In the Absence of Field Missions: The OSCE's Engagement with Georgia's Conflicts

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Abstract

Since the OSCE Mission to Georgia closed its seventeen-year field operations in 2009, questions have remained about the OSCE's engagement with Georgia and the prospects of it playing a meaningful role in the conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. In 2009, the OSCE was forced to terminate its field operations due to Russia's refusal to renew the Mission's mandate following the August 2008 Russian–Georgian war. Since then, the OSCE's involvement in Georgia's conflicts has continued mainly through the Geneva International Discussions and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism. This paper examines the OSCE's engagement in Georgia, with a particular focus on its "engagement without presence" in Georgia's conflicts. It considers the prospects for a future relationship between Georgia and the OSCE and the role the OSCE can still play in these conflicts.

Keywords

OSCE, Georgia, Geneva International Discussions, confidence-building measures

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Introduction[1]

At the end of the 1990s, it was widely believed in Georgia that no organization could be more involved in the resolution of the country's conflicts than the OSCE.[2] Since 30 June 2009, however, when the OSCE's seventeen-year monitoring operations ended in Georgia, questions have remained concerning the future of the OSCE–Georgia relationship and the role the OSCE can play in the conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia.[3]

The mandate of the OSCE Mission to Georgia came to a close at the end of December 2008, although the Mission had effectively already lost access to the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia following the August war between Russia and Georgia. Before the war, the OSCE had eight Military Monitoring Officers in the field, five of whom were based in the city of Tskhinvali. In the aftermath of the

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war, twenty additional officers were deployed to Georgia (under a separate mandate).[4] However, they were only allowed to monitor the surrounding areas and were not permitted in the conflict zone by the de facto authorities in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. Their mandate was extended in February 2009, and they remained in Georgia until 30 June, alongside several other Mission staff members.[5] The decision to end the OSCE Mission in Georgia came when Moscow refused to renew its mandate amidst failed attempts to reach an agreement on the status-neutral mandate that would have accommodated the Kremlin's demands. After recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia at the end of August 2008, Russia insisted on having two separate missions in Tbilisi and Tskhinvali. This was unacceptable to Georgia, which feared that such a move would lend legitimacy and de facto recognition to those who controlled the territory that it now considered to be occupied by Russia.[6]

Since then, the OSCE's involvement in Georgia's conflicts has continued through various means, but mainly through the Geneva International Discussions (GID), which it has co-chaired since its inception in October 2008, and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) in Ergneti. The OSCE's continued commitment to conflict resolution efforts in Georgia was reaffirmed by the Chairperson-in-Office (CiO), Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Anne Linde, during her visit to Tbilisi in February 2021. According to Linde, