1244, and respecting the rights of the UN Security Council laid down in its charter.

26 July 2008 Vitaly Churkin says UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has overstepped his authority and Europe is trying to usurp control over Kosovo. This is Churkin's reaction to a report on international presence in the province presented at the UN Security Council.

26 July 2008 The MFA criticises the declaration signed by the US president on the occasion of Captive Nations Week, in which he equates German Nazism and Soviet Communism. It says:

The phrase used by the US president cannot but hurt the hearts not only of Russian participants in the war but, we think, of veterans in the other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, including American ones, who were together fighting for common victory and shed blood on the battlefields for the sake of freedom and the future...One cannot fail to see that assessments of this kind only feed attempts of those who, for their own political and mercenary ends, are trying to falsify facts and rewrite history...All this is happening against the background of amazing tolerance on the part of the United States towards those who in some European countries are trying to whitewash their 'own' accomplices of fascism.

26 July 2008 Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov says the BSF must remain in Sevastopol. "Russia has no right to give away Sevastopol under any circumstances. To give away Sevastopol means to give away the south."

26 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the situation in northern Lebanon. Moscow calls for an immediate cessation of the armed confrontation between representatives of various religious communities in northern Lebanon and the restoration of full control over the situation by Lebanese constitutional structures.

26 July 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits China. He and Chinese Vice-Premier Wang Qishan launch an energy resources negotiation mechanism.

28 July 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Titov, interviewed in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, says that Russia is seriously concerned about the decision taken by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to start reconfiguring the international presence in Kosovo, and believes that in this way he has assumed the prerogatives of the UN Security Council.

28 July 2008 Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's permanent representative at NATO, says Russia has familiarized its partners in NATO with the main provisions of its new foreign policy concept at a meeting of the Russia-NATO Council. He also says that Russia's proposals on new security architecture in Europe will be presented to the member states of the alliance at the next meeting of the Russia-NATO Council. Russia suggests renouncing the "bloc-based" system for ensuring security in Europe, and opting instead for the creation of a single legally binding security treaty in which all countries are represented as individual nations.

28 July 2008 Russian Patriarch Aleksey II and Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew both attend the celebrations in Kiev devoted to the 1,020th anniversary of the baptism of Kievan Rus. They agree to resolve moot questions in relations through dialogue.

28 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement on Cyprus. It says Russia approves of the agreement between the leaders of the two Cypriot communities, Mehmet Ali Talat and Dhimitrios Khristofias, to start full-fledged negotiations under UN auspices on 3 September on a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

29 July 2008 Former Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak is appointed ambassador of the Russian Federation to the USA and permanent observer of the Russian Federation at the Organization of American States in Washington.

29 July 2008 Russian Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka says he does not see any grounds to talk about a "Russian trace" in the Aleksandr Litvinenko case.

29 July 2008 Metropolitan Kirill, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's external relations department, says that hard times are in store for the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

29 July 2008 CSTO deputy Secretary-General Valery Semerikov says that rendering military and military-technical assistance to a CSTO's member-state in case of an aggression against it will be refined during the second phase of the Rubezh 2008 joint command post exercise in Moscow. The first phase of the exercise was staged in Armenia, with joint consulting and decision making refined.

30 July 2008 The withdrawal of Russian Railway Troops from Abkhazia commences.

30 July 2008 Konstantin Zatulin, director of the Institute of CIS Countries and first deputy chairman of the Duma CIS Affairs Committee, says that the number of troops in the Russian peacekeeping battalion in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone might be increased this autumn.

Zatulin also says that the automatic renewal of the "great" Russian-Ukrainian Treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual aid is unlikely. On 1 October 2008 the deadline will expire when the sides can declare the suspension of further validity of the agreement. If this is not done, then the agreement, the 10-year period of validity of which expires on 1 April 2009, should be extended automatically for another 10 years.

30 July 2008 The second phase of the Rubezh 2008 joint command post exercise of the CSTO member states begins at the CSTO's Joint Staff headquarters in Moscow.

30 July 2008 The MFA issues a statement criticising the Georgian Foreign Ministry's reaction to the UN Secretary-General's report on the Georgian-Abkhaz settlement process.

31 July 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Libyan Secretary of the General People's Committee Dr Al-Baghdadi Ali al-Mahmudi discuss expansion of Russo-Libyan economic cooperation, mainly in the energy sector.

31 July 2008 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Anvar Azimov permanent representative to the OSCE in Vienna.

31 July 2008 The Russo-Cuban Intergovernmental Economic, Commercial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation Commission meets in Havana. The meeting is presided over by Igor Sechin and Ricardo Cabrisas, government minister of the

Republic of Cuba.

August 2008

1 August 2008 Russian muftis refuse to visit the USA as part of the international programme Islam in America. The trip was to take place at the invitation of the US Department of State. The refusal was caused by the USA's attitude to Russia and Muslim states. North Caucasus muftis visited the USA at the invitation of the US Department of State in July 2007.

1 August 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits Cuba. Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko also visits Cuba. This is a session of the Intergovernmental Russo-Cuban Joint Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation.

1 August 2008 The prime ministers of Russia and Turkey (Vladimir Putin and Recep Erdogan) discuss trade and economic cooperation as well as cooperation in the sphere of military-technical ties during a telephone conversation.

1 August 2008 The MFA says it regrets the fact that concern about the request of the International Criminal Court's prosecutor to arrest Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir has not been reflected in the UN Security Council's new resolution on Darfur.

1 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev sends a message to President of Council of State and Chairman of Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba Raul Castro Ruz praising the current state of Russo-Cuban relations.

2 August 2008 Airborne Troops Commander Valery Yevtukhovich says Russian paratroopers will come to the aid of the JPF in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone. "I think the decision to send additional forces there is within the jurisdiction of the [Russian] Security Council and the president, but in any case Russia will stand up for its citizens living in South Ossetia. As regards the Airborne Troops, we are prepared to come to the aid of the peacekeeping force in the conflict zone if need be."

The President of North Ossetia, Taymuraz Mamsurov, has a telephone conversation with South Ossetian president Eduard Kokoyty. Mamsurov says that North Ossetia is ready to help South Ossetia defend itself against Georgia.

The North Ossetian Ministry of Emergencies says it has started preparations for accepting refugees from the breakaway Georgian region of South Ossetia.

The MFA expresses concern over the increase of tensions between Georgia and South Ossetia.

Deputy chairman of the State Duma security committee Gennady Gudkov says "Russia should take every measure in order not to allow war along its borders". He is commenting on the statement made by South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoyty to the effect that the South Ossetian authorities are ready to announce mobilization and involve volunteers from the whole of the North Caucasus. Gudkov says that "any complication of the military situation encroaches on Russia's security". "We should not be modest here. We should clearly defend our national security and interests. Large-scale military conflicts should not be tolerated."

Vladimir Ivanov, aide to commander of the JPF, says Georgia's claims that Russian peacekeepers may have been involved in firing on Georgian villages in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone are an attempt to discredit the JPF.

Colonel Aleksandr Drobyshevskiy, head of the press service of the Defence Ministry's Information Directorate, says that the Georgian statement is "a dirty informational act of provocation".

2 August 2008 Andrey Klimov, deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, says Russia is resuming its presence in such an important geostrategic area as Cuba and Latin America. He states: "Russia is quite likely to take a decision on military presence in Cuba in response to the deployment of American ABM systems next to the Russian border...If America is installing ABM systems near our borders, Russia too may deploy its systems in those states which will agree to take them."

3 August 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the situation in South Ossetia:

The signing by the sides of an agreement on the non-resumption of hostilities and security guarantees, which was earlier proposed by the OSCE, remains an undoubted priority. The acceptance of appropriate obligations concerning this document would allow the threat of war in the region to be averted through the implementation of tangible confidence-building measures.

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeals to both sides to exercise maximum restraint. They should, in the spirit of goodwill, focus their efforts on resolving the crisis situation and preventing its recurrence. Russia will continue taking all the necessary measures for mutually-acceptable peaceful solutions to be found. Force scenarios would finally dash the hopes for a settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

Vladimir Ivanov, aide to the commander of the JPF, confirms that shooting took place at the South Ossetian village of Muguti. He says this was in retaliation to firing by the Georgian side.

The state information and press committee of South Ossetia says Russian peacekeepers are providing necessary assistance in the evacuation of women and children from the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone. Evacuation begins from the villages of Muguti, Veliti and Prinevi of Znauri District.

A rally in support of South Ossetia is taking place on Teatralnaya Square in Vladikavkaz upon the initiative of the council of elders of the Styr Nykhas all-Ossetian public movement. Kamal Khodov, member of the council of elders of the Styr Nykhas union, says "the time has come to draw up a list of volunteers in order to determine who will take part in defending our land in the south."

Sergey Shamba, foreign minister of Abkhazia, says Abkhazia's refusal to take part in a meeting of the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary-General is due to the "biased position" of the group's members regarding the situation in South Ossetia.

4 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says he believes that Russia should restore its positions in Cuba. He states: "We need to restore our positions in both Cuba and in other countries." Putin receives a report from Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin about the latter's visit to Cuba as co-chairman of the Russian-Cuban

intergovernmental commission.

4 August 2008 The chairman of the Federation Council, Sergey Mironov, states "the naval component of the strategic nuclear forces is being given a special role". He says that this is caused by "the USA's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the deployment of missile defence elements in Europe, the recent formal creation of the United States Fourth Fleet and NATO's gradual expansion to our borders".

4 August 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin and US Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried talk by phone on the Georgian-South Ossetian crisis. The MFA states that: "Russia already called upon Tbilisi to take a responsible line and is also expecting constructive influence from Washington."

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin discusses the South Ossetian crisis with his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze by phone. The MFA states that:

Moscow is seriously concerned with the escalation of tensions in the region caused by disproportionate use of force by the Georgian side.

Tbilisi should realize that there is a real threat of the situation developing in a violent way, and should take effective measures not to allow further escalation of the conflict.

The aide to the commander of the JPF, Vladimir Ivanov, says that "the situation in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone remains extremely tense and no positive dynamics towards the tension receding is being observed". He states:

The peacekeeping contingent of the JPF has been brought to heightened combat readiness. Observation at observation posts and checkpoints has been stepped up, additional forces and additional observation posts have been put in place. Military observers of the JPF from the three sides are monitoring the situation in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone.

First deputy chairman of the State Duma Committee on CIS affairs and relations with compatriots Konstantin Zatulin states: "The Georgian authorities should be politically aware that continued provocations cannot but lead to a situation where the Russian Federation will have to recognize South Ossetia." Zatulin says that the Russian peacekeepers should act in a more resolute manner.

The president of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoyty, says that about 300 volunteers have arrived in South Ossetia from Russia to help in the event of a war with Georgia. Kokoyty states:

It has been noted that the Georgian side is pulling up forces. We are observing how the reconnaissance of the area is being carried out and so on. All this shows that while Georgia is saying that it is ready for direct talks with South Ossetia, it is pulling up forces for some kind of serious and decisive actions.

We view this as pressure on South Ossetia with the aim of breaking down the existing format of talks, i.e. the four-sided format with the participation of Russia, North Ossetia, South Ossetia and Georgia. Georgia is today trying to squeeze Russia out of this negotiation process.

Zvezda TV reports that over 2,000 residents of South Ossetia left the republic for Russia in the last two days.

Georgian Minister of State for Reintegration Temur Iakobashvili says that the South Ossetian separatists are deliberately escalating the situation in order to create an illusion of war and thwart peace talks proposed by the international community.

Of course they are doing everything to avoid peace processes because they realize that as a result of international organizations' increased involvement in the peace process they will no longer be able to use the tricks they have used in the past. Therefore the situation is being artificially exacerbated. Artificial actions are being taken in order to create the illusion that war is at hand, that it will happen tomorrow or the next day.

The most unfortunate thing is that the Russian Foreign Ministry is not only directing this but also facilitating it. Their statement yesterday (which warned that "threat of large-scale hostilities between Georgia and South Ossetia is becoming increasingly real") was an announcement of war and nothing else.

4 August 2008 The president of Abkhazia, Sergey Bagapsh, turns down a proposal by US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza to deploy an international police force in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict.

5 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev issues a decree appointing Georgy Matyushkin to the post of representative of the Russian Federation at the European Court of Human Rights and deputy justice minister of the Russian Federation.

5 August 2008 Yury Popov, MFA special envoy, says Russia will not stay on the sidelines if violence continues to escalate in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone: "Russia will not be able to stand aside if events develop in the gloomiest and most violent way, given that Russian citizens are living in South Ossetia, including in the conflict zone."

The South Ossetian government refutes Georgian claims that Georgian and South Ossetian representatives will meet on 7 August.

The Union of Cossacks of Russia and Abroad says it is ready to provide assistance in defending the interests of South Ossetia.

The head of the Pravoberezhnyy Cossack community, Boris Smayliyev says the first group of volunteers from North Ossetia's Pravoberezhnyy District will leave for South Ossetia on 6 August.

The North Ossetian Interior Ministry denies information that volunteers from the republic are leaving for South Ossetia.

5 August 2008 The Russian Emergencies Ministry sends humanitarian aid to the flood-hit areas of Transdnestr region.

5 August 2008 Gazprom Deputy head Valeriy Golubev, Belarusian Deputy Energy Minister Ryma Filimonava and Beltranshaz director-general Uladzimir Mayoraw have talks. Gazprom states that Belarus has fully repaid Russian natural gas deliveries of the first half of this year. Gazprom and Beltranshaz signed a contract on gas deliveries and transit for 2007-2011 on 31 December 2006. The contract set the gas price at \$100 per 1,000 cubic metres for 2007 and approved a gas price formula for the period from 1 January 2008. Belarus, the same as Russian industrial consumers, will have to pay the European gas price minus transportation

charges starting from 2011.

5 August 2008 Mikhail Dmitryev, the director of the Russian Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, says that in 2008 Russia will deliver weapons and hardware worth more than \$8 billion dollars to its foreign customers. In 2007 Russia delivered \$7.5 billion dollars' worth of defence products. He says Russia has 10-15 key partners in military and technical cooperation, including India and China, as well as Algeria, Morocco and Venezuela.

5 August 2008 Konstantin Zatulin, the first deputy head of the Duma Committee on CIS Affairs and Relations with Compatriots, says there should be no automatic extension of the Russo-Ukrainian Friendship Treaty, if Ukraine seeks to join NATO. He says Ukraine's striving to join NATO is a threat to Russia's security and a violation of Article 6 of the Treaty.

6 August 2008 Aleksandr Surikov, Russian ambassador to Belarus, says that Iskander missile systems or strategic bombers may be deployed on Belarusian territory in response to the deployment of US missile defence system facilities in the Czech Republic and Poland.

6 August 2008 Interfax reports that an emergency meeting is being held at the Foreign Ministry to discuss the deteriorating situation in South Ossetia. Interfax cites Boris Malakhov, deputy official representative of the ministry. According to Interfax, the Foreign Ministry's leadership, including State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Ministry Grigoriy Karasin, are attending the meeting. The MFA's special envoy and co-chairman of the Joint Control Commission for the settlement of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict, Yury Popov, later denies this report.

Yury Popov flies to Tbilisi because there had been an agreement to hold a bilateral meeting between Georgia and South Ossetia in Tskhinvali on 7 August.

Aide to the commander of the JPF Vladimir Ivanov says peacekeepers have again detected illegal flights of jet aircraft over the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone. He says that on the night of 5-6 August, from 2000 to 0500 Moscow time the peacekeeping force's observation posts and checkpoints detected eight flights of jet aircraft from the south (from the town of Gori) to the north (the village of Java).

Vladimir Ivanov warns that the visiting of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone by representatives of foreign states, international and public organizations without the agreement of the joint HQ of the JPF has become unsafe.

Peacekeepers of the JPF deny reports about unexploded shells in Georgian settlements and the presence of armoured vehicles at South Ossetian observation posts.

The head of the South Ossetian state committee of information and the press, Irina Gagloyeva, says that there are new exchanges of fire in the zone of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. Georgian armed formations were forced out from the strategically important Nuli height.

Rossiia TV reports heavy fighting in the Znauri District in South Ossetia. Tskhinvali is essentially cut off from the rest of the republic.

6 August 2008 MFA official representative Andrey Nesterenko states: "A document prepared by the Iranian side was received on 5 August. However, unfortunately that

document does not, in essence, contain an answer to 'the sextet's' proposals concerning talks."

6 August 2008 Russia's ambassador in Minsk, Aleksandr Surikov, says the price Belarus pays for Russian gas will most probably exceed \$200 dollars for 1,000 cubic metres. in 2009. Russian *Ekho Moskvy* radio says that currently Belarus pays \$127.9 dollars per 1,000 cubic metres. It also says that the average price for CIS states will be around \$300 dollars.

7 August 2008 Interfax reports that the South Ossetian armed forces have engaged in direct contact with Georgian troops at the approaches to Tskhinvali.

Brigadier-General Mamuka Qurashvili, the chief of peacekeeping operations at the Georgian Defence Ministry, says the government has "decided to restore constitutional order" in South Ossetia and advance on separatist forces after Georgian villages in the area came under fire.

Russian Commander of the JPF General Marat Kulakhmetov says the Georgian side has virtually declared war on South Ossetia.

Russian Foreign Ministry's ambassador-at-large Yury Popov says the international community must review its attitude towards Georgia and the issue of its membership of NATO: "I think that the international community will draw the appropriate conclusions and, as I believe, must carry out re-evaluations, including a review of Georgia's prospects for NATO membership." Popov says an urgent meeting will take place on 8 August between Georgian special presidential representative for conflict settlement Temur Iakobashvili and South Ossetian deputy prime minister and special assignments minister Boris Chochiyev.

A meeting between Georgian Minister of State for Reintegration and special presidential envoy for conflict settlement Temur Iakobashvili and Yury Popov ends in Tbilisi.

The president of Abkhazia, Sergey Bagapsh, says that a Russian military battalion from NCMD has entered South Ossetia.

Head of the Federation Council's committee for CIS affairs Vadim Gustov believes that the USA bears responsibility for the actions of the Georgian side in South Ossetia. He believes that the USA is pursuing the aim of drawing Georgia into NATO and stationing its troops in its territory. He states: "We are therefore witnessing a forceful policy of deploying NATO complexes around Russia: first in Europe, close to our borders, and now the task is to draw Georgia into it all." He criticises the USA for re-equipping the Georgian army.

Grigory Karasin, state secretary and deputy foreign minister, describes Georgia's attempts to lay the blame for the crisis in South Ossetia on Russia as cynical, blasphemous and unfair.

Vladimir Ivanov, aide to the JPF commander, says the peacekeeping contingent of the JPF has been put on combat alert.

Russian envoy Yury Popov says the Russian peacekeeping force in South Ossetia is too small to deal with the size of the Georgian force which has intervened:

The peacekeepers have their mandate. However, in this situation, when there

is open aggression with large forces against South Ossetia, I think that the peacekeepers using their forces, which are in the region of 500 men today, are not in a position to impose order in the face of Georgian forces that outnumber them many times over. At the moment, it seems to me it is important to restrain the Georgian leadership from an escalation of the conflict.

7 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin arrives in Beijing to pay a working visit coinciding with the opening ceremony of the 29th summer Olympic Games.

7 August 2008 The Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology and the South Korean Ministry of Knowledge Economy agree a draft agreement on cooperation in the areas of geology and management of subsurface resources. The agreement will be signed in autumn 2008 in Moscow during a Russian-Korean summit.

8 August 2008 Aide to the commander of the JPF Vladimir Ivanov says Tskhinvali (South Ossetia) is under massive fire from the Georgian side.

A spokesman for the Russian peacekeeper command says twelve Russian peacekeepers have been killed and 50 wounded in Tskhinvali in artillery and gun fire by regular Georgian troops in the region.

South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty says that he is in Tskhinvali and that South Ossetian units already control the major part of the city. Kokoyty says over 1,400 have been killed in Georgian attacks. Kokoyty calls the start of an assault on Tskhinvali "a perfidious and base step by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili".

It is reported that Russian peacekeepers are engaged in fierce fighting with regular units of the Georgian army on the southern outskirts of Tskhinvali. Air strikes against Georgian positions in South Ossetia are being subjected to air strikes.

Subunits of the Russian 58th Army arrive in Tskhinvali. The MOD confirms that reinforcements have been sent to aid the Russian Peacekeepers in South Ossetia.

Commander-in-Chief of Russia's Ground Troops, Army General Vladimir Boldyrev, heads the operational headquarters set up in Vladikavkaz in response to the events in South Ossetia.

The commander of the JPF, Major-General Marat Kulakhmetov, says Tskhinvali has been practically destroyed as a result of concentrated shelling.

The MOD denies reports in the Georgian media that a Russian military aircraft has been shot down over Georgian territory.

Maya Kharebova, a representative of the State Committee for Information and Press of South Ossetia, says the people of South Ossetia are calling on the international community and the Russian leaders to take measures to protect them from extermination by Georgia.

Dmitry Medvedev issues a statement on the situation in South Ossetia. He is addressing an emergency session of the Security Council.

You know that Russia had and has been present on Georgian territory on a totally lawful basis, fulfilling its peacekeeping mission in compliance with the international accords that had been reached. We have always considered

preserving peace to be our main task. Historically Russia has been, and will continue to be, a guarantor of security for peoples of the Caucasus.

In compliance with the constitution and federal laws, as the president of the Russian Federation, it is my duty to defend the lives and dignity of Russian citizens, no matter where they are based. It is these circumstances that guide the logic of the steps we are taking now. We shall not allow our compatriots to be killed with impunity. Those who are responsible for that will be duly punished.

The Kremlin press service states:

At the moment, under the leadership of Dmitry Medvedev, a range of emergency measures is being discussed to restore the situation in South Ossetia to a peaceful course, to defend the civilian population taking into account the peacekeeping mandate that we have and defend Russian citizens and the national interests of Russia.

8 August 2008 Vladimir Putin has talks with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in Beijing.

8 August 2008 Putin says Georgia's "aggressive acts" in South Ossetia will trigger a response.

There are casualties: killed, wounded, including casualties among the Russian peacekeepers. This is very sad and very disturbing and, of course, this will provoke actions in response. We very much hope that these actions will be adequately assessed, including within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We all must take action to stop bloodshed.

Putin has talks with US President George Bush in Beijing on the South Ossetia crisis.

Sergey Lavrov issues a statement on the conflict in South Ossetia and says that Russia will not allow its citizens to be killed with impunity. He states:

Quite recently, before the combat actions began in South Ossetia, President Saakashvili said that it was nonsense to demand that he sign such a document, because Georgia does not use force against its people. Now it seems that it does use force.

All this raises major questions about Georgia's validity as a state and as a responsible member of the international community.

In South Ossetia civilians - women, the elderly and children - are continuing to be killed. As I have already said, many of them have Russian citizenship. The president of the Russian Federation today unambiguously underlined that Russia will not permit its citizens to be killed with impunity. The life and dignity of our citizens will be protected, wherever they are, in accordance with the Russian constitution and laws of the Russian Federation.

Lavrov and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice discuss the South Ossetia crisis by telephone. Lavrov also discusses the South Ossetian crisis in telephone conversations with German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier, and Finnish foreign minister Alexander Stubb, OSCE Chairman. Sergey Lavrov also speaks to

Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union Javier Solana.

The MFA has an emergency meeting on South Ossetia. The MFA issues a statement following its meeting.

It has become absolutely clear why, for a long time, Tbilisi, under various pretexts, insistently refused to conclude legally binding agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia about non-use of force. It is still not late to prevent mass bloodshed and new casualties, including among civilians. We are also very concerned about the future of the Russian peacekeepers. The Georgian leaders must come to their senses and return to civilized ways of resolving difficult questions of a political settlement. We also hope that our foreign partners and the international community as a whole will not stay indifferent in this difficult moment when the fate of hundreds of thousands of people living in the region is decided.

Russian envoy to the UN Vitaly Churkin addresses an emergency session of the UN Security Council on South Ossetia. He accuses Georgia of a treacherous attack on South Ossetia. He accuses western states of covering up for Georgia.

Russian envoy to NATO Dmitry Rozogin sends an official note to all missions of the NATO member states in Brussels in view of Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia.

The MOD says it will not "let its peacekeepers and Russian citizens get hurt" in South Ossetia.

A telegram sent to the chairman of the North Ossetian parliament, Larisa Khabitsova says that the legislative assemblies of Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories and the Republic of Adygea are ready to provide comprehensive help to the people of South Ossetia.

The Ministry of Transport says the Russian Federation will cease flights to Georgia.

The chairman of the Duma, Boris Gryzlov, says that Russia will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens in South Ossetia. He states: "In any case, we shall not refrain from taking the full-scale and rapid steps required to protect Russian citizens in the region and to maintain security at our southern borders."

Duma deputy speaker from the Communist Party and deputy chairman of the Communist Party Ivan Melnikov accuses Georgia of committing genocide in South Ossetia.

The head of the Duma security committee, Vladimir Vasilyev, says that the US State Department is directly responsible for the escalation of the situation in South Ossetia.

Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says he believes there are grounds to review the South Ossetian parliament's appeal about its status following Georgia's military aggression.

CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov says Russia should officially recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The South Ossetian Press and Information Committee releases a statement on behalf of Russian citizens living in South Ossetia:

Esteemed President Dmitry Medvedev, each of us has a passport of a citizen of the Russian Federation in their pocket or handbag. We are on our land, each of us was born and grew up here. We are being destroyed by Georgian aggressors. We, hiding from bombardment in basements, do not feel that we are citizens of a great country. We have heard that Russia has great aviation, excellent aircraft. Help us, if you make it in time.

There are probably just minutes left before our complete annihilation. The city has been razed to the ground. Civilians' houses are on fire. People have nowhere to hide from the enemy's fire. Citizens are dying. Protect your citizens. You are our only hope.

The North Ossetian parliament issues an appeal to the president and both houses of parliament to take "immediate and efficient measures" to defend Russian citizens in South Ossetia.

Yermak Dzansolov, first deputy chairman of the North Ossetian government, says Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili should be put on trial at the Hauge.

The president of Abkhazia, Sergey Bagapsh, warns that Georgia may attack Abkhazia next.

8 August 2008 Vladimir Putin has talks with Israeli President Shimon Peres in Beijing. He says: "We will continue efforts, using our special relations with Israel and our Arab neighbours - we will increase efforts in order to achieve a comprehensive and fair peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict." He says annual trade between Russia and Israel is worth over \$2.5 billion.

The MFA issues a statement calling on Israel to stop establishing settlements in the Palestinian territories, saying the activity undermines the Middle East peace process.

8 August 2008 Vladimir Voronkov, Russia's acting permanent envoy to the OSCE, calls on the OSCE to condemn Georgia's attack against South Ossetia.

Dmitry Medvedev and German Chancellor Angela Merkel discuss the worsening of the situation in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone in a telephone call.

9 August 2008 Official spokeswoman for the South Ossetian government Irina Gagloyeva says that the death toll in Tskhinvali has reached 1,600 people.

Fighting takes place between Russian and Georgian forces in South Ossetia. Russian planes bomb the Senaki military base. Air strikes in the Kodori gorge are also reported.

Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Ground Troops Vladimir Boldyrev says in Vladikavkaz that battalion battle groups of the Russian 58th Army of the North Caucasus Military District have fully "liberated" Tskhinvali from Georgian armed forces.

Georgian media claims that Russian military aircraft carried out a missile and bomb strike at the Kopitnari military airfield near Kutaisi.

Georgian Prime Minister Lado Gurgenidze says that the Russians have bombed main energy pipelines running through Georgia but the pipelines have not been damaged.

Aide to the commander of the JPF Vladimir Ivanov says that Russian peacekeepers have observed their Georgian opponents voluntarily laying down their arms and abandoning their positions.

RIA Novosti reports that units of the 76th Pskov Airborne Division have been moved to Tskhinvali.

Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin discuss the South Ossetian situation in Moscow:

[Putin] You know, in my view they are elements of some kind of genocide against the Ossetian people. And I think it would be the right thing to do, Dmitry Anatolyevich, if you were to direct the Military Prosecutor's Office to document cases of this kind.

[Medvedev] Naturally, I'll direct them so. The fact is that the prosecutor's office must look into all these cases. The fate of our citizens is at stake. We are all answerable for them. Accordingly, all those crimes that have been committed there must be documented in the most thorough fashion and subsequently must undergo the most thorough of analyses, up to it becoming a case of criminal liability specifically for those who have committed them.

Dmitry Medvedev discusses the South Ossetian crisis with US President George W Bush by telephone.

The government discusses the humanitarian crisis in South Ossetia. Dmitry Medvedev orders the Russian government to organize urgent humanitarian aid for the civilian population and the Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia.

Dmitry Medvedev says that the Russian peacekeepers and the units deployed with them in South Ossetia are conducting an operation to force Georgia to make peace. He meets Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and the Chief of General Staff General Nikolay Makarov.

Vladimir Putin meets North Ossetian leaders and heads of federal ministries and departments in Vladikavkaz. He makes the following statement:

The Georgian authorities' actions in South Ossetia are a crime, of course. First of all, this is a crime against their own people, because Georgia's territorial integrity suffered a deathly blow, which means a great damage to its statehood. It is difficult to imagine how, after all what happened and is still going on, one can persuade South Ossetia become part of the Georgian state. The aggression has led to many casualties, including among civilians, and provoked in fact a real humanitarian disaster. This is a crime against the Ossetian people, of course.

At the same time I would like to stress that Russia has always held Georgia in great respect and regarded the Georgians as a brotherly people. I am confident that, despite today's tragic events, this will be so in future too. Russia will have the same attitude towards Georgia in future, despite the criminal policy of

the incumbent rulers of that country.

Time will come and the Georgian people themselves will objectively assess the current leaders' behaviour. I think that Georgia, Russia and the whole world have now realized perfectly well that the Georgian leaders' wish to join NATO was caused not by their desire to be part of the global system of international security and contribute to the cause of peace in the world, strengthening of peace in the world. Their wish to join NATO was caused by totally different reasons - by an attempt to drag other countries and peoples into their bloody escapades.

As for Russia, from a legal point of view, our actions are absolutely justified and legitimate. Moreover, they are necessary. In line with the existing international agreements, including the 1999 agreement, Russia is not only carrying out peacekeeping tasks, but is also obliged, if one of the sides violates the agreement on ceasefire, to protect the other side, which we did in full compliance with these agreements, in this case with regard to South Ossetia. This is the legal point of view, as I said.

But there is also the political aspect. It stems from the fact that Russia has been playing a positive, stabilizing role in this part of the world, in the Caucasus as a whole, for centuries. It has been a guarantor of security, cooperation and progress in this region. This is how it was in the past and this is how it is going to be in future. Let nobody doubt this.

At the same time we are not going to impose anything on anybody. We understand perfectly well what kind of world we are living in. We will try to achieve a just and peaceful solution to all conflict situations which we have inherited.

We are urging the Georgian authorities to stop immediately the aggression against South Ossetia, stop violating all previous agreements on peace and ceasefire and treat with respect the legitimate rights and interests of other peoples. If somebody wants to be treated with respect, he must respect others.

The MFA criticises a statement made by the Ukrainian MFA on 8 August on the South Ossetian crisis: "The Ukrainian state, which recently has been recklessly arming the Georgian army to the teeth, in doing so has directly encouraged the Georgian leadership to intervene and to carry out ethnic cleansing in South Ossetia. It has no moral right to lecture to others, even less lay claim to a role in resolving the conflict."

The plenipotentiary representative of South Ossetia in Russia, Dmitry Medoyev says there is no-one in Tbilisi to talk to about a ceasefire between Georgia and South Ossetia.

The people of the republic of South Ossetia issue an appeal to the government of the Russian Federation and the people of Russia to recognise South Ossetia.

Russian ambassador to the UN Vitaly Churkin says that Georgia's military action against South Ossetia was possible because of the connivance of a number of member countries of the UN Security Council. He states:

Georgia is continuing its treacherous attack on South Ossetia. This is happening despite the appeal of the Russian leadership to cease fire

immediately, the fratricidal conflict, and resume the negotiating process.

Such a scenario has become possible because of the connivance of a number of Security Council members who last night blocked the assessment of the ongoing tragedy based on the document proposed by Russia. A humanitarian catastrophe is imminent.

The Abkhaz army carries out a rocket attack on several military facilities in western Georgia.

Investigators from the Russian Chief Military Prosecutor's Office have begun questioning witnesses and victims of Georgian security forces' actions. The Chief Military Prosecutor's Office has opened a criminal case into the attack on Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia on charges of murder. The case is being handled by investigators from the North Caucasus Military District.

The Federation Council calls for setting up an international tribunal to assess the actions of the Georgian leadership. Aleksandr Torshin, deputy speaker says Saakashvili and his inner circle, including the defence minister, should be brought to court as part of an international tribunal. Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says that Russia would insist on bringing Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili to "criminal justice for the military action begun in South Ossetia, which has led to numerous casualties".

9 August 2008 Chinese President Hu Jintao meets Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in Beijing. They discuss further bilateral and multilateral cooperation in diverse fields to achieve common development.

10 August 2008 Vladimir Ivanov, aide to commander of the Joint Peacekeeping Force says Tskhinvali has been completely cleared of Georgian units. He says: "Tskhinvali is fully under the control of Russian peacekeepers and subunits of the 58th Army. All Georgian formations have been driven out and they are currently being pushed from south outskirts towards South Ossetia's administrative border."

Russian naval spokesman Igor Dygalo says that Russian ships have sunk a vessel in a short naval battle off the coast of Georgia. He says that Russia is not implementing a blockade of Georgia and that the navy's actions are aimed at guaranteeing the conditions for the defence of Russian citizens in the region and to provide support for Russian peacekeepers.

The MOD denies claims that Russian warplanes have bombed Tbilisi airport. It also denies claims of air strikes against civilian targets in Georgia. The administration of Tbilisi airport denies reports that Russian fighter planes bombed the airport.

The MFA says it is extremely concerned at reports about the forced holding on Georgian territory of Russian citizens temporarily staying there who are trying to leave.

The deputy chief of the General Staff, Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, says that Russia had to send reinforcements to South Ossetia because Georgian troops outnumbered the Russian peacekeepers there by 12 to one at the time a full-scale conflict began on 7 August.

The MOD categorically denies claims by Georgia that Russian military subunits have gone beyond the confines of the administrative borders of South Ossetia.

Vladimir Ivanov, aide to the commander of the JPF, says that Georgian troops still remain in South Ossetia.

Dmitry Medvedev discusses the South Ossetian situation with French President Nicolas Sarkozy by telephone. Medvedev says that in order to normalize the situation in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, it is necessary for all Georgian troops to be withdrawn from the conflict zone and it is necessary to sign a legally-binding agreement on refusal to continue using force.

Medvedev describes Georgia's actions in South Ossetia as genocide. He says that evidence of the crimes committed by the Georgian military in Tskhinvali must be collected and documented, and those responsible prosecuted. He meets the chairman of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General, Aleksandr Bastrykin.

Vladimir Putin says that the exodus of refugees from the Georgian breakaway region of South Ossetia to Russia amounts to "a humanitarian catastrophe". He says the government has decided to earmark extra funds worth a total of R500 million to the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania to enable it, among other things, to deal with refugee problems.

Sergey Lavrov comments to the media on a claim that in a telephone conversation with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice he raised the issue of Mikheil Saakashvili remaining Georgia's president. Lavrov says that "A person who has issued an order for war crimes to be committed, as a result of which thousands of Russian citizens, including peacekeepers, have been killed cannot be considered a partner". Lavrov says that Rice "incorrectly interpreted this conversation, trying to present the matter in such a way that without Saakashvili's departure it would be impossible to end the conflict in South Ossetia...If Georgian troops withdraw from South Ossetia and if Georgia and South Ossetia sign an agreement on the non-use of force, peace will be restored irrespective of the future fate of Saakashvili."

The MFA issues a statement on the conversation between Lavrov and Rice:

SV Lavrov set out our fundamental assessments of the development of the situation in South Ossetia. It was stressed that in conditions of a persisting direct threat to the lives of Russian citizens in South Ossetia, Russian peacekeeping forces in accordance with the existing international agreements are continuing their operation for compelling the Georgian side to peace. Attention was also drawn to the numerous war crimes committed by Georgian subunits against the civilians of South Ossetia, as a result of which a most profound humanitarian crisis has arisen in the republic.

The minister emphasized the need for an immediate withdrawal of Georgian troops from South Ossetia to positions not violating the existing agreements of the sides, and the signing by the sides to the conflict of a legally binding agreement on the non-use of force.

The MFA issues a statement on a telephone conversation between Sergey Lavrov and Georgian foreign minister Eka Tqeshelashvili:

On 10 August, on the initiative of the Georgian side, a telephone conversation took place between Russian Federation Foreign Minister S.V. Lavrov and Georgian Foreign Minister E Tqeshelashvili, in the course of which the situation

in and around South Ossetia was discussed. The Russian side stressed the absolute need for a complete withdrawal of all Georgian armed units from the conflict zone, which would thus bring the situation back to full compliance with the accords fixed by the Dagomys agreements of 1992.

The Georgian foreign minister cited the Georgian leadership's statement that all Georgian forces had been withdrawn from the conflict zone. The Russian side replied by citing facts showing the presence in specific areas of Tskhinvali and its vicinities of Georgian forces continuing to conduct hostilities, including with the support of artillery and snipers, and the closing in of reinforcements from other parts of Georgia on the conflict zone. It was stressed that only an unconditional withdrawal of Georgian troops would make it possible to restore peace in the conflict zone and bring the situation back onto a legal footing, which requires the Georgian government's decision on the cessation of steps violating its obligations concerning both the South Ossetian conflict and the norms and principles of international humanitarian law. The attention of the Georgian foreign minister was also drawn to a statement by Minister of State T. Iakobashvili that the Georgian side does not intend to retreat from the conflict zone, which completely contradicts the claims that Georgian troops have already been withdrawn from South Ossetia.

E Tqeshelashvili promised to clarify the situation urgently and made assurances of her understanding of the Russian side's position concerning the steps official Tbilisi needs to take.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff, says that Russia has not received any official proposals from Georgia about the beginning of a peace process. He says Russia's operations in South Ossetia are a peacekeeping operation.

The MFA confirms that a note on ceasefire was handed over to the Russian embassy in Tbilisi but stresses that Tbilisi is still engaged in military actions in South Ossetia. The MFA yesterday denied knowledge of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's proposal to the Russian president to stop fighting in South Ossetia.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says the events in Tskhinvali have the features of genocide against the Ossetian people. He accuses the West of double standards over this crisis.

The West behaved in a strange manner in the first hours of the aggression against South Ossetia, keeping inexplicable silence and then, as if on command, many countries, some of which I have mentioned, took a position of criticism and are now in fact preventing the Russian armed forces from an operation to enforce peace.

He says Georgian forces must unconditionally withdraw from South Ossetia, to the line defined in the Dagomys agreement 1992 and Georgia must give a written obligation by the Georgian side not to use force.

Russia is fighting for people on the territory of South Ossetia and, by the way, on the territory of Abkhazia to live in peace and quiet without fearing that a sudden artillery or a missile attack will happen in the night, that their houses, towns and villages will be destroyed. This is what Russia is fighting for.

South Ossetia and Georgia are on the southern border of the Russian

Federation. We are interested in that all our neighbours live in stability and that our borders exist in a quiet, predictable and friendly mode...We are not against Georgia, we are against the militaristic aggressive course of the incumbent Georgian authorities that has been clearly shown in the events we have been witnessing for four days now.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says Moscow is astonished at the OSCE reaction to the events in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone and calls on the OSCE chairman to encourage the withdrawal of Georgian troops from South Ossetia. He says:

We had the right to expect that the current OSCE chairman would give a principled assessment of the fact that by triggering bloodshed against the Ossetian people, Georgia's ruling regime grossly violated all fundamental documents of the OSCE, including the Helsinki Final Act, the Code of Conduct, the European Security Charter, the CFE Treaty and other documents.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says Russia maintains diplomatic relations with Georgia, and the Russian embassy in Tbilisi is working actively.

The Emergencies Ministry sends 120 tonnes of food to people in South Ossetia.

Russian human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin says that those who gave orders for the overnight destruction of Tskhinvali are responsible for what is going on in South Ossetia and they must be tried at an international tribunal.

Abkhaz president Sergey Bagapsh says that after the tragic events in Tskhinvali, the international community should recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

An aide to the commander of the Russian peacekeepers, Aleksandr Novitsky, says a Russian grouping "largely consisting of paratroopers" has entered the security zone of the CIS Joint Peacekeeping Force in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone in Zugdidi District in Georgia.

The representative of the Abkhaz president in the Gali District, Ruslan Kishmaria, says Georgia has deployed over 4,000 troops to the de facto border with Abkhazia.

The governor of Zugdidi District, Zaza Gorozia says Georgia has given agreement to the deployment of an additional group of Russian troops on the territory of Zugdidi District, which borders Abkhazia, on condition that they will conduct patrols in the security zone with the participation of UN military observers and representatives of Georgia.

The commander of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces, Sergey Chaban, says that he will convey the Georgian side's request to Russia's military leadership.

Abkhaz president Sergey Bagapsh issues a decree declaring war status in a number of districts of the republic for 10 days from 11 August. War status is being introduced in Gali, Tqvarcheli, Ochamchire, Gulripshi districts, and in part of Sukhumi district.

The army of Abkhazia starts moving into the security zone in the republic's Gali District, closing in on the border with Georgia.

It is reported that Russian warplanes are currently bombing the Georgian villages of Azhara and Gentsvisi in the upper part of the Kodori Gorge (the only area in Abkhazia still under Georgian control).

Kristian Bzhanian, official spokesman of the Abkhazian president, says that Russia has reinforced its naval presence in the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zone. It rebuffs Georgian warships.

Abkhaz president Sergey Bagapsh says that the authorities of Abkhazia intend to call the republic's population to arms. Sergey Bagapsh also says that the Abkhaz military will bring the operation to dislodge Georgian units from the Georgian government-controlled Kodori Gorge to its conclusion. He says no talks are possible with the current Georgian leaders and that they should be tried for crimes in South Ossetia.

Georgia signs an EU ceasefire agreement, but Russia rejects it.

The MFA issues a commentary on the Ukrainian MFA statement that the Russian BSF cannot take part in the events surrounding Georgia. It rejects the Ukrainian claim.

11 August 2008 Russian forces enter Senaki to prevent Georgian forces from shelling South Ossetia and then claim to have withdrawn.

There are conflicting claims over whether Russian forces have entered Poti.

The head of the Georgian Interior Ministry department of analysis and information, Shota Utiashvili, says that Russian peacekeepers stationed in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone have moved to Georgia's Zugdidi District and occupied police buildings.

The Russian MOD denies reports that its troops have captured Gori. It is later reported by journalists that its forces are just outside Gori.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff, says that Russian peacekeepers are not moving beyond South Ossetia's de facto borders, and have not been set the task of invading Georgian territory. He denies claims that Russian forces have attacked Tbilisi airport but confirm that a radar has been bombed.

Aide to the commander of the Russian peacekeepers Aleksandr Novitsky says that a group of 9,000 paratroopers has entered the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone to supplement the CIS Joint Peacekeeping Forces.

The MOD says that Georgian forces have resumed shelling South Ossetia.

Sergey Chaban, commander of the peacekeeping forces says Russian peacekeepers in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone have presented an ultimatum about the surrender of arms to Georgian armed groups.

Dmitry Medvedev addresses the heads of political parties represented in the Duma on the South Ossetian crisis:

I have already spoken about this: my duty as president has from the very beginning been to defend our compatriots, not to leave with impunity the

crimes that have been committed against civilians and peacekeepers. Russia is seeking to put an end to this barbarism against the Ossetian people, against our citizens, as quickly as possible.

Let me reiterate something I said a couple of days ago. Russia has historically been a guarantor of security of the people of the Caucasus. It is our mission and our duty. We have never been and never will be passive onlookers in that region. I have spoken as regards the Georgian leadership, which unleashed aggressive actions, that we are using a tactic of forcing peace in compliance with the UN Charter. We consider this tactic to be absolutely effective and the only possible solution. Let me remind you that there have been many historical examples of appeasement of aggressors. Incidentally, this is what Western countries were involved in 70 years ago. You know what a tragedy that ended in: I mean first and foremost the lessons of the 1938 Munich Pact.

We shall do everything in our power. Russia will not leave its compatriots in trouble, and of course, it will seek to bring the situation back to normal.

Medvedev describes the alleged forcible detentions of Russian nationals in Georgia by the Georgian authorities as unacceptable.

Vladimir Putin criticises the USA for its approach to the South Ossetian crisis:

What can I say? This is a tragedy, a great human tragedy. It is known that Russia repeatedly warned our Western partners that one of the sides, the Georgian side, was preparing for aggression, was preparing to resolve this long-standing conflict through military means. Nobody listened to us. Here is the result, they have got what was coming to them.

Nevertheless, Russia will follow through its peacekeeping mission to its logical end. We shall strive to build working relations with every participant in the conflict, naturally including the Georgian side. It is a pity that some of our partners are not helping us, and in fact, are trying to hamper us. Apart from other things, I mean the redeployment of the Georgian military contingent from Iraq by the USA, using its military and transport aircraft, practically into the conflict zone.

Sergey Lavrov tells Ukrainian parliament speaker Arseny Yatsenyuk by phone that Russian BSF ships are off Abkhazia's coast to protect Russians and support peacekeepers. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry said earlier it reserved the right not to allow the BSF's ships back to Sevastopol in Ukraine's Crimea, where the fleet is based, because Kiev does not want to be dragged into military conflicts.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko rejects NATO criticisms that Russia has used force disproportionately in South Ossetia.

The MFA says it is concerned about the situation surrounding Russian nationals in Georgia. The MFA says that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is responsible for all civilian deaths in South Ossetia.

The MFA says it is too soon to speak about recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia at present. Boris Malakhov, the MFA's official spokesman says:

In the first place, we should settle the situation. There are priorities and

attention is focused on them. It would be untimely to even discuss the eventual recognition or non-recognition at the moment...We are committed to all international obligations which are related to the issue. In contrast to some other countries, we are implementing these commitments very precisely and consistently. In general, you may have noticed that our foreign policy is open, transparent and very responsible.

He says the status of Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia may be changed only after Georgian troops leave South Ossetia.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, an official spokesman of the MOD, presents a three point plan to achieve a ceasefire in South Ossetia.

1. *Both sides to cease fire.*
2. *Immediate measures to be taken to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe.*
3. *A binding agreement on the non-use of force as part of the peacekeeping mission.*

He says Russia has not yet received official notification of a ceasefire from Georgia.

The Russian envoy to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, says the USA is nervous because Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili may have misinterpreted some of the signals he may have received from Washington. He says: "The Americans are of course nervous. They are nervous because, as we all know, for a number of years they have maintained very close relations with Georgia. It is hard to imagine that President Saakashvili could have taken such an adventurist step without having received, in one form or another, Washington's approval."

Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs and co-chairman of the US Senate-Federation Council Working Group, calls on US senators to look together for ways to resolve the situation in South Ossetia.

Representatives of the Russian Defence Ministry, Interior Ministry, Health Ministry, Emergencies Ministry and other Russian departments deny the Georgian Foreign Ministry's claims that peaceful civilians have been detained in South Ossetia.

Russia's envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says it is impossible to have any negotiations with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.

Speaker of the Federation Council Sergey Mironov says that Georgian aggression against South Ossetia was masterminded by "overseas patrons" of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. He states: "I'm sure that ultimately it will not result in any direct conflicts between Russia and the USA. But it's a fact that nobody is allowed to kill Russian citizens and to commit genocide against people, including Russian nationals. And everyone in the world should take account of this fact."

Mironov says the Federation Council's Chamber Council has adopted a special appeal to the parliaments and peoples of the world calling on them to condemn Georgia's actions with regard to South Ossetia and genocide of the South Ossetian people.

The chairman of the Russian Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General, Aleksandr Bastrykin, says there will be a two-prong probe into "criminal

offences" committed by Georgian troops.

12 August 2008 At 0859 GMT Dmitry Medvedev announces an end to military operations in South Ossetia. He meets Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and the Chief of the General Staff Nikolay Makarov. Medvedev states:

On the basis of your report I have decided to conclude the operation to force the Georgian authorities into peace. The aim of the operation has been achieved. The safety of our peacekeeping forces and the civilian population has been restored. The aggressor has been punished and has suffered very significant losses. His armed forces are disorganized.

Nonetheless, should centres of resistance or other aggressive attempts arise, you must take the decision to destroy them.

Medvedev says Russia respects Georgia's territorial integrity, but its status as a sovereign state does not give Georgia the right to do everything it wants. He states:

As for territorial integrity, that is a separate concept. If sovereignty is based on the people's will and the constitution, then, as a rule, territorial integrity reflects the real state of affairs. Despite the fact that everything will and may look fine on paper, in real life everything can be much more complicated. The issue of territorial integrity is a very difficult issue, which is not resolved at rallies or even in parliaments or at meetings between leaders. It is a people's desire to live in one state.

And here you are right to ask whether Ossetians and Abkhaz can or want to live within Georgia. This question should be addressed to them. And they will give an unambiguous answer. Neither Russia nor any other states should answer this question. This should progress in strict compliance with the norms of international law, although in recent years international law has been rich in very complicated examples of the self-determination of nations and the appearance of new states on the map. Let us recall the example of Kosovo. That is why it is a question which has to be answered by the Ossetians and Abkhaz - taking into account history, and taking into consideration what has happened over recent days.

Medvedev rejects Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's claims that Georgia has been observing a ceasefire for two days: "You know, that is what differentiates thugs from normal people - when they smell blood it is hard to stop them. Then one has to resort to surgical methods."

Medvedev describes the goals of the Russian military operation in South Ossetia as follows:

First, we defended Russian citizens who live in South Ossetia. Second, we restored the status quo and defended order in accordance with international accords signed in 1992 and later years, which form the basis for settlement in this zone.

In other words, we fully implemented our peacekeeping mandate - in an expanded way, unfortunately, because this was demanded by life.

Medvedev says that Russian peacekeepers are to remain in the Caucasus:

The strength of world order is based on the system of international law. The better we remember this, the easier it will be to live and the fewer problems there will be. International agreements that peacekeepers operate under were formulated in 1992 and are supported by international documents adopted later. They remain in force and our peacekeepers continue to perform their functions and will perform their functions precisely because they are a key factor in ensuring security in the Caucasus. So it was and so it will be.

It is reported that Russian forces are shelling Gori despite Dmitry Medvedev's announcement of the cessation of hostilities.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy visits Moscow to discuss the Russo-Georgian conflict in an attempt to broker a ceasefire. He flew there from Tbilisi.

President Sarkozy outlines the following text which he will present to European Union foreign ministers in Brussels today. He says it will also provide the basis for a draft resolution at the UN Security Council.

- 1. No recourse to the use of force*
- 2. Definitive cessation of hostilities*
- 3. Free access for humanitarian aid*
- 4. Georgian military forces must withdraw to their normal bases*
- 5. Russian military forces must withdraw to the lines prior to the start of hostilities. While awaiting an international mechanism, Russian peacekeeping forces will implement additional security measures on a temporary basis.*
- 6. Opening of international negotiations on the modalities of security and stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. (This paragraph was changed at Georgia's request. The previous version, approved by Russia, provided for talks on the "future status" of the two regions. Russia accepted the "clarification".)*

Sergey Lavrov says that no further progress in resolving the Georgian-South Ossetian crisis is possible unless Georgia signs a document on the non-use of force.

The measures that are being taken by the Russian side through the efforts of our peacekeepers and additional units that were dispatched into the area to assist them consisted, first and foremost, of defending and ensuring the rights of our citizens, and fulfilling our peacekeeping obligations. Our actions are fully compliant with Article 51 of the UN Charter that stipulates the right to individual or collective self-defence. Our servicemen in the peacekeeping contingent were attacked.

We are not pursuing any goals other than the restoration of peace and the guarantee of calm, normal living conditions for the South Ossetian people. The only possible way out from the current situation is to guarantee a state of affairs whereby the Georgian troops would leave - so that they are not in South Ossetia, and Georgian troops are not in positions from which they can continue to fire upon and attack South Ossetia. The other sine qua non condition is the signing of a legally-binding document about the non-use of force.

He says that Russia has no trust in the current Georgian leadership: "At the same time, I am not going to conceal the fact that our approaches, Russia's approaches, to the negotiation process are going to undergo fundamental changes, because we have no trust left at all in the current Georgian leadership." Lavrov says that if necessary "We will be forced to take other measures to prevent any repetition of the situation that emerged because of the outrageous Georgian aggression". He also criticises the West, particularly the USA, for arming and training the Georgian armed forces.

Russian MOD spokesman Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, says that "the choice of president is a matter for the Georgian people". He says that as an outcome of the peace-enforcing operation, Georgia's military potential has to be seriously weakened. He claims that the operation to invade South Ossetia had been thoroughly directed and rehearsed by the Georgian side, also during joint military exercises with the USA.

The MOD denies statements made by official Tbilisi to the effect that Russian aviation allegedly continued to bomb a number of facilities in the territory of Georgia, and launched an air strike on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

The MOD states it has found a plan of military actions of the Georgian Army regarding Abkhazia in one of the Georgian command post vehicles.

Georgian spies captured in the northern Caucasus are paraded on Russian TV.

The parliament of the Republic of North Ossetia (Alania) asks the Russian leadership to consider the issue of recognizing South Ossetia's independence. The appeal to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Chairman of the Federation Council Sergey Mironov and State Duma Chairman Boris Gryzlov is unanimously adopted by the 11th special extended session of parliament.

President of North Ossetia Taymuraz Mamsurov dismisses the idea of a unified Ossetia that is independent from Russia, and suggested that "the tactic of accomplished facts" should be applied to the issue of South Ossetia's status. "Because Kosovo, we understand, is a fact. I would like us to use the same logic. However ugly it is, it is being applied by everyone apart from us."

South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty says that South Ossetia is going to strive to be united with the Russian republic of North Ossetia.

Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that unlike the USA, Russia has a cast-iron case with regard to its interpretation of the events in South Ossetia. He is commenting on the USA's decision to block a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council on the situation in South Ossetia. Rogozin says that NATO should condemn Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's "acts of villainy."

The MFA criticises Georgia's decision to leave the CIS.

Vitaly Churkin explains why a draft UN resolution for a settlement of the conflict in South Ossetia proposed by France is unacceptable for Russia.

First of all, [the proposed resolution] does not give a fundamental evaluation of the aggressive actions against South Ossetia which were undertaken by the Georgian side. The side of the matter related to the humanitarian catastrophe and victims among civilians, which occurred as a result of these adventurist

actions of Tbilisi, is not formulated clearly enough. The need for Georgia to sign an agreement with South Ossetia and Abkhazia on the non-use of force is talked about evasively and indirectly.

And the second condition is that the Georgians must sign an agreement on the non-use of force. And then, after some time, when everything has calmed down, when there is a more favourable situation, then maybe we can discuss, let us say, a certain reconfiguration of the Russian military presence in South Ossetia. But of course now it would be hard to expect, and simply unrealistic and wrong to expect us to suddenly drop everything and leave South Ossetia after all that has happened.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin orders Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev to ensure law and order in North Ossetia following the arrival of refugees from South Ossetia.

Mikhail Tyurkin, first deputy director of the FMS, says it has registered 16,500 people who have been evacuated to North Ossetia from the conflict zone in South Ossetia.

The Duma starts gathering information about crimes committed by the Georgian military in South Ossetia. Speaker Boris Gryzlov says several members of the State Duma, including deputies Arsen Fadzayev and Viktor Vodolatsky, are involved in organizing the gathering of information on crimes committed in the course of Georgia's aggression against Russian citizens, both civilians and Russian peacekeepers. Chairman of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecution Service Aleksandr Bastrykin says that there are prospects for criminal prosecution of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili for the attack on Russian peacekeepers and citizens of the Russian Federation in South Ossetia.

Gennady Gudkov, deputy chairman of the Duma's security committee, says Russia needs to make serious efforts to improve the promotion of its foreign policy. He says that "the public in the West are clearly not receiving enough objective information about Russia and in particular about Russian policy in the Caucasus".

Zvezda TV accuses the BBC and CNN of anti-Russian propaganda over the military operation in Georgia.

A poll by the Public Opinion Foundation shows 78 per cent support for the military operation in Georgia. Another poll by the Centre for Monitoring Social Processes shows 73.1 per cent. The former poll covered 1,001 respondents, and the latter 4,900. Both polls were held on 10-11 August and covered only urban residents. Some 94.5 per cent of those polled said Russia should defend its citizens wherever they might be, and 84 per cent (according to the poll by the Centre for Monitoring Social Processes) said Russia should "carry the burden of peacekeeping operations in the zones of its strategic interests".

Dmitry Medvedev and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown discuss the South Ossetia situation by telephone.

Commander of the Airborne Troops HQ Lt-General Nikolay Ignatov says that the units of the Airborne Troops that have been brought to Abkhazia to reinforce Russian peacekeepers are taking no part in the operations of the Abkhaz formations in the Kodori Gorge.

The head of the general staff of Abkhazia's armed forces, General Anatoly Zaytsev,

says that Georgian troops in the upper part of the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia have been surrounded by Abkhaz armed forces. Zaytsev later says that Georgian forces are withdrawing from Abkhazia.

12 August 2008 The BSF patrol ship *Ladnyy* docks at the Turkish naval base of Aksaz Karaagac in the first phase of its involvement in the "Active Effort" anti-terrorist operation.

12 August 2008 Atomstroyeksport states that it has embarked on the final stage of the installation of technological systems and equipment at Bushehr (Iran). No completion date has been given.

13 August 2008 The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade says the military conflict in South Ossetia will not affect the prospects of Russia's WTO accession negotiations.

13 August 2008 Russian forces take control of Gori in Georgia. It is reported that Russian forces are also in Poti.

A day of mourning is held in Russia for the victims of the humanitarian disaster in South Ossetia.

Dmitry Medvedev and his French opposite number, Nicolas Sarkozy, discuss by telephone the implementation of the principles for settling the conflicts in Georgia agreed in Moscow on 12 August. The Kremlin press service states:

Having stressed Russia's complete commitment to the that were principles drawn up together, and its responsible approach to their implementation, Medvedev noted that the most important thing at this point to ensure the reliability of the process of normalizing the situation in the region was not a UN resolution or some declarations but an agreement based on the said principles, which should be signed by the South Ossetian and Georgian sides as well as the guarantors of its implementation, namely Russia, the EU and the OSCE.

Sergey Lavrov says that Russian peacekeepers will remain in South Ossetia, but the Russian forces that were sent there as reinforcements will be withdrawn to Russia.

As for the armed forces of the Russian Federation which were sent to South Ossetia to reinforce our peacekeeping forces, they will be withdrawn to Russian territory depending on the extent to which the Georgian troops go back to their barracks. Our peacekeepers will remain in South Ossetia. They will continue to be guided by their mandate, which is defined by the relevant agreements. And they will continue to fulfil that mandate.

Lessons which were drawn from the tragedy make us think about additional security measures. The principles which were agreed upon stipulate that Russian peacekeeping will take such additional security measures. Our peacekeepers will decide on the ground what kind of measures are needed, on the basis of their experience of communication with the Georgian side and on the basis of what happened. Some additional security measures are necessary of course.

In the final version which President Sarkozy has agreed with Tbilisi and obliged them to support, the issue of status is not mentioned directly. But the phrase saying that international discussion needs to start about how to ensure

lasting, stable security in South Ossetia and Abkhazia naturally means that it is impossible to resolve these issues outside the context of status. They should be considered in the light of the status issue, taking into account the objective reality, as well as the existing administrative systems in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

I can't make forecasts, I don't know how the EU foreign ministers will react but I know that the chairman of the EU, the French president and chairman of the EU council of ministers Kouchner, French foreign minister, drew up the principles we are talking about. The issue you mean says discussion must be started on ways to ensure lasting security in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This document does not mention Georgia's territorial integrity, nor does it mention directly the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, everyone understands clearly, and this was confirmed at yesterday's meeting with the French delegation, that speaking about security in Abkhazia and South Ossetia without speaking about their status is impossible in present conditions, when we have just witnessed Georgia's aggression against them.

I have already said that there will be no fundamental changes in issues of peacekeeping in South Ossetia. The only change relates to the fact that Georgian peacekeepers, who were part of the peacekeeping contingent, but turned out to be simply traitors and cowards and started shooting at their colleagues - of course, they are never again going to appear as part of a peacekeeping contingent in South Ossetia.

The international aspect of peacekeeping might be reinforced, because it is already present. There is a UN observer mission in Abkhazia, and in South Ossetia there is an OSCE mission. They could be reinforced and given new functions. They probably need to be given new functions, because it is extremely important to monitor the actions Georgia takes, in order to prevent more aggression.

Lavrov criticizes US President George Bush's statement on Russian troops' involvement in Georgia. He denies that there are any Russian troops in the town of Poti, and says the troops remain near Gori and near Senaki only to render harmless the weapons arsenals found there and to provide humanitarian aid to local residents. He also criticizes the USA and other states for helping train and equip the Georgian army:

So we do of course understand that, fundamentally - and this is being openly written about - the current Georgian leadership is a special project of the United States. We understand that the United States are concerned about the fate of this project of theirs. But clearly at some point a choice will have to be made: either the concept of prestige from a virtual project, or real partnership in issues that truly do require collective action.

Sergey Lavrov and Georgian Foreign Minister Eka Tqeshelashvili discuss by telephone practical implementation of the proposals on the main principles for settling the Georgian-South Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhaz conflicts, which were drawn up at the meeting of Dmitry Medvedev and Nicolas Sarkozy on 12 August.

Russia's permanent representative to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, says the UN Security Council should draft a fundamentally new resolution after Dmitry Medvedev and Nicolas Sarkozy have worked out the six principles to settle the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict. He is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

The presidents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Sergey Bagapsh and Eduard Kokoyty, say they do not intend to hold any kind of talks with Georgia.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy says that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili accepts on the whole the terms of a ceasefire in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone, and has put his signature to the document agreed on 12 August by the Russian and French leaders. Sarkozy says certain adjustments were made. He says "The text of the document will be unveiled at a meeting of foreign ministers of all 27 member states of the European Union, who will give their agreement to it, after which the document will acquire the status of a resolution and will have legal force." The EU will present the resolution at a meeting of the UN Security Council. "The status of the presence of Russian troops in the conflict regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia will be determined. We shall agree later on whether they are to be given international status."

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn denies reports that there are Russian tanks in Gori. He says the MOD has already started planning the withdrawal of its troops to their place of permanent deployment, but time is needed to implement this operation.

The MFA says that western media reports about some kind of movement of Russian troops in Georgian territory towards Tbilisi and about looting in Gori "are without any foundation".

Russian peacekeepers say they are removing military hardware and ammunition from an unguarded arms depot near the Georgian town of Gori.

The HQ of the NCMD states that two reconnaissance drones of the Georgian armed forces have been shot down in the zone of the peacekeeping operation.

Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff, says the General Staff will draw "serious conclusions" in particular about radio electronic measures in light of the losses sustained during the operation in Georgia.

The MFA says that Georgia's demands to cease the peacekeeping operation in Abkhazia might be an attempt to prepare new military action against Abkhazia.

Rossiya TV reports that Georgian forces have now been pushed out of the Kodori gorge in Abkhazia.

Abkhaz foreign minister Sergey Shamba says that Abkhazia wants the Russian peacekeepers to extend their mission in Abkhazia.

The government of South Ossetia resumes working in its ordinary regime in Tskhinvali.

Russia's permanent representative at the United Nations, Vitaly Churkin, writes an official letter to the President of the UN Security Council explaining Russia's stance on the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict.

13 August 2008 The MFA issues a statement saying it regards Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's signing of decrees relating to the Russian Federation's BSF as an anti-Russian step which contradicts the spirit and letter of the agreements between the two countries on the BSF and the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation

and Partnership. Yushchenko's decree states that BSF ships and aircraft now need to request permission to cross Ukraine's state border.

13 August 2008 members of a Russian military delegation at a session of the coordinating committee for air defence issues under the CIS Council of Ministers, says that aircraft of the Russian Air Force, which took part in the operation to force Georgia into peace, were shot down with air defence systems which had been supplied by Ukraine and manned by Ukrainian crews.

13 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan hold talks at the Mayndorf estate in Moscow Region:

[Medvedev] Our relations have a considerable regional and international weight. And of course, such close countries like ours, which have developed very good, close relations, must compare notes when problems occur. Unfortunately, there are rather a lot of them today, among them I mean the recent Georgian aggression against South Ossetia.

[Erdogan] The present meeting will give us an opportunity to evaluate the present situation in South Ossetia. Taking advantage of this possibility, we will also have an opportunity to review the relations between our countries. In this region, solidarity with the Russian Federation is of great importance. I hope this solidarity will be useful in future.

13 August 2008 Sergey Bulkin, a representative of the secretariat of the CIS Council of Ministers, says at a meeting of the Council of Ministers' coordination committee on ABM issues in Dushanbe that Russia will allocate over R20 million for the modernization of the combined CIS missile defence system in 2008.

13 August 2008 Russia's envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says Russia-NATO relations cannot but fail to change after the South Ossetian conflict. Rogozin states: "This is a war for oil, no matter how strange it may seem." He says that the USA needed Mikheil Saakashvili, first of all to destabilize the situation in the region, control oil deliveries and deprive Russia of ways to really cooperate with Europe.

14 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov states:

I think it will be impossible to make the Ossetians, the Abkhaz agree to the logic that they can be forced to return to the Georgian state. How do you imagine this now, after this aggression, after Tskhinvali was burned, many villages in South Ossetia razed to the ground; when we see on Russian, at least, television - although these images do not always make it onto the screens that the Western audience watches - when we see this human tragedy, now the inclusion of a reference to Georgia's territorial integrity in any document would have been taken by these people just as an insult, a deep human insult.

We do not want Georgia to break up, I can assure you. However, de facto the situation that has emerged is such that simply neither the South Ossetians nor the Abkhaz want to live together in one state with a person who sends his troops against them.

Lavrov also states:

I am convinced that Saakashvili can no longer be a sensible partner in

negotiations. All he has been saying over the past few days is absolutely out of touch with the facts, and the political assessments he has been making on the basis of lies that have been spewing forth on a daily basis are just scandalous.

I am convinced that he is a provocateur. He issued a treacherous order for the massive shelling of peaceful districts of the Town of Tskhinvali from salvo-fire and artillery systems, and aerial bombardment. Showing himself off against a background of an EU flag, he says on TV that he is defending American values here. Well, I think it is obvious to everyone how cynical such statements are. Even those who are trying to defend him realize that this affair is doomed to failure.

Lavrov also says that the American leadership has underestimated the degree of belligerence of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. Lavrov continues:

They [the Americans] assured us that Washington is constantly working with Tbilisi keeping the Georgian leadership away from such adventures. The last conversation on this subject took place literally a month ago shortly after the return of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice from Tbilisi...It is distasteful to them, of course, that they saw their protégé in a less than attractive light: it upsets them as regards the whole project, the efforts that were taken and the funds that were spent. Probably, from the human point of view it is possible to understand but a choice has to be made: either to throw everything into the scales of the virtual project or to think that the world is more complicated and there are far more serious situations where we cannot avoid partnership and real cooperation.

Lavrov says that he is unconcerned about US threats of Russia facing international isolation following its actions in Georgia, saying that the West has in any case been "stringing Russia along" with regard to WTO membership.

However, as far as I understand the situation now - and we are in contact with both the South Ossetian leadership and the Abkhaz leadership - they are resolutely in favour of keeping Russian peacekeepers on their territory. They are ready to continue cooperation with international observers and are ready to consider proposals to increase the number of international observers.

In the case of South Ossetia, I have no doubt that, apart from the return of the existing OSCE mission to Tskhinvali itself, additional controllers, inspectors - whatever you wish to call them - monitors will certainly do no harm on the external perimeter of the security zone, on the external perimeter of South Ossetia.

Dmitry Medvedev has talks with the leaders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Sergey Bagapsh and Eduard Kokoyty in Moscow. He states:

I would like you to know that the Russian position has not changed: we will support any decision that the peoples of South Ossetia and Abkhazia take in compliance with the UN Charter, the 1966 international convention and the Helsinki Act on security in Europe. And we will not only support, but also guarantee them both in the Caucasus and in the whole world.

MOD representative Major-General Vyacheslav Borisov says that in the next two days all posts in the city will be controlled jointly by the Georgian police and

Russian troops, after which the Russian troops will leave Gori.

A spokesman for the peacekeeping headquarters says that Russian forces are not taking over Georgian towns and settlements.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff says that the MOD and the commander-in-chief have given instructions to prepare a plan for withdrawing Russian troops from South Ossetia; as soon as it is approved, the president will give an order to begin the process.

RIA-Novosti reports that South Ossetians have begun returning home from North Ossetia in large numbers.

Dmitry Medvedev and Italian President Giorgio Napolitano discuss the South Ossetian crisis by telephone.

Sergey Lavrov and Georgian Foreign Minister Eka Tqeshelashvili discuss by telephone the implementation of agreements on the main principles for settling the conflicts drawn up at the meeting of Dmitry Medvedev and Nicolas Sarkozy.

Sergey Lavrov and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner discuss by telephone the need to legally formalize fundamental principles agreed in Moscow by Presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Nicolas Sarkozy to de-escalate the crisis caused by the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia.

Lavrov tells his French counterpart that the documents consisting of six principles had been signed by the South Ossetian and Abkhaz leaders; now it has to be signed by Tbilisi. It is stressed that the document must finally be signed by the Georgian side as well, as it was agreed in Moscow. They also discuss the possibility of a UN Security Council resolution which would support the Moscow document and call on the sides to strictly abide by it.

MFA representative Andrey Nesterenko says that Moscow urges the USA to refrain from steps that might be viewed by the Georgian leadership as encouragement of its revanchist ambitions.

The North Ossetian parliament addresses the Russian government and the international community asking them to recognize the independence of South Ossetia.

14 August 2008 South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty and Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh give a press conference in Moscow. Kokoyty says there can only be Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Observers can be present on Georgian territory. He says there will be no third independence referendum as there have already been two.

Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh rules out the possibility of any dialogue with Georgia after its "aggression in South Ossetia".

Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy head of the General Staff, say the General Staff is concerned about the nature of the cargo which is being delivered from the USA to Georgia, and suggests that the American side should publish credible information to this effect.

Abkhaz foreign minister Sergey Shamba says that Abkhazia's status does not need

to be discussed: it was decided on by the people at a referendum of 1999, when 97 per cent of the republic's population voted for independence.

The Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office institutes criminal proceedings under the article of the Russian Criminal Code "genocide" in connection with the killing of Russian citizens in South Ossetia.

Vitaly Shlykov, member of the Public Council under the MOD regrets that Russian forces did not inflict a heavier defeat on the Georgian army.

14 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov condemns Ukraine for anti-Russian attitudes:

President Yushchenko is undertaking a definite series of anti-Russian moves, in particular concerning the Black Sea Fleet. It has already become the practice for President Yushchenko to adopt decrees that are a unilateral attempt to rewrite what was agreed in the Russian-Ukrainian accords on the Russian Black Sea Fleet being based on Ukrainian territory. This also in large measure reflects the domestic political situation that has taken shape in Ukraine, and we want this permanent crisis in Ukrainian politics to be rapidly overcome. We want Russian-Ukrainian relations to be free of these artificial complexities, be they connected to the political battle between the leading political forces or arising from the obsession with pleasing NATO and dragging into it as soon as possible the Ukrainian public, who don't want to go there.

Deputy chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that the Ukrainian President's decree on the BSF is not binding.

Russia's envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that the USA must realize that it is not the master of NATO.

It is necessary now to do everything so that the Americans, who evidently see how their American project called 'Misha Saakashvili' is melting before their eyes, finally understand that they also are not the masters of NATO. It is an organization where there are 26 countries and there are states and a prime minister who have already made important statements, virtually in support of Russia's right to self defence.

14 August 2008 Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Moscow's preparations for a joint naval exercise FRUKUS-2008 will continue even though the USA has pulled out of it.

Russia receives notification to the effect that the participation of a Russian naval ship in NATO's Active Endeavour antiterrorist exercise would be inappropriate.

14 August 2008 The chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs Konstantin Kosachev states that the preliminary agreement between Washington and Warsaw to deploy US ABM facilities in Poland may result in further deterioration in Russian-US relations.

This agreement is not in the interests of strategic stability in Europe and in the world as a whole, because there still is no evidence that a nuclear missile threat to the USA or Europe comes from Iran or other states usually mentioned by the USA in this context. Therefore, whether one likes it or not, Russia's strategic nuclear potential is the main aim for deploying US ABM systems in Poland and radars in the Czech Republic.

15 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Sochi. They discuss South Ossetia. Medvedev states:

There are conflicts which cannot be smoothed out but must be resolved. Conflicts are conflicts because very often it is not possible to bring the positions of the sides together. If there would have been a different way out of this situation, probably we would have used it, I mean the question of status.

Nobody is rejecting the principle of territorial integrity as a fundamental principle in international law. The question is about a specific situation in a specific country. It is here that main difficulties arise.

Unfortunately, after what has happened, it is unlikely that the Ossetians and the Abkhaz could live in the same state with Georgians. Alternatively, some titanic efforts will have to be taken to resolve this conflict.

Russia, as a guarantor of security in the Caucasus and the region, will accept a decision that will reflect, unambiguously, the will of these two peoples of the Caucasus. It will not just accept that will but will also take it into account in its foreign policy and will guarantee its implementation on the territory of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in compliance with the peacekeeping mandate that we have.

We are also fulfilling our part of the obligation that concerns ensuring security in that very complicated region. But the problem is that the Ossetians and Abkhaz themselves do not believe in anyone other than the Russian peacekeepers. Because all recent history - the past 15 years - has shown that the only troops which have been able to protect their interests, and unfortunately, often their lives too, have been Russian troops.

This is why they believe that Russian troops are the only guarantee of security. And that will have to be taken into account.

I can give you an example of a recent and also very complicated story connected with the recognition of Kosovo, when the Kosovo side rejected certain peacekeeping forces with the UN mandate and asked for peacekeeping forces with a special EU mandate. Of course, their demands were met.

On relations with the West Medvedev states: "Of course we would not like either a long-term or a short-term deterioration of relations. On the contrary, we have always proceeded from the necessity of full-scale development of relations with the EU, individual EU states as well as the USA and other countries." On the US plans for a missile defence system in Europe:

The Russian military are right. This decision clearly demonstrates all that we have recently been talking about. The deployment of new missile defence forces in Europe has the Russian Federation as its aim. And an appropriate moment has been chosen for this. Therefore, fairy-tales about the deterrence of other countries, fairy-tales saying that some rogue states are being deterred with the help of these systems do not hold water.

15 August 2008 MOD spokesman Lt-General Nikolay Uvarov says elements of the ABM system which the USA is planning to deploy in Europe are aimed against Russia, including its strategic missile bases in Kozelsk (Kaluga Region). He says the

range of the American missiles is 2,000 kilometres and Poland is approximately 4,000 kilometres from Iran, against whose missiles the ABM system in Europe is ostensibly being founded.

Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff states that the preliminary agreement between the USA and Poland on deploying missile defence facilities on the latter's territory is likely to further aggravate the already complicated relations between Russia and the USA.

When a side gives consent to deployment, it naturally takes certain obligations upon itself. We are talking about a military facility, so there are additional [obligations]. Of course, every [military] facility is of interest to the other side. That is why one must be careful with this. Striking these objects is always the first action to be taken by the opposing side. That is why it is not simple. It cannot remain unpunished from the point of view of military usage and so on.

As for consent to deployment, the Russian side has stated its position at a political level long ago. I would not like to repeat it. You are well familiar with it. It is absolutely open and clear. We cannot but regret that, as we here again see that we will have to deal with the most complicated situation. The American side aggravates the situation in Russian-US relations even further. That is why it is a rather serious issue.

The head of the Defence and Security Committee of the Federation Council Viktor Ozerov states:

The deployment of the American ABM system is an unfriendly act towards Russia. It is a violation of those agreements which were reached so that NATO's infrastructure would not close in on Russia's borders. And Moscow will give an asymmetrical response to this step...It is obvious that this step is aimed against Russia and not against a threat from Teheran. The building of a third deployment area is, above all, a desire to issue a further challenge to Russia.

He says Russia should respond by improving the quality of the missiles it already has.

First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Committee for International Affairs Vasily Likhachev says he thinks that the signing of the ABM agreement "will remove Washington still further from the sane powers in the European Union". He says it is necessary to draw up a new Treaty for Collective Security in Europe in the near future.

15 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev and French President Nicolas Sarkozy discuss the settlement agreement for South Ossetia.

15 August 2008 MOD spokesman Lt-General Nikolay Uvarov says that the ships of the BSF have completed all the combat tasks and are now returning from the Georgian coast to their military bases in Sevastopol and Novorossiysk.

Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy head of the General Staff says that Russia and Ukraine should return to bilateral talks on the BSF in Sevastopol.

15 August 2008 Nogovitsyn states the following on the arrival in Georgia of US humanitarian aid:

The scale of the USA's military and humanitarian operation in Georgia is growing. Aircraft of the US military transport aviation are being used. Five C-17 aircraft carrying various kinds of cargo landed this morning at a Tbilisi airfield.

We were saying that it would be nice to know whether the cargo is humanitarian, or military cargo of some kind. But there is no information about that, we have no such information.

Novogitsyn rejects allegations that Russia used cluster bombs in Georgia. Novogitsyn explains what Russian military are doing in Gori:

In the South Ossetian area, a Russian peacekeeping operation group is in Gori. Its task is to establish contact with the local administration - as was initially done - to protect military hardware, weapons and ammunition that has been abandoned by Georgian military units in order to ensure the safety of the civilian population and to prevent looting.

Yesterday we managed to establish contact regarding administration. Representatives, representatives' offices, of the Georgian side were identified. The Russian side provided the first phase of humanitarian aid.

MOD spokesman Lt-General Nikolay Uvarov says that Russian servicemen from the group in South Ossetia have virtually completed the disposal of armaments in Gori.

Head of the Investigation Committee of the Prosecutor General's Office Aleksandr Bastrykin says that charges of "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" could be added in the criminal cases opened in relation to the alleged mass murder and genocide in South Ossetia. Vladimir Putin says that the Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili should be held accountable for the genocide in South Ossetia on an international level.

A VTsIOM poll shows that over 70 per cent believe Russia should ignore Georgia's demands to withdraw its peacekeeping forces from South Ossetian territory. The higher the level of respondents' education and the older the interviewed people are, the more often they believe that the forces should be kept in the conflict zone.

Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs Mikhail Margelov says he thinks that the Georgian leadership's aim in the operation in South Ossetia was a complete purge of Ossetians from the country's territory by means of mass killings and expulsion from their homes.

Aleksandr Brod, member of the chamber and director of the Moscow human rights bureau says that a commission of the Public Chamber has proof that Georgian military have killed children and pregnant women in South Ossetia.

15 August 2008 Russian Ambassador Dmitry Rogozin criticises some western circles for advocating suspending the Russia-NATO Council.

MOD spokesman Lt-General Nikolay Uvarov says Russia is no more interested in the preservation of the Russia-NATO Council than Europe and the USA:

The Russia-NATO Council is a mechanism which allows opinions to be exchanged, to search for and find solutions for difficult problems. I am not sure

that Europe will reject dialogue with Russia...As is well known, it takes two to tango, that is, if we created the mechanism for cooperation in the fight against terrorism and foreign threats, it means that we need to solve these problems together.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy head of the General Staff, says that the Russian military do not think it sensible to stop the joint Russian-NATO "Partnership for Peace" programme.

15 August 2008 Dmitry Rogozin says that the use of force by Russia during the operation to enforce peace in South Ossetia was much more proportionate than the NATO operation in Yugoslavia in 1999. He says:

It is not possible to accept Kosovo's independence and to meaninglessly reiterate Georgia's territorial integrity...After what has happened, the question of Georgia's territorial integrity needs to be put not to us, or Washington or Tel Aviv but to the residents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia themselves. Do they want to live in one state with Saakashvili?

15 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Sergey Ryabkov deputy foreign minister. Until recently, Ryabkov was head of the department of European cooperation of the MFA.

15 August 2008 Head of the Duma Committee on Economic Policy and Enterprise Yevgeny Fedorov accuses the USA of conducting a geopolitical fight by unacceptable methods and fears that the next blow to Russia will be struck from Ukraine:

The American State Department prepared the necessary regimes several years in advance, Saakashvili, Yushchenko and others; now their time has come - this is precisely why Saakashvili carried out the punitive operation in South Ossetia...For people all over the world, the Georgian events are a signal that the USA, to ensure its global leadership (using the censorship and controllability of the world media), is already prepared, among other things, for genocide against other nations...Most probably, the next blow to Russia will be struck from Ukraine.

16 August 2008 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says that if Russia recognizes the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, this will be done absolutely legitimately, in line with international legal standards.

The Georgian Foreign Ministry says that Russian troops "entered today the town of Kharagauli 50 kilometres away from Kutaisi and Sachkhere and Khashuri districts. The Foreign Ministry report also says that "the Russian troops that left the Black Sea port of Poti yesterday, returned there today". The Georgian government reports that Russian troops control segments of the central highway connecting east and west Georgia in Gori, Khashuri, and Kaspi districts.

President Dmitry Medvedev has a telephone conversation with Finnish President Tarja Halonen. Medvedev says that he is in favour of strengthening the role of the OSCE mission in the zone of the Georgian - South Ossetian conflict.

Dmitry Medvedev signs the Georgian conflict settlement plan, which consists of six previously agreed principles. It was signed by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili on 15 August.

Sergey Lavrov says that the withdrawal of Russian army units from Georgia depends on the implementation of additional security measures under the aegis of peacekeepers. He says Russia is perplexed by the fact that the document which Mikheil Saakashvili signed on 15 August is different to the one agreed by Presidents Medvedev and Sarkozy in Moscow; so this issue is yet to be clarified through diplomatic channels.

Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice discuss the South Ossetian situation by telephone.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that it is still premature to talk about a time frame for withdrawing Russian troops from Georgian territory.

17 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that Russian forces will commence withdrawing from Georgia on 18 August.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that preparations for the withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers and the units of the 58th Army from the zone of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict continue.

We are talking about a plan to gradually return Russian troops to the place of their permanent deployment on the territory of the Russian Federation...The main task of the Russian peacekeepers and the affiliated units of 58th Army in the conflict zone is to be in permanent readiness to implement tasks as part of the peacekeeping mission and to eliminate the aftermath of the humanitarian catastrophe.

Nogovitsyn says that Russian peacekeepers have taken control of the Ingurskaya hydroelectric power plant situated on the border between Georgia and Abkhazia:

We perfectly realize that electricity from the Ingurskaya power plant is going to thousands of Georgians and Abkhazians, and we realize that such strategically important facilities can become targets for provocations and even terrorist attacks. To ensure uninterrupted work of the plant and conditions for normal work of its personnel, our peacekeepers are patrolling and guarding the station. Residents of both Georgia and Abkhazia should not worry - there will be electricity in their houses.

The Russian MOD warns that Georgia is preparing a large-scale act of provocation in Gori. The MOD denies Georgian claims that Russian forces have taken control of Georgian villages Khashuri and Akhagori.

Russia's new permanent representative to the OSCE Anvar Azimov says Russia is ready to approve the OSCE's proposal to build up the presence of military observers in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone. "There are now 10 military observers in the conflict zone. Finland, which is the current chair of the OSCE, proposes increasing the number of observers to 100 people." Azimov also says that Russia will try to make sure that the Georgian aggression against the Ossetian people is condemned by the European Court of Human Rights.

The MFA criticises a ruling on South Ossetia by the European Court of Human Rights, as its wording makes it look as though it is criticising Russia.

South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty dismisses the government of South

Ossetia and sets up an emergency commission in its place. The commission will work with the Russian Emergencies Ministry and the Russian Ministry of Regional Development.

Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu says it may take months to establish how many were killed during the Russo-Georgian conflict.

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says the gross (probably net) outflow of capital from Russia during the hostilities in South Ossetia amounted to \$7 billion. According to Kudrin, the net inflow of capital in 2008 will be lower than the Russian Central Bank's forecast of \$30-40 billion.

18 August 2008 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko meets his Iraqi counterpart Karim Wahid Hasan. Shmatko says that Russia is ready for a full-scale energy dialogue with Iraq to restore historical relations. At present, three Russian companies - Interenergосervis, Silovye Mashiny and Gidromashservis are operating in Iraq.

18 August 2008 Russian Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that in 2008, the Russian government will allocate R1.5 billion for the restoration of vital facilities in South Ossetia. In addition to this, R540 million will be allocated for emergency work.

Abkhaz deputy defence minister Garri Kupalba says that Abkhazia will embark upon the formation of border outposts on the border with Georgia in Kodori Gorge, where the operation to push out Georgian troops was completed on 13 August.

Dmitry Medvedev visits the HQ of the 58th Army in Vladikavkaz. He states that the Russian armed forces have overcome the crisis of the 1990s. They are now combat ready and able to perform any peacekeeping operations. He states:

The world has seen for itself that these days too there exist political freaks who are prepared to kill innocent and defenceless people for their own opportunistic considerations, and to compensate for their own mediocrity and inability to find the way out of difficult problems in the most terrible manner: by annihilating an entire nation. I believe that historic parallels here are absolutely obvious, and there should be no forgiveness for this.

We will do our utmost to ensure that this crime does not go unpunished, and will continue the firm line towards ensuring the security of the entire region, towards guaranteed provision of peace and stability to South Ossetia, with Russia's participation. We will do everything necessary to achieve this. No-one should have any illusions.

The MFA issues a commentary in which it repeats that Moscow is not prepared to talk to Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.

The MFA states that provision of reliable security to South Ossetia and Abkhazia is impossible without resolving the issue of their status:

The international community's contribution to the stabilization of the situation and the creation of conditions to preclude a repeat of the Georgian leadership's military adventures should consist in opening a debate on ways to ensure security for South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as provided for in clause 6 of the Moscow accords...It is clear that security of the two republics cannot be

reliably provided without a decision on their status which would enable the people of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to look into the future without fear.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says the government of South Ossetia should be formed by the republic's president, but Russia is ready to provide expert support. Putin also says that Russia will allocate another R820 million to provide financial aid to those who have suffered in South Ossetia and compensate for their lost property. He also supports the proposal of the Russian Education and Science Ministry to extend the financing under the Education national project to South Ossetia.

The MFA says that Russia is forwarding all the claims from victims of South Ossetian conflict to the International Criminal Court.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia has started to move its forces in Georgia back to the areas set by the special control commission in 1999.

Today, in accordance with the peace plan, the Russian peacekeepers and the forces attached to them have started to be withdrawn to the areas set by the decision of the special control commission of 1999, in the territory of South Ossetia. Russia has worthily completed the operation to stop Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia. On the order of the supreme commander-in-chief, we are today worthily completing this mission.

South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty requests that a Russian military base be established in South Ossetia.

Anatoly Novogitsyn states that Russian peacekeeping forces will not remain in South Ossetia under the current composition. He says Russia has complete supremacy on the Black Sea, and vessels of the Russian BSF will return to their base in Sevastopol as soon as the situation allows. He denies reports that Russian forces used Tochka-U missiles in Georgia.

RIA Novosti says Russian troops have left Tskhinvali and started moving towards Vladikavkaz. *Kommersant* newspaper journalist Vladimir Solovyev, who is in Georgia, says on *Ekho Moskvyy* radio at 1400 GMT that there is no sign of Russian withdrawal. *Ren TV* (1930 GMT) reports that the pullback of the Russian troops from Georgia has been suspended for unknown reasons.

The Georgian Interior Ministry reports that the Russian military units are moving in the direction of Borjomi and Sachkhere in southern Georgia.

An MFA commentary accuses the USA and Britain of trying to sabotage Russia at the UN over the South Ossetia crisis. It states:

Against the backdrop of this complicated situation regarding the document that is designed to become the foundation of settlement, Russia together with France is actively seeking the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution to set in stone the accords reached in Moscow on 12 August. These efforts have encountered resistance from the USA and Great Britain, which are trying to retrospectively distort the content of these accords and present the situation as though the aggressive actions unleashed by Georgia against South Ossetia on 8 August had no effect on the situation in the region, and ignoring the acute

need to begin a serious consideration of the issue of status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin receives US Ambassador to Russia John Beyrle at the latter's request. Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn and US Defense Attache Brigadier General Henry Nowak also take part in the meeting. They discuss the South Ossetia situation.

Russian permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that Russia has withdrawn its request for an emergency meeting of the Russia-NATO Council. The US side blocked an extraordinary meeting of the Russia-NATO Council on the situation in South Ossetia. In this situation Russia withdrew its request for a meeting. Rogozin says that "all possible bilateral consultations have been held in NATO".

Rogozin is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He says that Russia reacted to the events in Georgia in full compliance with the UN Charter. He says the future status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia has to be determined by the people of the republics and then discussed at an international level. International observers should therefore be admitted to the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhazian conflict zones.

Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh says that Abkhazia will only start talking to Georgia once its independence, and the independence of South Ossetia, has been recognized.

Dmitry Medvedev says the operation in South Ossetia was one of the most glorious chapters in the history of the Russian Armed Forces.

18 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says Russia will not tolerate Ukraine's interference in BSF affairs.

The Black Sea Fleet will be in the focus of our special, particular attention. They must not tell us how to behave. We will act in strict compliance with the international agreements and in compliance with the directives that I issue as the supreme commander-in-chief.

Unqualified interference in these issues will not lead to anything good. We are ready to talk but everything about the Black Sea Fleet must be based strictly on our international agreements. We shall not put up with anything else.

An aide to the commander of Russia's land forces, Igor Konashenkov, says that all Georgian military hardware seized by Russian troops in South Ossetia was modernized in Ukraine.

18 August 2008 The CSTO Rubezh-2008 command-staff exercise starts in Armenia. The first stage was held in Armenia in early July, the second at the CSTO HQ in Moscow in late July. The exercise will end at a test range in Armenia on 22 August.

19 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev informs French President Nicolas Sarkozy during a telephone conversation that by 22 August, after the checkpoints and places of stationing are fully equipped, part of the peacekeepers will be pulled back to the temporary security zone defined by a decision of the Joint Control Commission in 1999. The remaining contingent, which was given as reinforcement

to peacekeepers, will be pulled back to the territory of South Ossetia and to Russia.

Dmitry Medvedev has talks with South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoyty in Sochi.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russian forces are continuing to pull back from Georgia, but more peacekeeping posts should be installed in the area by 22 August. He says Georgia is not withdrawing its troops in line with the French-brokered ceasefire deal.

Dmitry Medvedev discusses the South Ossetian crisis by telephone with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Sergey Lavrov says a fundamental difference between the events in South Ossetia and Chechnya. He says: "South Ossetia and Abkhazia were never used for terrorist attacks on Georgia...Chechnya was a springboard for such terrorist attacks (on Russia)...Therein is the fundamental difference." He also says that while South Ossetia and Abkhazia are conflict areas, one of the aims of the final settlement should be demilitarization and it would be right to declare an embargo on the supply of arms to Georgia. He also praises OSCE for putting pressure on the Georgian side to make sure that the document on the non-use of force is adopted. The MFA welcomes the OSCE decision to send extra military observers to Georgia.

Aide to the commander-in-chief of the Russian Ground Troops Igor Konashenkov says that Russian and Georgian forces have exchanged prisoners in Georgia's Gori Region.

Abkhaz foreign minister Sergey Shamba says that Abkhazia does not intend to hold a new referendum on the republic's independence. Shamba says that the question of the recognition of Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's independence was discussed at meetings which the foreign ministers of the unrecognized republics held over the weekend of 16-17 August with the leadership of the Russian Foreign Ministry, but no concrete agreements were made.

Sergey Lavrov criticizes the NATO Council's statement on Georgia as "biased and one-sided". He says that relations between NATO and Russia will be affected.

Generally speaking, we are getting the impression that the Membership Action Plan and the policy of dragging Georgia into NATO is dictated by the ambitions that I cannot describe as anything but anti-Russian and intended to support the aggressive regime rather than based on the principle that Tbilisi should meet NATO's criteria.

The Russian envoy to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, dismisses the statement on Georgia adopted by NATO foreign ministers as a "damp squib":

There are some hints, semi-hints, some kind of mutterings, but we can see nothing of what Ms Rice was talking about on the eve of the session. That is why, although the actual tone of the document is undoubtedly nasty and one can say that NATO is still showing its purely bloc-minded approach - It's enough to become a candidate for joining NATO and you can do whatever you like, you can rob, kill, shoot and so on, but you will still be exonerated by your dear allies. Having said this, I think it was a damp squib and, by and large, all the threats that were showered on Russia up until now have proved to be empty words. No-one in reality wants to break off relations with Russia and nor are they going to or will be able to, especially in the light of the problems

NATO has encountered in Afghanistan, Iraq and other places...Ms Rice can pretend that she has achieved everything she wanted, but in reality we can see that the Americans have not achieved anything. Europe is not planning to break off relations with Russia, especially on security issues.

He also states:

In fact, we also have serious grounds for reviewing many things in our relations because I believe that NATO's leaders have adopted a bigoted position on this issue. They are effectively encouraging the aggressor and lending it moral support. We also agree that it cannot be business as usual in our bilateral relations. That is why they should not portray themselves as someone who dictates the terms in our relations. We will dictate our own terms in these relations.

Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says on French radio that the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia "has already begun", and that it would take "a few days" to implement the whole of the six-point ceasefire agreement.

19 August 2008 MFA representative Andrey Nesterenko says the test of the space carrier rocket Safir by Iran does not justify the USA's plans to deploy missile defence elements in the Czech Republic and Poland.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia is not planning to equip the Baltic Fleet with nuclear weapons in response to the agreement between the USA and Poland.

19 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that the documents which constitute the international-law basis of Russian-Ukrainian relations say nothing about the need for Russia to provide explanations as to where, why and for how long the BSF ships leave their base in Sevastopol.

19 August 2008 Aide to the navy's commander-in-chief Igor Dygalo says ships from the Russian navy will not take part in the Open Spirit-2008 international naval exercises in Baltic Sea waters. He also says the USA has been informed that "at the present time, it is not possible to receive the guided missile frigate USS Ford", a business visit for which was planned to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy from 5 to 9 September 2008.

19 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka in Russia. Trade between Russia and Belarus will exceed \$30 billion in 2008.

20 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres discuss in Moscow issues of cooperation aimed at overcoming humanitarian consequences of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh in Sochi.

Russia submits to the UN Security Council its own draft resolution on Georgia and South Ossetia. The new draft is based on the six principles of settlement in Georgia proposed by the French and Russian presidents on 12 August.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that

Georgia has been restoring combat readiness of its troops, and that the Russian Armed Forces have started fulfilling the task of pulling back units and subunits. He says Russian forces will remain in the buffer zone around South Ossetia and only "time will tell" how long. He says the Russian military is in favour of imposing a no-fly zone for Georgian aircraft under a future peacekeeping mandate in Georgia, and warns that Georgia may stage terrorist attacks in South Ossetia. He says a total of 64 peacekeepers have been killed, 323 injured and no-one is missing. A small number of conscripts took part in the military operation.

The Joint Control Commission for the settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict says the total number of people killed and missing as a result of Georgian aggression in South Ossetia exceeds 2,000.

Deputy chairman of the Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecutor General's Office, Boris Salmaksov, says US Army officers were training the Georgian military immediately before the start of the Georgian Armed Forces military action against South Ossetia.

Salmaskov says that more than 4,000 civilians have been recognized to be victims of Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia.

The North Ossetian parliament adopt an appeal on the recognition of South Ossetia's independence.

Abkhazia's parliament adopts an address to the Russian president and the chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation with a request to recognize the republic's independence.

South Ossetia lifts its state of emergency.

20 August 2008 The MFA issues a commentary on the US-Polish missile defence agreement of 20 August.

20 August 2008 Russia's envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin compares Russia and NATO to husband and wife, who have fallen out but are not going to divorce and need "some time on their own" after trying to sort out their relations "on a high emotional level". On 19 August, at an emergency meeting of the foreign ministers of 26 NATO member states, convened at the USA's request to discuss the situation in Georgia, Russia was accused of disproportionate use of force in South Ossetia. It was also announced that meetings of the Russian-NATO Council will be suspended on all levels.

Rogozin writes an article on the Russo-Georgian conflict in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

20 August 2008 The Russian-US antiterrorist drill scheduled to be held in the Far East is cancelled.

21 August 2008 Syrian President Bashar al-Assad visits Moscow. He discusses military technical cooperation. Syrian-Russian summit talks between President Bashar al-Assad and Dmitry Medvedev start in Sochi.

21 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has telephone talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

21 August 2008 King Abdallah II of Jordan starts a visit to Russia.

21 August 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov states that in accordance with the decree of the supreme commander (President Dmitry Medvedev), over the course of 22 August only Russian peacekeepers stationed in specially equipped posts will remain on the territory of Georgia.

Commander-in-Chief of the Ground Forces Vladimir Boldyrev reports that the pullback from Georgian territory of the Russian units attached to the peacekeepers is going according to plan, and in 10 days' time these units will be on Russia's territory. The Russian MOD says that the pullback of units of the 58th Army of the NCMD from Gori has begun.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that the situation in the Georgian-South Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zones remains "difficult" and it is planned that additional Russian peacekeeping posts will be deployed in Abkhazia in the near future.

Nogovitsyn says foreign countries need to ask Russia for permission for their aircraft to fly over the zone of responsibility of Russian peacekeepers.

Nogovitsyn says that OSCE observers in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict zone knew about plans to attack Tskhinvali but did not warn Russian peacekeepers about it.

First Deputy Defence Minister Colonel-General Aleksandr Kolmakov states that conditions have been created to implement the six principles for peaceful settlement in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone.

Georgian *Rustavi TV* reports that Russian forces have once again entered bases of the Georgian Border Police Coast Guard and the navy in Poti. Russian forces are also reported entering western Georgia.

The director of the FMS Konstantin Romodanovsky says about 18,000 refugees have returned from Russia to South Ossetia.

21 August 2008 The state secretary - deputy minister of foreign affairs Grigory Karasin receives L Van den Brande, deputy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and rapporteur for Russia of the PACE monitoring commission.

21 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov gives an interview on *Vesti TV*. He discusses Georgia, Ukraine, NATO and Syria.

21 August 2008 Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that pending a Russian political leadership decision on the prospects for cooperation with NATO, the Ministry of Defence of Russia has temporarily "frozen" military cooperation with the alliance.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia has not yet announced any changes to the agreement with NATO on military transit to Afghanistan.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that Moscow has confirmed that Russia's relations with NATO, including in the field of military cooperation, will be

reviewed.

Konstantin Kosachev, chair of the Duma international affairs committee says that at present Russia is not interested in cooperating with NATO. He says NATO had "a unique opportunity to avert the South Ossetian catastrophe at an early stage, so to speak, if it had sent clear signals to Tbilisi at the time that a military operation was inadmissible...As I understand, no such signals were sent." Kosachev also says:

Without Russia NATO will do even worse as regards the tasks of stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan...NATO's understanding of what is happening with the Iranian nuclear programme, the North Korean nuclear programme and the Pakistani nuclear programme, what is happening in a number of regional conflicts, including the Middle East one, will be even worse than it is now...Developments in immediate future will very clearly reveal to NATO the negative consequences of the destruction of de-facto cooperation with Russia.

21 August 2008 The meeting of the Council of CSTO Defence Ministers takes place in Yerevan. The participants in the meeting "discuss the implementation of the plan for joint military develop of the CSTO up to 2010 and beyond, and questions of perfecting operational and combat training of the forces and preparing means of the collective security system". They discuss the draft provision for drafting, financing and implementing targeted inter-state programmes of the CSTO. The defence ministers endorse the plan of joint measures for operational and combat training of the command and contingents of the armed forces of the CSTO states for the next year. They also coordinate the draft plan of consultations of representatives of the CSTO countries on foreign policy, security and defence for the second six months of this year and the first six months of next year. The defence ministers amend a number of documents in the area of military cooperation, including the normative-legal base regulating the activity of the rapid deployment collective forces in the Central Asian collective security region. It is decided to set up an interstate working group to take measures to create a uniform system for technical protection of railways of the CSTO countries and to implement the organization's budget.

22 August 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says that Russian troops and units were pulled back from Georgian territory to South Ossetia by 1950 Moscow time on 22 August.

22 August 2008 The deputy chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that there are 2,142 of Russian peacekeeping personnel in Abkhazia, and in South Ossetia 272 servicemen at eight posts along line one, and 180 servicemen at 10 posts along line two - 452 troops in total.

Nogovitsyn says that Senaki airport is part of the security zone surrounding South Ossetia.

Nogovitsyn says that the entry of Spanish and German warships into the Black Sea will not help to stabilize the situation in the region.

Federation Council member Vladimir Kulakov says the commission on human rights violations in South Ossetia, which will include representatives of both chambers of the Russian parliament, will call for setting up an international tribunal to investigate these crimes.

South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoyty says Georgian enclaves in South Ossetia have been liquidated. The settlements of Kekhvi and Tamarasheni have been

completely destroyed as a result of the hostilities.

General Anatoly Zaytsev, head of the general staff of the Abkhaz armed forces, says that three hours after the full seizure of South Ossetia, the Georgian Army planned to start an offensive military operation against Abkhazia.

22 August 2008 The MOD officially notifies NATO that it is suspending military cooperation.

Russian envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that "irresponsible Western politicians" are to blame for the recent deterioration of Russia-NATO relations:

Any other country which is a member of NATO would have to act in a similar way in a similar situation; and they would have acted this way. But because in this case this is not a NATO country, but our country, they start sniffing and taking completely irresponsible decisions that offend Russia's national honour and our right to self-defence. We will not allow this. That is why if they do not behave in a partner-like manner, the whole partnership will become lame and so will a whole set of relations that exist between us and NATO members that has been built so assiduously during the last years and the last months. And if this all collapses completely or partly, this will be the fault of irresponsible Western politicians only.

Rogozin says that Russia will try to resume cooperation with NATO in order to counter global threats. He says Russia has no true friends in NATO which remains a Cold War organisation.

The head of the Defence and Security Committee of the Federation Council, Viktor Ozerov, says that he believes that Russia and NATO will eventually resume cooperation.

22 August 2008 An MFA statement criticises recent statements by the Japanese Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs Motoo Hayashi, who voiced concern over Russia's plans for the social and economic development of the Kuril Islands saying that Japanese youth should be taught a sense of possession regarding the islands.

23 August 2008 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia has pulled back all its troops from Georgian territory into the peacekeepers' zone of responsibility in South Ossetia by the end of 22 August. He says Russia is acting strictly in line with the six principles of the French-brokered ceasefire agreement. He says that: "In accordance with the six principles of the Medvedev-Sarkozy ceasefire agreement, Russian peacekeepers will control the situation in the city of Poti and other settlements by patrolling." He says also that Russia could reinforce its peacekeeping forces in the Georgian conflict zones if the USA decides to rearm Georgia.

Russia's envoy to UN Vitaly Churkin says that the draft Russian UN Security Council resolution on Georgia reiterates the text of the Medvedev-Sarkozy agreement. He therefore does not understand French objections to the Russian draft.

24 August 2008 A telephone conversation takes place between Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his German counterpart, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. They discuss the Georgian situation.

25 August 2008 The leaders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia address the Federation Council, to approve an appeal to the Russian president to recognize the two regions as independent states.

The Duma and Federation Council vote to recognise the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

South Ossetian foreign minister Murat Dzhioyev says that South Ossetia will not be raising the issue of becoming part of the Russian Federation for the time being. This issue is being set aside for the future.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says Russia has not agreed to replace Russian peacekeepers in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone with OSCE forces.

Nogovitsyn says that Georgia is preparing acts of subversion on transport facilities and armed operations along the routes of Russian military convoys.

Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh proposes that Abkhazia and Russia sign an agreement on military cooperation.

Deputy Energy Minister Vyacheslav Sinyugin says that the South Ossetian villages which used to receive electricity from Georgia will be switched to power supply from Russia within about three months.

25 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin in Sochi. They discuss the Transdnestr problem. Medvedev states:

Recently, certain events have occurred that showed how dangerous the conflict potential, which certain so-called frozen conflicts bear, may be. This was revealed to the full in South Ossetia where, as a result of certain aggressive actions, after the Georgian leadership had in fact their roof blown off (they lost their mind – Russian slang) as they say, all these problems aggravated and a military clash has occurred.

This is a very serious warning, a warning to everyone, and I believe that in this context we must approach considering other existing problems.

25 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks in Moscow with Russia's plenipotentiary envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin. He says relations with NATO have sharply deteriorated.

Recently, after the armed conflict in South Ossetia and the aggression unleashed by Georgia, our relations with the North-Atlantic Alliance have not been easy...There has been a sharp deterioration in our relations and not through a fault of ours...From our point of view, NATO has applied a policy of double standards to Russia's actions. In some sense, the alliance has withdrawn from cooperation which was established earlier. I am ready to put forward specific proposals now...

He states:

Russia has for quite a long time consistently developed relations with NATO. We would want these relations to be full-fledged and those of partnership but

we don't need illusions, when we are being surrounded by bases from all sides, when an increasing number of states are being dragged into the North Atlantic bloc and we are being told: Don't you worry, everything is all right.

Naturally, we are not happy with it. All the more so when restricting actions as those adopted recently are being taken. We did not provoke them and we did not want them.

It is member states of the North Atlantic Alliance, not the Russian Federation that are primarily interested in this cooperation. If, in effect, they are terminating this cooperation, that does not mean anything awful for us. We are ready to adopt any decision, up to severing relations altogether. Although, of course, that would be the hardest turn of events.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn states:

One cannot but be concerned about the build-up of NATO warships in the Black Sea waters. At present there are already nine foreign warships, among them two belonging to the US navy, one from Spain, Germany and Poland and four ships from Turkey. Furthermore, a US destroyer has been at anchor at Batumi since yesterday. Another US navy warship is heading for Batumi, too. Unfortunately, these actions only raise the degree of tension in the area.

25 August 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin is interviewed in *Ogonoyek*. He says that if Ukraine joins NATO, the introduction of visa requirements for travel between the Russian Federation and Ukraine may become topical.

25 August 2008 Vladimir Putin makes the following comment about the WTO:

It means that we don't see or feel any pluses of membership, if there are any at all, but we carry the burden. So we need to bring some clarity into these issues with our partners. This is especially topical because of drastic fluctuations on the world markets, including the world food market, I mean price fluctuations. We also should seriously think about protecting our producers.

However Putin says that Moscow should continue with its strategic movement towards the WTO.

Maksim Medvedkov, Russia's chief WTO negotiator and director of the trade negotiations department at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, says that Russia will not rescind basic bilateral WTO agreements but plans to revise only those agreements on certain goods that are economically disadvantageous and that were signed in exchange for promises of partners' support for Russia's rapid accession to this organization.

First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov announces the government's plans to start negotiations on suspending a number of agreements with the main WTO partners. Shuvalov also says that the Russian Federation did not see the prospect of joining the WTO "over the next several months or a year".

26 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev announces that Russia has recognised Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states:

Of course, you know about the tragedy of South Ossetia. The night-time firing on Tskhinval by Georgian forces led to the death of hundreds of our civilian citizens. Russian peacekeepers died having fulfilled their duty to defend women, children and elderly people to the very end.

The Georgian leadership, in violation of the UN Charter and its obligations under international agreements, and against common sense, unleashed an armed conflict, the victims of which were civilians. This same fate awaited Abkhazia. They apparently hoped in Tbilisi for a blitzkrieg which would put the world community before a fait accompli. The most inhumane method was chosen to achieve its goal, to incorporate South Ossetia at the cost of destroying the whole nation.

This was not the first attempt. In 1991, Georgian President Gamsakhurdia using the slogan Georgia for Georgians - just think about these words - ordered an assault on Sukhum and Tskhinval. Thousands killed, tens of thousands of refugees, ruined villages - such was the result of that then. It is precisely Russia that at that time stopped the extermination of the Abkhaz and Ossetian peoples. Our country has become a mediator and a peacekeeper. Striving to achieve a political settlement, we were proceeding from the recognition of Georgia's territorial integrity at the same time.

The Georgian leadership chose a different path. Disruption of the negotiating process, ignoring of agreements reached, political and military provocations, attacks on peacekeepers, all this crudely violated the regime in the conflict zones, the regime put in place with the support of the UN and OSCE. Russia was exercising self-restraint and patience. We repeatedly called for a return to the negotiating table and did not depart from our position, even after the unilateral declaration of Kosovo independence. But our persistent proposals to the Georgian side to conclude accords with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on the non-use of force, remained unanswered. Unfortunately, they were ignored in NATO and even in the UN.

It is now clear that a peaceful settlement of the conflicts was not part of Tbilisi's plans. The Georgian leadership was methodically preparing for a war, while political and material support by external protectors only increased the feeling of its impunity. On the night preceding 8 August 2008, Tbilisi made a choice. Saakashvili chose genocide to solve his political tasks. By this, he himself eliminated all hopes for a peaceful existence of Ossetians, Abkhaz and Georgians in one state. The peoples of South Ossetia and Abkhazia repeatedly spoke in referendums in support of independence for their republics.

We understand that after what happened in Tskhinval and was planned for Abkhazia they have a right to decide on their fate themselves. The presidents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, on the basis of the results of referendums and decisions taken by the parliaments of the republics, have asked Russia to recognize the state sovereignty of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The Federation Council and the State Duma voted in support of these requests. Taking into account the situation that has come about, a decision needs to be taken.

Taking into account the free expression of will by the Ossetian and Abkhaz peoples, taking into account the provisions of the UN Charter, the declaration of 1970 on the principles of international law pertaining to friendly relations between states, the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe of 1975 and other fundamental international

documents, I have signed the decrees on the recognition by the Russian Federation of the independence of South Ossetia and the independence of Abkhazia. Russia is calling on other states to follow its example. This is not an easy choice, but this is the only possibility to preserve lives.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says he supports the idea of recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

26 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed on *Al Jazeera TV*.

Russia does need good relations with the West - this is without any doubt. And the West needs good relations with Russia. We live in a global economy. Events on the markets in New York hit Tokyo the next day and then make themselves felt in Moscow too. We are all interconnected. I hope therefore that our American partners will concentrate less on sorting out international relations and more on strengthening their own economy, because the American economy plays a key part in many economic problems, and the fact that important institutions such as Fannie May and Freddie Mac are in such a state that it's time to declare default is a situation that would have serious consequences for America and for other markets. These are the issues that require attention, including through efforts we can make together. As for capital flight, military campaigns always have a negative effect on the markets, but the events on our stock market are more to do with the processes underway on international financial markets. I have studied the analyses and they show that the changes and the drop in value on our stock market arise primarily from the situation on the global economic market, the state of affairs in global finances and on the global stock indexes. Of course we will work on strengthening our own economy. We want foreign investment, and there can be no doubt about this. We cannot build a developed country on energy prices alone, but I think that all countries need to follow a responsible economic policy. I think this is a very important conclusion. We all depend on each other.

Medvedev states that Russia is not afraid of a new Cold War:

We are not afraid of anything, including the prospect for a Cold War. Of course, we do not want it. In this situation, everything depends on the position of our partners - our partners in the international community, in the West. If they want to preserve good relations with Russia, they will understand the reason for our decision. And the situation will be calm. If they choose a confrontational scenario, well, we lived in different conditions, we will manage to live this way too.

26 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev instructs the MFA to begin talks on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He instructs the MFA "to conduct with the participation of interested federal executive bodies" negotiations with the South Ossetian and Abkhaz sides on the preparation of a draft treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance and to produce duly a proposal on its signing.

26 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov makes the following statement about relations with NATO and the EU following the Russian decision to recognise South Ossetia and Abkhazia:

Russia needs cooperation with NATO, the European Union not more than our partners do. And I'm not even going to guess now or make any grim, gloomy

forecasts regarding the way in which our relations with Europe - and first of all, with Europe represented by the European Union - will be developing in the future. I am convinced that if each side proceeds not from artificially imposed attempts to defend the personality who has completely discredited himself, but proceeds from its deep, national interests, then the current situation simply cannot do any noticeable damage to our relations.

He is unconcerned about the prospects of sanctions:

As regards sanctions, this method has fully discredited itself in the world politics. No-one has ever achieved their political goals through sanctions.

I cannot and do not want to guess what our opponents may cite as a pretext for sanctions. Russia is a self-sufficient country, and attempts to hinder our ambitious plans, the implementation of which is vitally important for the country's social and economic development, will yield no results, although someone probably would very much want to use an act of provocation like Georgia's aggression.

Lavrov says that parallels between the recognition of Kosovo and the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia would be inappropriate.

Lavrov says the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan has not become obsolete because of Russia's recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Lavrov accuses NATO of starting new supplies of arms to Georgia.

The MFA issues a statement on the decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh says that Abkhazia will soon sign an agreement on military cooperation with Russia.

26 August 2008 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that NATO naval activity in the Black Sea is excessive. He notes the expected arrival of another eight NATO ships in the near future, and says it is difficult to believe that they are all carrying humanitarian aid.

President of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoyty says that South Ossetia is ready to conclude a friendship treaty with Russia. He says he will also offer Russia a military base on the territory of South Ossetia.

Head of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev advocates the establishment of Russian military bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The chairman of the Duma committee for CIS affairs and ties with compatriots, Aleksey Ostrovsky, says that Russia should conclude with Abkhazia and South Ossetia bilateral military-political treaties, so that any attack against the two new states would automatically mean an attack against the Russian Federation.

Aleksandr Bastrykin, chairman of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He accuses Georgia of genocide.

The State Corporation for Organizing Air Traffic in the Russian Federation FGUP

accuses the Georgian civil aviation department of not serving flights from Russia in Georgian airspace.

26 August 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that only if both Russia and the USA take each other's interests into account can they achieve balance and move to a certain compromise, which would be for the benefit of the entire international system of regional and global security. He states:

We would like to see our relations with the USA develop progressively. We are determined to work constructively but definitely standing up for our interests...a lot of positive things have been done in our relations...This constitutes their core and their stable foundation...We hope and the USA, under the present administration and the one that will replace it, will retain a similar approach. A different course would be destructive and would lead to the erosion of the positive that has been accumulated in our relations.

Ryabkov makes the following comments on the planned deployment of a US ABM system in Poland:

We warn of the consequences and urge our partners to approach the situation at all levels at once, not to be locked in some narrow group or bilateral agenda...I understand that allied relations are very important for the USA and Poland, but no country, no group, no alliance can ensure its security at the expense of the infringement of others' security, in particular, Russia's...Such logic is irreproachable from our point of view, especially as it has been repeatedly reflected in documents adopted between Russia and the USA, with Poland, in the format of the Russia-NATO Council, the OSCE...That is, it is the rudiments of international politics and diplomacy. It's a pity that these rudiments are being blatantly disregarded.

He makes the following comment about US attitudes to arms control:

We are unequivocally against backtracking and a return to the logic which forced [parties] to move to countermeasures, which in turn caused the following round of attempts to respond by military-technical means...But, unfortunately, we do not see readiness from American partners so far to consider seriously the issues of transparency or measures of trust and also issues connected with future arms control...So far, there are no concrete signs of readiness to come to an agreement from the USA...This worries us. This creates the prerequisites for the agreements signed between the USA and Poland to begin to be implemented.

He warns: "We cannot but respond to such a policy, including by military-technical means."

26 August 2008 Russia's permanent envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that Russia is not planning to send its chief military representative to NATO nor receive NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in the near future. He says that Vice-Adm Valentin Kuznetsov, who had worked in this position, left on 10 August. It was planned to appoint the former Ground Troops commander, General Aleksey Maslov, to this position. But there is no need to send such a high-ranking military official to Brussels now. Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer was supposed to visit on 17 October.

Rogozin gives details of how Russia intends to cut back military cooperation with

the alliance:

You know that the Russian Ministry Defence has announced that it will suspend cooperation, specifically on the military side, with NATO. I would like to say what this means.

First: we consider it necessary to postpone high-level visits of the representatives of the NATO military leadership to the Russian Federation.

Second, to suspend the practice of the visit of ships of permanent naval groupings of NATO and NATO member states to the ports of Russia.

Third, to suspend participation in joint exercises with forces and troops of the Russian Federation.

Fourth, to refrain for a while from talks and consultations to draw up a normative and legal base for Russia-NATO relations on the military side.

Fifth, to refrain from sending groups of representatives of the Russian Defence Ministry to various training courses through NATO, at least in 2008.

Sixth, to stop receiving NATO specialists in military educational establishments of the Russian Federation in 2008.

Seventh, to limit the number of events carried out to raise the level of operational compatibility of the forces of Russia and NATO.

Eighth, to reduce the level of participation of Russian military representatives in sessions of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Military Committee.

Ninth, to suspend the cooperation of Russia and NATO in rear services support.

And tenth, we announce the suspension of cooperation in the field of contacts and exchanges between scientists and experts in the sphere of military and related research.

At the same time, we are not stopping our participation in the work and activities of the working bodies of the NATO-Russia Council. We have, as part of the NATO-Russia Council, so-called working groups in which there is discussion and a search for solutions of certain questions that are important for us.

I will now name these groups. They are, first and foremost, the working group, the initiative for cooperation in airspace; this group is working on setting up a system for mutually reporting on threats of terrorists seizing aircraft; a working group on defence reform cooperation; a group of experts on conventional arms control; a joint working group on issues of nonproliferation; a group of nuclear experts; a group that deals with search and rescue at sea - you know that is a very important subject and very high profile. You remember the sinking of the submarine Kursk and the joint operation to save our submersible in the Far East; so in any case, this is necessary, so there is no need to smash the crockery here.

There is also the question of continuing work as part of the Euro-Atlantic

Partnership Military Committee and also continuing our partnership in the Conference of National Armaments Directors - this work will be continued through the efforts of Russia's permanent representative to NATO.

Rogozin states that the NATO leadership has been notified of Russian proposals regarding a new format of NATO-Russia cooperation.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that when countries that are not party to the CFE join NATO, this "creates security problems for Russia".

26 August 2008 Head of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev says that Russia is not going to isolate itself from the rest of the world and hopes that its partnership with the West will be maintained. He says the countries which have recognized the independence of Kosovo are responsible for the tragedy in South Ossetia.

26 August 2008 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Russia will join the WTO in any case, but on normal rather than discriminatory conditions.

26 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that the sides to the Transdnestr region conflict are ready to return to the so-called "Kozak plan" of 2003 and resolve the remaining problematic issues.

27 August 2008 Sergey Lavrov announces that Russia will insist on international control of Georgian territory adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and is prepared for an increase in the number of international observers.

Lavrov dismisses the criticism of Russia's actions in Georgia contained in the speech made in Kiev by British Foreign Secretary David Miliband.

Dmitry Medvedev discusses the decision to recognise South Ossetia and Abkhazia in a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

A VTsIOM poll shows 71 per cent support for recognising the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty states that he wants Russian military bases in South Ossetia.

The MFA criticizes the OSCE minorities commissioner's statement on South Ossetia.

The USA's ambassador to the Russian Federation, John Beyrle, hands to the state secretary - deputy foreign minister Grigory Karasin US President George Bush's response to a letter from Dmitry Medvedev on 26 August.

27 August 2008 The press secretary of the head of the government of Russia, Dmitry Peskov, says that Moscow doubts that the presence of NATO ships in the Black Sea can be explained by the provision of humanitarian aid to Georgia alone, and notes that the alliance's actions do not facilitate the normalization of the situation in the region.

27 August 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that Moscow is counting on constructive cooperation with Washington on Iran and other serious problems:

We are disposed to work constructively but definitely defending our interests and expecting that only with the mutual taking into account of interests will their balance and a way to compromises, which will benefit the whole international system and regional and global security, be possible. We calculate that in the USA both under the current administration and under the one which will replace it, a similar approach will remain.

27 August 2008 The MFA issues a statement expressing concern about the fact that North Korea has decided to suspend disabling its nuclear facilities.

28 August 2008 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that a US passport was found at the scene of a clash with a team of the special forces of Georgia. He also says that foreign nations are supporting the rearming of Georgia. He states that Russian troops' presence in the Black Sea port town of Poti and other areas outside the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflict zones is within their mandate. He quotes from article 3 of the appropriate decision under the 1992 agreement. He denies that Russia had been planning to invade Georgia before hostilities broke out in South Ossetia in early August.

The Russian envoy to the OSCE, Anvar Azimov calls for the international control of the Georgian territories adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia for the purpose of preventing new adventurous undertakings on the part of Tbilisi. He is speaking at a special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council.

28 August 2008 Russia's representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that Russia knew about Georgia's plans for an attack on Abkhazia in April this year. He says that Georgia was planning to attack in early May. He says that Russia leaked this information to the USA.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin accuses the US Administration of provoking a war in the Caucasus to benefit one of the US presidential hopefuls.

The problem is not only that the US Administration was unable to persuade the Georgian leaders against this criminal act. The American side effectively trained and armed the Georgian army. Why hold difficult talks for many years and look for difficult compromises in interethnic conflicts? It is easier to arm one of the sides and push it towards the killing of the other side, and the business is done. Such an easy solution, one would think. In fact, it is not always so. I have other considerations. If my speculations are correct, there are suspicions that somebody in the USA deliberately set up this conflict in order to exacerbate the situation and create advantages in the presidential race for one of the candidates.

It is not getting better in Afghanistan. Moreover, the Taleban have launched an autumn offensive and are killing NATO troops by dozens. In Iraq, after the euphoria of the first victories, there are nothing but problems and the death toll has reached 4,000. There are problems in the economy, there are financial problems, and there is a mortgage crisis. We are also worried about this and want it to come to an end soon, but it exists. One needs a small victorious war. And in case of failure, one can blame us and portray us as an enemy, in order so to consolidate the country again around certain political forces, against this background of exalted patriotism. I am surprised that you are surprised by my words. This is obvious.

28 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin attend the SCO summit in Dushanbe.

28 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says Russia will never use fuel deliveries to retaliate against pressure from the EU. He is interviewed on CNN.

We never politicize economic relations. We are very surprised by the position of some officials in the US Administration, who are touring European countries and trying to persuade the Europeans to reject our products, gas for instance. This is a shocking politicization of the economic area, very harmful in fact. Indeed, the Europeans depend on our deliveries. But we also depend on those who buy our gas. This is mutual dependency, and a guarantee of stability.

28 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev makes the following comment on the SCO:

You know, the SCO never took upon itself the function to be a counterweight to NATO. NATO is a military bloc while the SCO is an organization aimed at ensuring security but not only. It has different functions and a different region where the forces are being utilized. Nevertheless, I think that the SCO has become very much stronger in the recent times. This is a respected organization which is being listened to, an organization that is capable of putting together not only recommendations but also real solutions. The discussions that are being held in open format and, of course, in closed format, show that these are perfectly substantive discussions. Even the documents that were signed today are not simply declarations about what we would like to do but this is a real work on issues linked to terrorism, on issues linked to international crime, against narcotics trafficking, regional intermediary services, a large number of economic projects that do not conflict with other ways of integration between our states while complement them.

28 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Afghanistan's President Hamed Karzai at the Dushanbe SCO summit. Medvedev accepts an invitation to visit Afghanistan.

28 August 2008 Aleksandr Bortnikov, FSB director and head of the National Antiterrorist Committee, meets regional heads of antiterrorist commissions and operational headquarters of the Volga Federal District in Nizhny Novgorod. He says Georgian special services are operating in southern Russia.

28 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad at the SCO summit in Dushanbe.

29 August 2008 South Ossetian parliament vice-speaker Tarzan Kokoyty says that South Ossetia counts on becoming part of Russia within the coming two or three years.

Abkhaz foreign minister Sergey Shamba, says that Abkhazia may become part of the Union State of Russia and Belarus. He says Abkhazia is ready to provide its territory for stationing Russian forces if a corresponding agreement is signed with Moscow.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Russia has an interest in the effective work of the OSCE observers to monitor Georgia's borders with South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

29 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is interviewed on German TV. He says that Russian troops deployed in Georgia will be pulled back to the "security zone" around South Ossetia and eventually will leave that zone as well. He states:

When we spoke with Mr Sarkozy during his visit to Moscow we told him directly that we do not intend to annex any of the Georgian lands. And we will of course leave the sites where we are now. We will go to the security zone which was set out in the previous international agreements.

We do not intend to stay there forever either. We think that it is Georgian territory. Our goal is just to ensure security in this region; not to allow another covert concentration - as it was done in this case - of arms, hardware; to block the creation of preconditions for a new armed conflict.

And in this respect, I can say that we will only welcome involvement of international observers there, observers from the OSCE, the EU, including ones from Germany. We only need to agree on the principles of this joint work.

He denies claims that Russia aims to overthrow Mikheil Saakashvili and prevent Georgia from joining NATO:

This is not the case. This is simply a distortion of the facts and a lie. Had this been our aim, then it would probably have been us who would have started this conflict but, as you yourself have said, it was the Georgian side which started the conflict.

Let me recall recent history. After the unlawful decision to recognize Kosovo, everyone expected Russia to recognize Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's independence and sovereignty. This is true, everyone was expecting a decision to this effect on Russia's part. And we had moral right to do that, but we did not. We responded in a very restrained manner, and I wouldn't even comment on this. In actual fact, we swallowed it.

As for Georgia's leadership, people who have led their country to a catastrophe - and by its actions the Georgian leadership certainly contributed to Georgia's territorial integrity and statehood being undermined - these people, in my view, should not be in charge of states, whether small or big. Had they been decent people, they would have stepped down straight away.

He says Russia cannot be isolated over Georgia. He states:

I think that a country, in this case Russia, that can protect the honour and dignity of its citizens, protect their lives, fulfil its international obligations under a peacekeeping mandate will not be in isolation, irrespective of what our partners in Europe or the United States may be saying in their bloc mentality. The world is not just Europe and the United States.

I would like once again to stress another thing. If certain states think that they can ignore their own national interests while serving the interests, foreign policy interests of other states, their standing in the world will be gradually declining, irrespective of how they explain their position. In this respect, if European states want to serve the USA's foreign policy interests they will not gain anything, in my opinion.

He denies that Russia has any interest in Crimea:

The Crimea is not a disputed territory. There was no ethnic conflict there, unlike the conflict between South Ossetia and Georgia. And Russia recognized the borders of modern Ukraine a long time ago. In effect, we have largely completed our talks on the border. What is left is demarcation, but this is a technical matter.

In my opinion, the question of any goals of that kind that Russia may have smacks of provocation.

In Crimea, there are difficult processes taking place inside society: the problem of the Crimean Tatars, of the Ukrainian population, of the Russian population, of the Slavonic population in general. But this an internal political problem of Ukraine.

We have a treaty with Ukraine regarding the presence of our fleet until 2017, and we shall be guided by this agreement.

He makes the following comments about NATO:

There was the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact and there were Soviet troops in Germany. In effect - one should say honestly - those were occupation troops that remained in Germany after World War II but under the guise of an allied force. Those occupation forces left, the Soviet Union broke up, the Warsaw Pact is no more.

There is no threat from the Soviet Union; however, NATO, the US troops in Europe remain. What for? In order to bring order into their own camp, within their own allies, in order to keep them within the boundaries of bloc discipline, an external threat is needed. Iran does not quite fit the bill. And they are very keen to bring back the image of the enemy in the form of Russia. But nobody in Europe is frightened any more.

On the recognition of Kosovo he states:

Was Resolution 1244 adopted? It was. It states and stresses the territorial integrity of Serbia. That resolution was dumped on a rubbish heap. It was totally forgotten. They tried to twist it one way or another but they couldn't. It was completely forgotten. Why? The White House gave an order and everybody followed it. If European countries continue to carry out their policies the same way, then we shall have to discuss European matters with Washington.

He also expresses the suspicion that the US may have been behind Georgia's decision to use force in South Ossetia:

We know that there were many US advisers there. It is very bad to arm one of the sides in an ethnic conflict and then push it towards resolving those ethnic problems through the use of force. On the face of it, this seems far easier than holding talks for years and searching for compromises, but it is a very dangerous path, and what happened has proved that.

Where do you think instructors, teachers, in the general sense of the word, the staff providing training on how to operate military hardware that has been supplied there should be? At training ranges and training centres. Instead,

where they were based? In the zone of the military operation. That alone prompts one to think that the US leadership knew of the planned operation and, moreover, was most likely involved, because without a command from the senior leadership US citizens had no right to be in the conflict zone. In the security zone there could be only local residents, OSCE observers and peacekeeping forces. However, we found there traces of US citizens that did not fall under any of the above categories and that poses the question: why the US senior leadership allowed its citizens, who had no right to be present in that security zone, to be there.

If they allowed it, then I am left to suspect that it was done on purpose, in order to arrange a short victorious war and, if that failed, to create an image of the enemy out of Russia and on those grounds rally voters around one of the presidential candidates, of course, the ruling party's candidate, because only the ruling party can have the resources to pull it off. These are my thoughts and assumptions. It is up to you to agree with them or not, but they have the right to exist because we found traces of US citizens in the military action zone.

29 August 2008 An MFA commentary says that the G7 statement of 27 August is biased:

The statement from the G8 disseminated on 27 August contains a condemnation of Russia's recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. This step is biased in nature and aimed at justifying Georgia's aggressive actions. In it, it is claimed unjustifiably that Russia undermined the territorial integrity of Georgia. Russia's reasoned position in favour of the decision, which was difficult but the only right one in the situation, to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia is ignored.

As for the six points of the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan, Russia is implementing them in full. Russian forces have been pulled back; a unit of Russian peacekeepers remains in the security zone adjacent to South Ossetia in compliance with this plan.

29 August 2008 Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin states that Russia can exist for a very long time without cooperation with the West. He also states that:

The world is interconnected in security and economic matters, especially now, during the period of universal shortage of fuel...Such rudeness and ignorance in a dialogue with Russia might push the Russian elite towards re-orientating towards other partners.

Russia is right all the same. There is only one right way - to stick to one's position, to be oneself, especially for such a big country as ours. We cannot help but announce our independence in foreign policy and the West's negative reaction was caused by the fact that they have encountered a different Russia - a resolute country which understands its role and bears responsibility for its citizens, including those living abroad.

He also says that Russia and Europe must find a dignified way out of the situation which has taken shape in the last few days, without jeopardizing their strategic cooperation. "Neither Europe nor Russia should be beguiled by Washington's geopolitical game whose goal is a reciprocal weakening of both Russia and Europe." He says it is important now to admit that as a result of US policy in the Caucasus

absolutely new relations between Russia and the West have taken shape.

29 August 2008 LUKoil denies reports by the Western media that oil supplies to Europe would be stopped. Energy Minister, Sergey Shmatko, also denies these reports.

29 August 2008 Russia's permanent representative at the UN Vitaly Churkin reads out the decrees of Dmitry Medvedev recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to the UN Security Council.

The MFA says that it regrets the Georgian parliament's decision to sever diplomatic ties with Russia.

29 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says at the SCO summit that the SCO is important for ensuring security in Central Asia, Russia and Europe as a whole.

The MFA praises the SCO for showing solidarity with Russia over South Ossetia.

30 August 2008 The MFA issues a statement on talks between Sergey Lavrov and German foreign minister Frank Walter Steinmeier. They discuss the possibility of European Union representatives joining the monitoring of implementation of the undertakings on the non-resumption of hostilities and provocations in the security zones around South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

30 August 2008 Yury Luzhkov proposes negotiations with Ukraine to sign a new friendship and cooperation treaty. He accuses Ukraine of pursuing an anti-Russian policy: "Ukraine's leadership is showing an absolutely clear tendency towards the suppression of all things Russian, the Russian language, Russian culture, Russian literature, Russians on their territory. It has now become in effect just like in the Baltic states."

31 August 2008 Dmitry Medvedev sets out five foreign policy principles in an interview on TV:

When pursuing the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, I will be basing it on five points.

The first point: Russia recognizes the primacy of the basic principles of international law, which define relations between civilized nations. It is in the framework of these principles, of this concept of international law, that we will develop our relations with other states.

Second: The world should be multipolar. Unipolarity is unacceptable, domination is impermissible. We cannot accept a world order in which all decisions are taken by one country, even such a serious and authoritative country as the United States of America. This kind of world is unstable and fraught with conflict.

Third: Russia does not want confrontation with any country; Russia has no intention of isolating itself. We will develop, as far as possible, friendly relations both with Europe and with the United States of America, as well as with other countries of the world.

Fourth: Our unquestionable priority is to protect the life and dignity of our citizens, wherever they are. We will also proceed from this in pursuing our

foreign policy. We will also protect the interest of our business community abroad. And it should be clear to everyone that if someone makes aggressive forays, he will get a response.

Finally, fifth: Russia, just like other countries in the world, has regions where it has its privileged interests. In these regions, there are countries with which we have traditionally had friendly cordial relations, historically special relations. We will work very attentively in these regions and develop these friendly relations with these states, with our close neighbours.

Medvedev has discussions by telephone with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown on the six points of the plan for settling the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

31 August 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that politics has played a role in delaying Russia's bid to join the WTO. He says WTO membership remained Russia's goal but it was not ready to pay "any price" in order to achieve it. Putin says that Russia's plans to increase energy exports to Asia will not lead to a reduction in supplies to the West:

We are not planning to restrict anything or anyone. We will be strictly adhering to our contractual obligations. However, we will be expanding and diversifying our export opportunities for raw hydrocarbons, which the world economy needs so much. We declared this a long time ago. This is a programme that is in no way connected to any political events of the current day. That is what the world economy is interested in, especially the Pacific region, which is growing and developing particularly fast. This is a programme we formulated several years ago. It is developing and we will be developing it. Such projects cannot be thought up and carried out overnight. This is the strategy of our development.

31 August 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov visits Libya. He has talks there with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

September 2008

1 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov gives a speech at Moscow Institute of International Relations. He calls for a collective security system in Europe:

Russia's relations with NATO are experiencing a long-desired moment of truth. NATO was the first to take the path of raising stakes. One is under the impression that the alliance needs once again the so-called front-line states to prove its own importance in the new conditions.

It was not us who put the whole existing architecture of European security to test. But its systemic defects are obvious. And first of all, it is NATO-centrism, which by definition denies the creation of a truly universal collective security mechanism in the Euro-Atlantic region. I am sure many in Europe understand it perfectly.

He says the USA needs to move away from unipolarity:

And we will not conceal that we would like America to take the path of change in international relations, rather than block its way. If this does not happen,

the USA and the whole world will have to face rather difficult times. Attempts to live in one's own unipolar world have been made for too long; this is a state that is dangerous for everybody.

He says the USA is risking a historic mistake by supporting Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. He also states:

In a cardinally changed, globalizing world, everyone will have to reformulate their mission. The Western Europe has effectively done this, with a majority of the countries refusing to share the Americans' reliance on military force. The new Russia too has made its choice, having confirmed it in a foreign policy concept which has been approved by President Medvedev. Now the ball is in the court of the rest of the members of the European and Euro-Atlantic family.

Certain Western countries' reaction to the South Ossetian crisis in some ways borders on self-exposure. In a clearly-defined geopolitical, ideological manner, that is to say detached from the real facts, it clearly demonstrates lack of morality.

He says there must be an embargo on the supply of arms to Georgia.

1 September 2008 The Russian envoy to the European Union Vladimir Chizhov criticizes its decision to suspend talks with Moscow on a new framework agreement until after Russian troops have withdrawn from Georgia.

The MFA issues a commentary regarding the implementation of the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It rejects claims by western powers that Russia has not abided by the implementation of the six principles.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko and the US deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs Matthew Bryza, discuss the situation in the South Caucasus. Yakovenko also meets Slovene Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel and Swedish Foreign Minister Karl Bildt.

1 September 2008 Vladimir Vasilyev, chairman of the Duma Committee on Security says it has information that Al Qaeda, which is interested in escalating conflict in the Caucasus, intends to use the situation surrounding South Ossetia to that end.

1 September 2008 Gazprom says that gas transportation through the Yamal-Europe pipeline will be suspended:

Following requests from the EuRoPol GAZ and Wingas companies for planned repairs in Poland and Germany, gas transportation through the Yamal-Europe pipeline will be suspended from 1600 on 2 September until 2200 on 3 September. As of 2200 on 3 September until 2200 on 4 September gas deliveries will amount to 50m cu.m. a day.

1 September 2008 A ban on the imports of poultry from 19 US producers comes into force. Another 29 US suppliers may be struck off the list of certified importers of poultry into Russia in a month's time.

2 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed on Italian RAI TV. He says that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili "does not exist" for Russia, describing him as "a political corpse". He accuses the USA of giving Saakashvili a "carte blanche" to

launch a military operation in South Ossetia and urges Washington to reassess relations with him. Medvedev also says that Russia will respond to the deployment of US missile defence elements in Europe. He dismisses the threat of Russia's expulsion from G8. He also insists that he is taking decisions concerning the use of Russian armed forces.

Medvedev is interviewed on *Euronews TV*. He says Russia will continue to be a reliable supplier of energy to Europe. He rejects the danger of separatism in the Northern Caucasus.

2 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan at his Sochi residence.

2 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia will respond to the presence of NATO ships in the Black Sea calmly and without hysterical outbursts.

Putin says that there are no Russian troops in Georgia and that the peacekeeping group in the zones of conflict has been reduced.

Putin says that Russia reserves a right to take "additional security measures" in areas of Georgia adjacent to the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Putin says Russia's actions "did not in any way damage energy facilities on Georgian territory" including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. He also says that the conflict in Georgia will have an insignificant effect on the Russian economy. He says the inflow of capital to the country will be smaller this year than in 2007. It will amount to \$30-40 billion.

Putin has talks with Uzbek President Islom Karimov on gas relations.

2 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov visits Turkey. He says Moscow hopes that the EU will send its representatives to South Ossetia as part of the OSCE Mission and within the framework of prospective international police forces.

Lavrov says that Russian peacekeepers will leave the Georgian conflict zone only after an agreement on the non-use of force has been signed. He criticises NATO states for arming Georgia. He denies that Russia has been secretly supplying arms to Iran.

Lavrov discusses the situation in the Transcaucasus with his Turkish counterpart, Ali Babacan, in Istanbul.

2 September 2008 The MFA issues a commentary disagreeing with the EU summit held on 1 September on Russia-EU relations following the Georgian conflict.

Russia's envoy to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, says he does not rule out the possibility that negotiations between Russia and the EU on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The first round of negotiations was on 4 July. The next round is scheduled for 16 September.

2 September 2008 The MFA says that Georgia is restoring its military facilities and building up forces near the border of South Ossetia and that Georgian forces are provoking Russian forces.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia has completed the withdrawal of its troops from Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He claims that US military transport planes have airlifted over 1,200 tonnes of cargoes, including military ones, to Georgia over the past two weeks. He also expresses concern over the presence of a group of NATO navy ships in the Black Sea.

2 September 2008 The Federation Council signs cooperation agreements with the parliaments of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

3 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that the text of the Russian-Georgian peace settlement signed by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is a "forgery", claiming it contained many distortions of the "authentic" Russo-French text signed on 12 August.

Lavrov says Russian troops will pull out of Georgia once "international mechanisms" to guarantee the security of its breakaway region of South Ossetia are in place.

3 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia will remain a reliable supplier of energy to Europe.

In our relations with the European Union, the energy sector occupies one of the central places. This is natural. We have an energy dialogue, along with other economic dialogues of sectoral aspect. And we want this dialogue to be based on the previously agreed principles, first of all, the principles agreed at the G8 summit in St Petersburg, which are based on taking into account mutual interests, a balance of interests among producer countries, consumer countries and transit countries.

We still think that these principles are absolutely necessary to resolve all issues that are emerging in this sphere. All the more so that there are very few issues emerging. My counterpart and I today discussed the energy topic, and I reminded [the visiting Belgian foreign minister] that we still have not received a response to a question, or rather a request, that we have been repeatedly asking: Give at least one example when Russia failed to fulfil or breached a single contract associated with supplies of hydrocarbons to Europe, or anywhere else, for that matter. There has been no answer. The disruptions that took place were associated exclusively with transit countries. Everyone knows this very well. Therefore, when our European counterparts are talking about the necessity to create an early warning mechanism in the energy sphere, we agree. We propose that transit countries must also take part in this mechanism. Because all the problems that emerged over the last few years, once or twice, were associated with them precisely.

As regards the proportion of our energy ties with separate European countries on a bilateral basis and our energy contacts with the European Commission, I think that this contradistinction is artificial. Of course, the European Union has its own rules. In the European Union, there is a desire of the Brussels commission to assume as many functions as possible. This is a law of development for any bureaucracy, I am not revealing any secret here. Our position is that we have partners with whom we have long-term agreements in the energy sphere. These agreements will be observed.

3 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is not interested in terminating

the Agreement on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine. This agreement is due to expire on 1 October. The agreement is automatically prolonged if none of the parties notifies the other before 1 October. Lavrov says that any Ukrainian demand to raise rent for the naval base in Sevastopol is contrary to the basic agreement on the BSF, where the rent is fixed.

3 September 2008 An MFA spokesman says that Russian troops have withdrawn from Georgia, but some remain near Poti.

Chief Military Prosecutor Fridinsky gives an update on Russian losses in South Ossetia operation. He says prosecutors have so far established that 71 Russian troops died and 340 were injured during the operation.

3 September 2008 Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev visits Armenia. He thinks that after the events in the Caucasus, Russia has asserted itself as a new world geopolitical centre. He says: "The configuration of forces has changed. After these events, Russia has asserted itself as a centre. But not only itself, but also those organizations in which it is a member - the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization." He also says: "Europe is no longer following in the wake of the United States. They have their own opinion, and we are listening to it." He says the USA and some other countries are trying to get access to hydrocarbons of the Caucasus and Central Asia: "The Caucasus and the Central Asia region are regions rich with hydrocarbons, oil and gas. Therefore, this region is in the zone of interests of this or that country, in particular the USA. They want to get access to this wealth."

3 September 2008 Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's permanent representative to NATO, says Russia did not rule out, in principle, the possibility of curtailing cooperation between Russia and NATO on Afghanistan. The decision would depend on the alliance's position on the "Caucasus crisis".

3 September 2008 A SCO conference opens in Volgograd to precede antiterrorist exercises Volgograd Anti-Terror 2008.

4 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says the forthcoming visit to Georgia by members of the NATO Council led by NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is outrageous. He says the trip, which is scheduled for 15 and 16 September, looks like a demonstration of NATO moral support for Mikheil Saakashvili. He says Moscow may reduce further cooperation with NATO perhaps over the agreement between Russia and NATO on military transit to Afghanistan.

Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev says that Georgia is more of an instrument in the hands of the USA than a sovereign country. He is commenting on US Vice-President Dick Cheney's recent visit to Georgia and Ukraine.

Italian foreign minister Franco Frattini visits Moscow for talks with Sergey Lavrov. Lavrov states:

Today we have had a detailed exchange of views on what additional steps must be taken to ensure full implementation of the settlement plan outlined at the meeting between presidents Medvedev and Sarkozy in Moscow on 12 August. In brief, the tasks are to ensure - as soon as conditions allow, as soon as the international community's capabilities allow - impartial international

monitoring and control of the security zone around South Ossetia, and, of course, ensure that the Saakashvili regime fulfils its obligations, mainly as regards unconditional guarantees not to use force again.

The MFA issues a statement "On the Russian proposal to launch an OSCE civilian police operation in the security zone around South Ossetia".

Chairman of the Duma committee for relations with the CIS and compatriots and the director of the CIS states institute, Konstantin Zatulin, says Russia shall not discuss issues concerning its military presence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia with anyone but the leaderships of these republics.

The Foreign Ministers of the member-states of the CSTO adopt a statement in connection with the events in South Ossetia.

Sergey Lavrov says member states of the CSTO have agreed to coordinate their actions in international organizations regarding the situation in the Caucasus region after the conflict over South Ossetia. He says the foreign ministers of the CSTO have agreed to start joint work on a collective European security agreement.

Lavrov says that one cannot compare the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia with the conflict in Nagornyy Karabakh.

4 September 2008 Gazprom resumes the transportation of gas through the Yamal-Europe pipeline following the partial completion of repairs by the companies EuRoPol Gaz and Wingas.

4 September 2008 The special services of SCO member states stage an exercise in Volgograd.

5 September 2008 The heads of state of the CSTO meet in Moscow.

5 September 2008 The MFA says that US Vice-President Richard Cheney's recent statements supporting Georgia and promises of fast-track NATO membership and more US aid to that country only encourage the "aggressive ambitions" of President Mikheil Saakashvili.

The MFA also says it regrets the "biased assessments" in the European Parliament's recent resolution on Georgia, however the document attempts to establish the real causes of the recent conflict.

5 September 2008 The MFA says its regrets the decision of the Ukrainian authorities to deny Duma deputy Sergey Markov entry to the territory of Ukraine.

5 September 2008 Viktor Remishevsky, deputy head of Roskosmos, says he hopes that Russia and the USA will continue to cooperate in space research.

6 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev addresses the State Council on the Georgian conflict.

The MFA welcomes Russia welcomes Nicaragua's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh says that Abkhazia would like to join the CIS and, possibly, the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

6 September 2008 First Vice-Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Leonid Slutsky denies claims that passports are being issued to residents of the Crimea.

6 September 2008 An interview recorded with Vladimir Putin on 31 August is shown on *Rossiya TV*. He says that there will not be serious problems with the West over Georgia:

Well, we have just talked about oil, gas, metals. One could also recall some other traditional articles of our exports, chemical fertilizers, wood, and many other things. Take services in the space sector, for example. The International Space Station cannot exist now without our carrier rockets. There are very many things that we have without which our partners simply cannot exist, or it will be very difficult for them. Why should someone give it up? If suddenly someone wants to do so, the world is large, and the demand for these services and these goods in the world economy is very strong. They are in short supply. You understand, everything that we have is in short supply in the world economy, while what is supplied to our market is, on the whole, available in quite large amounts in various areas of the world.

6 September 2008 Ingush President Murat Zyazikov suggests that the USA is trying to destabilise Ingushetia.

6 September 2008 Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev says the Agriculture Ministry proposes to cut the imports of poultry, that comes to Russia mainly from the USA, by 200,000 tonnes in 2009. As of 1 September, Russia struck 15 American companies manufacturing poultry and exporting it to Russia off the list of accredited suppliers.

7 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He says that the Russian troops currently present in Georgia are peacekeepers whose mandate is based on the 12 August Medvedev-Sarkozy accord signed in Moscow. He says that Russia would be ready to withdraw troops from the "security zone" after an "effective" international mechanism was in place.

Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev says that the Western stance on the Russian-Georgian conflict is getting more balanced. He is commenting on the 5 September PACE Bureau urgent meeting dedicated to the conflict in Georgia.

7 September 2008 Azeri foreign minister Elmar Mammadyarov has talks in Moscow with Sergey Lavrov.

8 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev and French President Nicolas Sarkozy hold talks in Moscow on Georgia. Medvedev agrees that Russian forces will be withdrawn from areas of Georgia outside South Ossetia and Abkhazia by 1 October.

Medvedev says that the EU's position on Georgia is quite balanced.

The MFA states that Sergey Lavrov will hold talks in Moscow on 9 September with the foreign ministers of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Murat K Dzhioyev and Sergey Shamba. An exchange of notes establishing diplomatic relations at the level of embassies between Russia and the aforementioned states will take place.

Sergey Lavrov and the UN secretary-general's special envoy for Georgia, the head of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), Johan Verbeke, discuss issues of UN monitoring of the situation in Georgia and Abkhazia.

The MFA says that it is unnecessary to send a separate mission of EU observers to Georgia.

The MOD refutes Georgian claims of violation of the Georgian air space by two Russian military aircraft.

8 September 2008 NATO representative Dmitry Rogozin says that Russia may cease cooperation with NATO if Georgia is granted the NATO Membership Action Plan.

8 September 2008 Aide to the commander-in-chief of the Russian navy, Capt 1st Rank Igor Dygalo says that the *Pyotr Veliky* heavy nuclear-powered cruiser and support ships will hold joint exercises with Venezuelan warships in the Atlantic Ocean in November. The ships will have joint manoeuvres, practise search and rescue at sea and check communications. The exercises had been planned over the past year, and the Russian and Venezuelan presidents confirmed the plans in July.

8 September 2008 The MFA says the US administration's decision to withdraw from the Congress the Russian-American agreement on cooperation in the area of civilian nuclear energy causes regret and is not in line with the development of bilateral relations.

8 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree in accordance with which the Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS) will be renamed the Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS), of Compatriots Living Abroad and for International Humanitarian Cooperation.

9 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev holds talks on Georgia with defence minister Anatoly Serdyukov. He welcomes the idea of observers from the OSCE and EU on Georgian territory.

Sergey Lavrov says that Russian troops will remain in Abkhazia and South Ossetia "for a long time" and in sufficient numbers to deter any future attack by Georgia. He is speaking at a joint news conference with Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik. Lavrov confirms that Russian troops will leave "peacekeeping posts" in Georgia proper within 10 days after the deployment of at least 200 EU observers, who are due to arrive on 1 October.

Lavrov also says that Russia is not considering reopening a radar centre in Cuba.

Russia formally establishes diplomatic relations with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Sergey Lavrov meets their foreign ministers.

Russia submits to the UN Security Council a draft resolution on prevention of further rearmament of Georgia. Russia's permanent representative at the UN, Vitaly Churkin proposes an unofficial meeting on 7-8 October of the UNSC with the participation of South Ossetian and Abkhaz representatives. The UN Security Council is due to extend the mandate of the UN observer mission in Georgia before 15 October.

Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces says that preparations for dismantling checkpoints in the zones of responsibility of Russian peacekeepers in Georgia adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia have started.

Nogovitsyn says that by helping Tbilisi by transporting Georgian service personnel by air from Iraq to Georgia, Washington set a precedent of complicity in the armed conflict on Georgia's side.

Head of the Duma committee for international affairs Konstantin Kosachev says that the European Union has become a kind of a buffer between Georgia on the one hand and South Ossetia and Abkhazia on the other, and: "Another interesting fact is that there is no place left for the USA in this system of accords - not because someone artificially excluded it but because America is not very interested in a system in which peace will be rigorously ensured".

9 September 2008 Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega says he would like to strengthen relations with Russia in all areas.

9 September 2008 Duma speaker Boris Gryzlov meets the president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Joao Soares. Gryzlov says that OSCE needs to be reformed because it is failing to resolve important issues, including those in the area of ensuring European security. He says the OSCE needs a charter.

9 September 2008 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov hopes that peaceful nuclear cooperation between Russia and the USA will be resumed.

9 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets businessman Alisher Usmanov. He says the Russian government will provide political support for Russian business when taking a decision on investing outside the Russian Federation.

9 September 2008 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says in Vienna that "the price of oil should be fair and take into account not only the wishes of consumers but also the significant growth of oil companies' costs". A Russian delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin is attending the OPEC session as an observer.

10 September 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko says that international human rights organizations, including ODIHR, use double standards.

10 September 2008 Yury Buligin of the Russian Federation Chamber of Trade and Industry says the ratification of Serbia's energy agreement with Russia does not necessarily mean that the building of the South Stream gas pipeline will begin. He says he is not convinced that the South Stream project would be implemented.

10 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin urge NATO countries to embargo arms sales to Georgia and to suspend visits by high ranking officials to this country. He says this at a meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council at the NATO headquarters.

10 September 2008 An inter-party conference on foreign policy is held in the Duma. It issues a statement on the Georgian situation.

10 September 2008 A VTsIOM poll shows that the number of Russians who regard the USA negatively has more than doubled from June to September. 65 per cent have a negative attitude towards the USA - in June there were only 29 per cent. The

number of respondents who regard the USA positively has decreased from 49 to 22 per cent.

10 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks with the South Korean foreign minister, Yu Myung-hwan in Moscow. Lavrov says that the approaches of Russia and South Korea to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula coincide, and all sides in the six-party talks should not let bilateral issues hinder the process.

10 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russian forces will be withdrawn from the Poti-Senaki line in Georgia within one week after 8 September.

Lavrov warns NATO not to accept Georgia as a member: "If Georgia is accepted into NATO, this will mean that the alliance supports an aggressor". He says that NATO's desire to rearm Georgia shows that NATO and the USA have not learnt any lessons from the conflict in Georgia.

The MFA says that Georgia should accept the Russian proposal of arms embargo against Georgia.

The MFA confirms that Russian peacekeepers denied entry to South Ossetia to three UN employees, and has explained this by saying the UN did not prepare the correct paperwork for the visit.

Commander of the peacekeeping force in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone Marat Kulakhmetov denies Georgian MFA claims that Russian forces fired and killed a Georgian policeman in Karaleti.

10 September 2008 Two Tu-160 strategic bombers of the Russian Air Force land at Libertador military airfield in Venezuela. The aircraft will be making training flights over neutral waters for several days, after which they will return to base in Russia.

10 September 2008 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says it will not use force against the Baltic states:

We have repeatedly said that we are not planning to use various strong measures of pressure - I can't even force myself to say of military nature - against countries with which Russia has disagreements on various issues. We have also been and will always be in favour of civilized methods of communication with such countries and their representatives - of course if they are interested in this. We are not going to impose a discussion. We are always open for a dialogue which reflects mutual respect and interest, on any issues on the common agenda.

As for Russian speakers, whose rights are violated in the Baltic countries, I hope you know our position. We are in favour of the implementation of their rights. We inform the Baltic leaders of our point of view. However, we are doing this, as established in the international practice, calmly and explaining our reasons, not only on the bilateral level but also in many international organizations, where we find understanding and support on the part of many countries. However, I repeat that these are problems which must be resolved in a civilized manner.

10 September 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin says that Russia should create a strategic partnership with OPEC. He is attending the OPEC conference

session in Vienna:

We want to create a mechanism of constant coordination, exchange of information and implementation of scientific projects, and, on the whole, to understand the market better, to analyse markets and forecasts. These forecasts are very important for our companies and for the development of our oil and gas industry. In this sense we believe our partnership with OPEC, which we want to achieve, is strategic.

11 September 2008 South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty says South Ossetia intends to be united with North Ossetia and become part of Russia. (Kokoyty is later reported as saying the opposite, claiming that he had been misunderstood.)

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Moscow is not considering the issue of South Ossetia becoming part of Russia.

Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh says that Abkhazia intends to make an application for joining the Union State of Russia and Belarus and does not rule out the possibility of joining the CIS and CSTO.

Official spokesman for the Investigations Committee under the Prosecution Service Vladimir Markin says that Russia lost 66 soldiers in the South Ossetia conflict.

11 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says Russia is proposing to establish "common rules" in international cooperation.

You are asking why Russia cannot develop stable relations with the West, but I want to ask you why the West is not developing stable relations with Russia...I do not want to offend anyone, but Western Europe does not have its own foreign policy line at the moment and Russia cannot function in such a system of relations and will not do so.

No country, not even the grandest one, is in a position to tackle all problems in the world on its own, without engaging capable partners. One cannot behave like a Roman emperor. One should take into account interests of one's partners and respect them. We are proposing such work and are ready for such work.

He says there is no basis for a new Cold War.

Putin says that Russia has no plans to annex Crimea.

11 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov visits Poland for talks with Polish foreign minister Radoslaw Sikorski. He says that the artificial inclusion of various countries in NATO is damaging European security. Lavrov states:

We do not see any threats to the Russian Federation from Poland, but we cannot ignore the fact that an integral component of the USA's strategic systems will appear close to our borders; systems which until recently, for many decades, were regulated by agreements between Moscow and Washington with the aim of supporting parity in offensive and defensive strategic weapons. This parity has been seriously violated in recent years.

11 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says Russia is ready to cooperate with the USA on countering terrorism.

Igor Neverov, director of the North America department of the MFA, says that Moscow hopes that Washington will reconsider its decision to recall the Russian-US civil nuclear agreement from Congress.

11 September 2008 The MFA issues a statement on relations with Ukraine. It accuses Ukraine of pursuing an unfriendly policy towards Russia.

12 September 2008 The Commanders of the Russian and Syrian navies have talks.

12 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev makes the following comment about Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili:

Speaking of Georgia's membership of NATO, as I said earlier, this would clearly be a very serious destabilizing factor for both NATO and the Caucasus. The problem would have been only half as serious if the Georgian state had been led by balanced, sensible politicians, even pro-American ones. But it is a different matter when at the helm of the state is not merely a person who we simply will not have any business with, but a person who is absolutely unpredictable, a person who is burdened with an array of pathologies and, unfortunately, is in an unbalanced mental state, a person - forgive me for saying this, of course - who uses narcotic substances, which is something Western journalists who interviewed him not so long ago are well aware of. For a head of state, being interviewed for two hours in a state of strong narcotic intoxication is a bit too much, an overdose. If our colleagues from the NATO bloc wish to get a leader like that, then go ahead.

13 September 2008 A session of a special working group of the SCO member states on information technology and telecommunications takes place in Yekaterinburg. A high-speed data superhighway will be built on the territory of the SCO member states and will be used as a backup system in case of an unexpected fault in the main communications network. The data superhighway will be made up of two fibre-optic rings, the Northern and the Southern ones. The first one will go across Russia and another one across China. They will cross in Kyrgyzstan. There might be a third ring passing through India. To implement this enormous project, fibre-optic communication lines need to be laid in the countries. The length of the networks and the project budget are being decided now. A unified information space of the SCO member states will be created by the beginning of the summit in Yekaterinburg in June 2009.

13 September 2008 Aleksandr Pankin, deputy director of the MFA's department for international organizations, says that it will be a major blow to the G8 if Russia is excluded from the club.

What will the G7 lose if they lose their eighth member? They will lose a lot. Both politically and strategically it would mean entirely nullifying the G8's work - not because they wouldn't survive without us, but because there is talk about expanding the G8, about the fact that the G8 is insufficient, because this is confirmed by the 'eight plus five' format...If you look at our real role in recent years, then perhaps as a donor it has been modest, but as the holder of an enormous amount of liquidity resources, of funds in other, Western, banks, we are a serious player...Partly, together with others, we helped the Americans to avoid a major crash which could have happened if our resources had not been invested there, in US securities.

13 September 2008 The MFA issues a statement confirming that Russian peacekeepers have withdrawn from their posts from the Poti-Senaki line and left the territory of Georgia. This is done two days ahead of the deadline established in the Medvedev-Sarkozy agreements.

14 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov and Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh suggest that ethnic Georgians displaced from Abkhazia and South Ossetia will be unable to return to their homes in the foreseeable future. They are speaking at a joint news conference in Sukhumi. Lavrov confirms that the Russian troops in the regions no longer had the formal status of peacekeepers. He says that the legal basis for their stay there was provided by a Russian presidential decree and "a direct request" from the separatist governments. He states:

As for the Russian troops currently on the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, their status has changed. They are not peacekeeping forces. They are a Russian troop contingent that is here on the basis of a decree by the Russian Federation president in response to a direct request by the leadership of Abkhazia. The same applies to South Ossetia. In the coming days their legal status will strengthen and be determined by an international treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance, which will spell everything out very clearly.

14 September 2008 Russian strategic bombers Tu-160 hold a training flight over the Caribbean and land in Venezuela.

15 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that it is pointless for other states to impose sanctions on Russia because of Georgia. He is addressing a session of the board of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. He also states that Russia is committed to protecting the interests of its business both inside the country and abroad, and if somebody tries to block Russia's access to a market, there will be certain consequences. He says there will be no change in economic policy, and that Russia still desires to join the WTO.

Despite what happened in August, despite the military decisions, the principles of economic policy will not change. There should be no change in priorities. We do not need either militarization, or governmentalization of the economy. But we certainly do need order. And the state will ensure order, while sticking to the basic values and rights and freedoms that are stipulated in our constitution and the main laws. I believe that the main task nowadays is the one I talked about some time ago: defending the right to private property and strengthening courts in our country.

15 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov warns Georgia against committing provocations in South Ossetia. He is in South Ossetia to discuss the further development of relations with this state.

15 September 2008 The chief of the operations directorate of the BSF staff, Rear Admiral Andrey Baranov, says that the Russian BSF and NATO will continue cooperation at the level of commands both in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean. He says he believes that the role of the Russian BSF will be increasing because new ships are being added to the active inventory of this force. "We have already received a small gunship, a new minesweeper, we are currently testing new torpedo boats."

He says that new air defence systems are being tried out at the new ships. "We are

learning lessons from the naval operation to force Georgia into peace, and air defence assets become particularly relevant in this context, as do communication equipment and ship command and control systems."

15 September 2008 The MFA welcomes the agreement reached in Zimbabwe on forming a coalition government.

16 September 2008 Gazprom signs a contract on gas deliveries to Armenia in 2009-2010. In 2007, Gazprom delivered 2.05 billion cubic metres of gas to Armenia.

16 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev has talks in Moscow with his Azeri counterpart Ilham Aliyev.

16 September 2008 Vladimir Putin says that most refugees have now returned to South Ossetia.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko accuses Georgia of hindering restoration work in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Nesterenko also says that the MFA believes it expedient to hold an informal meeting of the UN Security Council in a European country if the USA refuses to issue visas to representatives of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The MFA holds a collegium to discuss current foreign policy tasks in the light of Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia.

It was noted at the collegium meeting that the latest events in the Caucasus will have far-reaching, multidimensional repercussions for regional and global politics and that they herald a new quality in the international situation and Russia's international standing. The myth of "unipolar world" has been finally dispelled. The positions of all responsible "players" and political forces in the world affairs are getting stronger. There is a growing understanding of the need for a transformation of the international system that would reflect the realities of multi-polarity, based on equality, collective efforts and international law.

The MFA criticises the recent visit of a NATO delegation to Georgia.

Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, rejects "evidence" presented by the US State Department that Russia started the conflict in South Ossetia. He is commenting on an article in the *International Herald Tribune* today about the publication by Georgia of intercepts of conversations between Ossetian border guards before the events of 7-8 August.

The chairman of the Duma defence committee, Viktor Zavarzin, says that the visit by the NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer to Georgia attests to the fact that the alliance is acting on the basis of its plan and does not strive to take into account the interests of Russia in the sphere of security.

16 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks with Vietnamese foreign minister Pham Gia Khiem.

16 September 2008 A contract is signed to sell a consignment of Kornet-E antitank missile systems to Turkey.

17 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev signs agreements on friendship, cooperation

and mutual assistance with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. He pledges Russia's commitment to the security of these new states. Russia has recognized dual citizenship with Abkhazia and South Ossetia and will take the citizens of these countries under its protection in third countries. Russia acquires the right to open military bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The prosecutor-general of South Ossetia, Taymuraz Khugayev says that the number of victims of Georgia's attack on South Ossetia is presumed to be 1,694.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that the position of some EU countries, according to which the European Union's military observers should be stationed on the territory of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, does not correspond to the agreements of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

The MFA issues a statement criticising the decision of NATO to hold a NATO Council Session in Georgia.

Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says Georgia is for the USA an ideal base for invading Iran. He says the Russian BSF ships will be pulled back from the coast of Abkhazia as soon as US ships leave the Black Sea.

17 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative at the UN Vitaliy Churkin says that the P5 should keep their rights if the UN is reformed.

17 September 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits Venezuela. He praises Russo-Venezuelan military cooperation. Russia and Venezuela have signed contracts totalling \$4.4 billion in the past three years.

Lt-Col Vladimir Drik, assistant to the commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force says that two Tu-160 strategic bombers arrived in Caracas from the Libertador air base.

17 September 2008 The head of Roskosmos Anatoly Perminov says Russia and Cuba are having discussions on the possibility of creating a space centre in Cuba.

17 September 2008 Anatoly Isaykin, director-general of Rosoboronexport says Russia is discussing with Iran the issue of supplying it with defensive systems.

At the end of 2005 Russia and Iran concluded a contract for the supply of Tor-M1 anti-aircraft missile systems, and the shipment was completed in late January 2007. In February 2007, the Iranians carried out successful launches of Tor-M1 systems during an exercise of the air and naval forces of the elite Islamic Revolution Guards Corps in the area of the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman.

Isaykin says the company is willing to offer potential clients among countries on the African continent alternative schemes of settlement for the supply of military equipment. He states:

Rosoboronexport is willing to use alternative and flexible settlement schemes. These include creation of joint ventures and exploration of underground mineral resources. These offers made by the Russian side give African countries more opportunities to obtain the latest Russian weapons.

Rosoboronexport is willing to receive traditional African export commodities, including diamonds, timber, cotton, palm oil and coffee, as payment for armaments.

18 September 2008 The speaker of the Duma, Boris Gryzlov, states that Russia will increase its defence budget in response to the deployment of the US missile defence system in Western Europe. He is in Kaliningrad.

18 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin speaks of improving preconditions for implementing the South Stream gas pipeline construction project. He meets his Bulgarian counterpart Sergey Stanishev in Sochi.

Putin meets in Sochi ex-Chancellor of Germany Gerhard Schroeder, who is chairman of the shareholders' committee of Nord Stream. They discuss the implementation of the pipeline building project from Russia to Germany along the bed of the Baltic Sea. Putin states:

This project has already changed from a bilateral Russian-German project into a multi-national, pan-European project. Already more than 10 large European companies have got involved in it, in the realization of this project. It's assumed that a minimum of five countries will receive our product, our gas, Russian gas, in Europe. These are of course the Federal Republic of Germany itself, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark. We are prepared to consider the involvement of other European partners as well in this work. This is, I repeat, a large-scale European project aimed at solving urgent energy problems. I am confident that it will work rhythmically for the benefit of the development of the Russian and European economy.

Gazprom head Alexey Miller says that "there are no doubts at the present time that the project will be implemented at the end of 2011", in line with the current schedule. In the next 10 years, the growth of gas imports to the European Union will exceed 200 billion cubic metres of gas a year, with Nord Stream providing gas to meet more than a quarter of the growing demand in Europe.

18 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov addresses the Federation Council's International Affairs Committee. He criticises some foreign countries for trying to revise the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan for resolving the Russia-Georgia crisis to the advantage of Tbilisi. He says Western countries will have to choose whether to continue helping the Georgian leadership or to stop providing it with unconditional assistance, since it does not comply with democratic standards.

We have no doubts that the crisis provoked in the Caucasus marks a new quality of the international situation and Russia's international stance. Illusions which some might still harbour have finally been dispelled, the myth about the unipolar world has been dispelled once and for all, and probably it is precisely the realization of this that has evoked a hysterical and absolutely immoral reaction in a number of capitals.

He refers to Dmitry Medvedev's proposal to sign an agreement on European security:

We are not driving a wedge into transatlantic relations, we are offering to expand them, these transatlantic relations, so that they cover all branches of the European civilization, Russia, the European Union and the USA. And we are not falling into anti-Americanism, nor are we going to posture, nor reply on

the principle of an eye for an eye, and of course we will not be drawn into a quarrel with Europe.

Only based on the recognition and the practical use of the key principle of the indivisibility of security can we talk about stability in the Euro-Atlantic region, about stability in the world at large. The principle of indivisibility of security, which is laid down in basic documents between Russia and NATO, and the OSCE documents states clearly that one state cannot ensure its own security by infringing the security of others.

Lavrov says Russia's recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia does not create a precedent for Moldova's breakaway Dniester region or Azerbaijan's Nagornyy Karabakh republic.

Lavrov accuses Georgia's "foreign patrons" of readiness to train terrorist groups there to fight for restoring control over South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

18 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev says that relations with the USA are a priority for the Russian Federation, and the accumulated potential of bilateral ties should "not be frittered away".

The MFA says that the US administration is beginning to take a more realistic and balanced view of the events in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Sergey Lavrov accuses the Western media of conducting a biased "information war" against Russia in its coverage of the conflict with Georgia.

18 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the resumption of cooperation within the Russia-NATO Council is inevitable.

18 September 2008 Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the Federation Council foreign affairs committee, criticizes some PACE delegates for attempts to expel Russia.

18 September 2008 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin heads a government delegation to Nicaragua.

18 September 2008 Two Tu-160 strategic bombers leave Caracas for Russia.

18 September 2008 Head of the Russian WTO delegation and director of the Economic Development Ministry's trade talks department Maksim Medvedkov says talks on Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization will continue in the working mode. According to the Russian delegation, the task to complete the technical talks on Russia's entry in the WTO before the end of this year is "quite feasible".

19 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets the heads of public organisations in Russia. He criticizes the USA for stating it will support teachers, doctors, academics, trade union leaders and judges in the Russian Federation.

He says the G8 could have alleviated the consequences of the current global financial crisis. He says that the current international security system has failed and needs to be improved. He also rejects claims that Russia is becoming a dictatorship and rejects the idea of Russia moving behind an Iron Curtain.

19 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has talks in Sochi with his French opposite number, Francois Fillon.

Gazprom and French Total sign an agreement with Bolivia's YPFB company on joint gas exploration and production at Acero field. State-owned YPFB will hold 51 per cent in the joint venture, while Gazprom and Total will have 24.5 per cent each. The initial daily production is to amount to 13m cubic metres of natural gas.

19 September 2008 The MFA issues a commentary on the speech of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (18 September) at the German Marshall Fund in Washington on Russia and Russian-American relations in the light of the events in the Caucasus. The head of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, Mikhail Margelov, also criticises Rice's speech as an "artificial excitation of the information environment".

19 September 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko says that after the EU had guaranteed the non-use of force by the Georgian side against new republics South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Russia rules out the possibility of military actions in the region. He says that Russian peacekeeping forces will leave the security zone around South Ossetia and Abkhazia immediately after the EU fulfils its obligations and sends international observers.

The MFA criticises the OSCE over the issue of sending observers to South Ossetia. It says the OSCE has once again been unable to take effective measures to prevent a new aggravation of the situation.

The MFA criticises a decision by the IMF Board of Governors to give Georgia a \$750 million loan.

19 September 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko says that the tension around the Iranian nuclear programme can be relieved only by using political and diplomatic methods and tough dialogue with the Iranians: "It is important to hold a dialogue with the Iranians while bringing them to constructive positions and to resolve all issues through the IAEA while defining all the steps Tehran should take to restore trust in its nuclear programme."

Yakovenko says that Moscow has some questions about the possibility of convening a Middle East conference in Moscow: "We have certain questions as regards convening a conference in Moscow in the immediate future, bearing in mind the approaching US election and internal tribulations in the region."

20 September 2008 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that Russia has no intention of succumbing to anti-American feelings in response to US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's tough rhetoric about the Russian Federation voiced during her speech at the Marshall Fund: "Russia is seeking neither isolation nor a new cold war. This is not in our national interests, any more than in the interests of global security. Even less would we like to succumb to anti-Americanism."

First Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Denisov says that trade cooperation between Russia and the USA should not depend on the political environment. He is speaking at the Russian-US "round table" within the framework of the Seventh Sochi International investment forum.

Deputy chairman of the Federation Council committee for international affairs

Vasily Likhachev says US plans to create within NATO structures a rapid reaction force which could be urgently sent to countries fearing a threat from Russia "go against" the standards of international law.

It is becoming clear that the Americans and their NATO partners have plotted a course towards creating a system to be known as Pax America, Euroatlantism, in order to create and tighten the ring of encirclement and external pressure on the Russian Federation, all the more so because these structures will operate in the immediate vicinity of Russian borders.

I fear that, after a careful analysis, we shall have to take not only political but also military steps to prevent this kind of ring of encirclement of Russia. The Russian Federation should not give in to this sort of proposals and to harsh steps that raise international tension. Our response will be totally objective, lawful and appropriate.

20 September 2008 The MFA distributes a statement on the results of the meeting of the world's six mediators on the Iranian nuclear issue. The MFA says it is against further UNSC sanctions at this stage.

20 September 2008 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says at Sochi that it is necessary to ponder changes in the international financial architecture in connection with the world economic crisis: "Of course we all have to think about changing the architecture of international finances and the diversification of risks because the entire world economy cannot be tied to a single printing press."

20 September 2008 French Prime Minister Francois Fillon says to Vladimir Putin in Sochi that talks on the Russia-EU treaty may resume in October. Putin says France's role in settling the Caucasus crisis have proved the country's ability to play a noticeable role in situations of this kind.

20 September 2008 Putin says that the issue of Russia's military presence on the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia will be settled on the basis of international accords between the Russian Federation, on the one hand, and Sukhumi and Tskhinvali.

22 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov visits Ireland.

22 September 2008 Lavrov says that Russia is meeting all its obligations under the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan for a settlement in South Ossetia in full.

The commander of the Russian peacekeeping force in South Ossetia, Marat Kulakhmetov, states that an EU observer mission consisting of 200 people will be arriving in the security zone in Georgia on the border with South Ossetia from 1 October. Duma speaker Boris Gryzlov visits South Ossetia.

22 September 2008 A squadron of the Russian Northern Fleet leaves Severomorsk for Venezuela. The voyage is headed by Deputy Navy Commander Vice-Admiral Vladimir Korolev. There will be a first joint drill with the Venezuelan navy aimed at developing cooperation during rescue operations and countering sea terrorists.

Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin says that Russian and Venezuelan oil and gas companies may set up a consortium for working at oil and gas fields in Latin America.

22 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative at NATO Dmitry Rogozin urges the USA to withdraw its ships from the Black Sea area, and dismisses the idea that Russia might set up military bases in South America. He warns that Russia would terminate its cooperation with NATO if Georgia and Ukraine became candidate countries to join the alliance.

Rogozin describes the US administration's proposal to create NATO rapid reaction forces near Russia's borders as "political rattling".

22 September 2008 Dmitry Medvedev meets Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev during a forum in Kazakhstan of the leaders of the border regions of both Russia and Kazakhstan. They discuss energy cooperation. Medvedev says that Russia and Kazakhstan may become leading agrarian powers.

Eight agreements are signed at the forum, among them a memorandum on the development of roads that would connect Western Europe and China via the route of St Petersburg-Kazan-Orenburg-Aktyubinsk-Almaty-Chinese border. In addition to this, a number of documents are signed between border regions on trade and economic, scientific and technical, and cultural cooperation.

22 September 2008 Director of the Economic Development Ministry's department for trade negotiations Maksim Medvedkov says Russia plans to reconsider trade agreements with around five countries, including the USA, which in their current form may be economically disadvantageous for Russia.

22 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov urge Western partners to conduct "honest negotiations" on the future security architecture in Europe. He says the USA and Canada should contribute to the drafting of a new agreement on European security.

22 September 2008 MFA special envoy Valery Nesterushkin says that Russia would like the neutral military and political status of Moldova to be confirmed in an additional document.

23 September 2008 The MOD denies Georgian claims that a Russian unmanned aerial vehicle has been shot down near Gori.

23 September 2008 The SR Duma faction proposes that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin consider a possibility of establishing a CIS tribunal that would try and punish those responsible for actions similar to those of the Georgian leader Mikheil Saakashvili.

23 September 2008 Abkhaz president Sergey Bagapsh confirms that two major Russian military bases will be located on the territory of the republic: one on the outskirts of Gudauta (western Abkhazia) and one in Ochamchire (in the east).

23 September 2008 C-in-C of the Russian Navy Vladimir Vysotsky says Russia will join international efforts against maritime piracy in the zone off the coast of Somalia in the near future, however it will tackle the problem on its own.

23 September 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says the Northern Fleet squadron led by the *Pyotr Veliky* will visit more than 25 states during its oceanic voyage.

23 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the format of the Russia-NATO Council is failing to live up to

expectations, and he has not ruled out a transformation of the Russian Federation's cooperation with the alliance.

23 September 2008 The head of the CSTO Nikolay Bordyuzha says Russia has no intention of cancelling the transit of non-military cargoes for the coalition troops in Afghanistan. Bordyuzha says that the CSTO is ready to cooperate with NATO in the suppression of narcotic drugs coming from Afghanistan, yet NATO rejects the cooperation offer. He says the CSTO is not a military-political bloc in opposition to NATO.

The head of the Federal Service for the Control over the Trafficking of Narcotics Viktor Ivanov says high-ranking officials in Afghanistan are involved in drug trafficking. Ivanov claims that every year, 18 tonnes of pure heroin are smuggled into Russia from Afghanistan.

23 September 2008 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Russia opposes currently having a debate on the Iranian nuclear issue at the UN as desired by the USA. He accuses the USA of having a negative attitude towards Russia. "One would very much like Washington to finally decide what exactly it wants from relations with Moscow. If they want to 'punish' Russia, it is one thing. If they agree that we have coinciding interests which should be moved forward with joint efforts, then it is another thing. But, to quote C Rice, you 'can't have both'."

23 September 2008 The MFA says that the federal law on the southern border of Russia's Arctic zone is not an attempt to revise the external border of Russia's continental shelf. It states:

This is about a new federal law. It would precisely stipulate exactly what constituent parts of the Russian Federation form the country's Arctic zone to which the measures on their social and economic development would apply and which the Russian Security Council has discussed.

This law does not refer to the issue of revising the Russian Federation's external border continental shelf, the corresponding document on which, as is known, has been considered by the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf since 2001.

23 September 2008 The MFA says Russia is fully committed to fulfilling international obligations to assist Africa. This statement follows a session of the UN General Assembly on Africa's development.

24 September 2008 Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that representatives from South Ossetia and Abkhazia must attend the UN discussion in Geneva on 15 October that deals with the issue of the status of these republics.

Federation Council Chairman Sergey Mironov admits that there were been violations of human rights on both the Georgian and the Russian side during the Russian-Georgian conflict.

Sergey Stepashin, head of the Audit Chamber of the Russian Federation, informs a coordination conference of heads of law enforcement bodies devoted to combating corruption that South Ossetia must urgently form government bodies so as to prevent wasting the funds disbursed by Russia for rebuilding the republic. Russia has allocated R10 billion for rebuilding South Ossetia.

24 September 2008 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is ready for constructive relations with the USA but only on an equal basis. Lavrov meets members of an independent two-party commission, created jointly by the Nixon Center and Harvard University's Belfer Center for the preparation of a special report for the future president of the USA on policy priorities in relation to Russia.

Lavrov also says he sees nothing new regarding South Ossetia in US President George Bush's speech at the United Nations. He welcomes the speech by French President Nicolas Sarkozy for stressing the need for a collective approach.

24 September 2008 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Russia does not see any kind of crisis around the Iranian nuclear programme and does not think it necessary to take any emergency measures. He says the IAEA is continuing work in Iran and cooperation is continuing: "We do not see crisis phenomena in these negotiation processes."

Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says the issue over the conducting of a meeting of the ministerial "group of six" on Iran's nuclear problem is in a suspended state. "There is no guarantee that the meeting will take place. We cannot agree with our partners who are calling for an emphasis on the sanction track and for the development of a new sanction resolution to begin."

24 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov has talks with Arab League Secretary-General Amr Musa in New York at the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The MFA states:

It was agreed that in the subsequent period Russia and the Arab League would continue to actively cooperate in the interests of stabilizing the situation in the Middle East and a collective search for solution to all the acute problems of the region on the basis of strict adherence by all sides to the accepted standards of international law.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko also confirms Moscow's willingness to host an international meeting on Middle East settlement in Moscow. He says the dates of a meeting of this kind would be discussed on the margins of the UNGA.

24 September 2008 Russia's permanent mission to NATO issues a statement calling on the alliance not to sabotage the work of the Russia-NATO Council. It states:

The Russia-NATO Council was set up as a mechanism of political dialogue on regular and, more importantly, urgent issues of security in the Euro-Atlantic region. By sabotaging its work, some countries are hiding their heads in the sand. We regret to see yet another show of political petulance and are calling on our partners to take matters seriously.

The Russian permanent representative to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that cooperation within the framework of NATO between military professionals on the issue of countering terrorism is at a high level while the political dialogue is lagging behind.

24 September 2008 The MFA issues a statement welcoming the fact that the Ukrainian delegation at the UN Human Rights Council, having failed to enlist almost any support, was forced to officially recall the draft resolution "Memory of

the 1932-1933 Holodomor famine in Ukraine", which it had introduced earlier.

25 September 2008 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that Russia should seek to actively influence world oil prices.

25 September 2008 Aleksandr Bastrykin says that investigative activities to collect evidence of Georgian aggression in South Ossetia have been completed and the investigation has obtained a full body of evidence to prosecute individuals who committed crimes in the republic. He says Georgia was aiming to annihilate the Ossetians living in South Ossetia as a national group.

Vladimir Putin says that economic and administrative measures should be taken to promote the integration of South Ossetia into the Russian Federation.

25 September 2008 President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela visits Moscow. He has talks with Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin. They discuss energy cooperation and naval cooperation. They also discuss atomic energy cooperation.

25 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice meet at the UNGA. They discuss Iran and North Korea.

25 September 2008 Chairman of Gazprom Aleksey Miller and Iranian Deputy Minister for Oil Reza Kasa'izadeh discuss prospects for cooperation in the energy sector in Moscow.

25 September 2008 Aleksandr Vorobyev, head of Roskosmos press service, says that Roskosmos does not see China's space programme as a rival. It sees China as a partner.

26 September 2008 A memorandum on mutual understanding is signed by the Russian and Venezuelan energy ministries in Orenburg. It provides for the creation of a Russian-Venezuelan consortium which will include Venezuela's national oil company PDVSA and five major Russian companies - Gazprom, Rosneft, TNK-BP, Surgutneftegas and Lukoil. An intergovernmental agreement draft should be ready by the end of October 2008.

26 September 2008 First Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Denisov says that Russia will not allow for new military adventures, similar to Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia, to take place.

26 September 2008 The MFA welcomes the acceptance by western members of the Group of Six of a Russian proposal to table a short and simple resolution on Iran to the UN Security Council. Russia is opposed to further sanctions against Iran.

Sergey Lavrov says that Russia does not experience the desire to punish Iran, but is rather disposed towards the continuation of negotiations. He states:

Other countries that are members of the sextet expressed concern that not holding a meeting of the sextet may send an incorrect signal to Iran, as if the sextet has collapsed and some kind of games would start around this. This is absolutely not so. Simply Russia does not experience the desire to punish someone for something...If our partners are starting to have doubts, a simple resolution should be adopted which would confirm all the former decisions and call upon Iran to comply with them...Representatives of the sextet offered to introduce a resolution of this kind and our idea was supported.

The Quartet foreign ministers meet in New York. Sergey Lavrov says he thinks it is untimely to impose new sanctions against Iran over its nuclear programme:

We indeed believed, and continue to believe, that considering now - at the level of ministers or at some other level - proposals for new sanctions against Iran is untimely. That position has not changed in any way. We are convinced that, based on the assessments in the last report of IAEA director general Mr Muhammad al-Baradi'i, it is possible and necessary to continue efforts to create conditions to begin negotiations.

26 September 2008 Chairman of the Duma defence committee Viktor Zavarzin expresses confidence about the future development of Russo-US relations:

Russian-US relations are not in a stalemate, the wind of change is still filling our sails...It is obvious that common sense is gradually beginning to replace emotions in our relations...I think pragmatism will prevail in the end...One thing is clear: solutions to problems which pose interest both to Russia and the USA, such as Iran's nuclear programme, Afghanistan, Iraq and North Korea, have good prospects.

26 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that all countries of the Middle East should be involved in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, including Iran and Syria.

26 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says:

You know, relations are not frozen. Our NATO partners are trying to suspend all the events in the format of the NATO-Russia Council, from the level of ambassadors upwards...As for transit to Afghanistan, the agreement that was signed with NATO at the summit in Bucharest in April formally remains and is still in force. But there are no possibilities to implement it because NATO has yet to reach such an agreement with other countries with which it is necessary to come to an agreement for transit to Afghanistan.

26 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is planning to hold consultations with both the CSTO and the European Union on its proposal to conclude a treaty on European security.

27 September 2008 The head of the navy's information service Capt 1st Rank Igor Dygalo says that one of the main elements that the Russian navy is planning to practice during the Stability-2008 strategic command post exercise is strategic deterrence. The exercise to ensure the Russia-Belarus Union State's security started on 22 September and will continue until 21 October in various regions of the two countries. It will include a series of various-scale drills and training sessions. The exercise is the backbone of the tactical and combat training of the Russian and Belarusian Armed Forces in 2008. The exercise is led by Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov.

27 September 2008 The MFA calls for an end to the blockade of Cuba and for a full integration of the country in the system of international relations. Sergey Lavrov met his Cuban counterpart Felipe Perez Roque in New York on 26 September, during the 63rd session of the UNGA.

28 September 2008 The UN Security Council issues a new resolution on Iran.

Russian envoy to the UN Vitaliy Churkin says:

The value of the resolution is that it has embodied the idea put forward by the Russian Federation several weeks ago. The idea was to pass a short UN Security Council resolution which in effect would give a new lease of life to the political process. We are convinced that the text of the resolution which was passed today complies with this criterion. It urges everyone, including Iran of course, to take extra efforts as part of the political and diplomatic settlement of issues related to the Iranian nuclear programme.

29 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov describes the Georgian reporting on South Ossetian events as "state propaganda of an aggressive war". He also criticizes Western media, specifically CNN, for biased reporting.

Lt-General Nikolay Uvarov, MOD official representative says the Russian peacekeeping posts in the security zones on Georgia's borders with South Ossetia and Abkhazia will be removed before 10 October. There are nine Russian peacekeeping posts in the security zone on the border with South Ossetia and eight on the border with Abkhazia. Uvarov also says that EU military observers are capable of assuming peacekeeping duties in buffer zones in Georgian territory on the border with Abkhazia and South Ossetia before 10 October. The replacement of the Russian peacekeeping contingent should begin on 1 October and be completed on 10 October.

29 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov criticizes NATO for its refusal to cooperate with the CSTO in fighting drugs trafficking from Afghanistan. He also criticizes the USA on missile defence in Eastern Europe.

29 September 2008 Rosatom head Sergey Kiriyyenko says Russia and the United States have synchronized their programmes and agreed to continue cooperation where nothing has changed. He meets US Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman at the IAEA General Conference in Vienna. Kiriyyenko says Russia is ready to contribute \$10 million to the IAEA cooperation fund.

29 September 2008 Former Chief of the General Staff General Yury Baluyevsky is interviewed in *Versiya*. He says US missile defence is aimed at Russia. "It is because of us, to control our Armed Forces and - this possibility cannot be ruled out - to prepare a strike on our country. It may yet be theoretical, they may keep it quiet for the time being, but it is a fact: it is our country that the USA regards as a potential enemy."

29 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is ready to extend the UN mandate of the Multinational Forces in Iraq.

29 September 2008 South Korean President Lee Myung-bak has talks in Moscow with the Russian leadership. He says South Korea and Russia are concerned with the fact that North Korea has suspended the deactivation of its nuclear facilities.

29 September 2008 The MFA issues a statement saying that it is unacceptable that Moscow should politicize the deployment of the Russian BSF in Crimea. Consultations between the Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministries regarding the deployment of the BSF in Ukraine were held in Kiev last week.

29 September 2008 Chairman of the CEC Vladimir Churov says the election process in Belarus is democratic.

29 September 2008 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov visits India. He says Russia and India are extending the term of the military and technical cooperation programme for another 10 years.

30 September 2008 Lt-Col Vitaly Manushko, chief of the temporary press centre of the Russian peacekeeping force in the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict zone says there needs to be a memorandum to define the work of the EU observers in the zone.

Sergey Lavrov says that Russia has prepared a number of initiatives for the UN conference in Geneva that opens on 15 October on how to ensure the demilitarization of Georgia. Russia has also drawn up draft new agreements between Georgia and Abkhazia and between Georgia and South Ossetia and presented them for the consideration of its UN partners.

30 September 2008 Sergey Lavrov says Russia has still not received the proposals promised by the USA on increasing measures of confidence for ABM cooperation.

30 September 2008 The MFA states that it favours extending the 1997 Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine for the next ten years.

30 September 2008 The MFA issues a statement on the Belarusian parliamentary election of 28 September. It rejects OSCE criticisms of the election.

Want to Know More ...?

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this paper are entirely and solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect official thinking and policy either of Her Majesty's Government or of the Ministry of Defence.

ISBN 978-1-905962-58-7

Published By:

Defence Academy of the
United Kingdom

Advanced Research and Assessment Group

Defence Academy of the UK
Block D, JSCSC
Shrivenham
SN6 8TS
England

Telephone: (44) 1793 788856

Fax: (44) 1793 788841

Email: arag@da.mod.uk

<http://www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/arag>

ISBN 978-1-905962-58-7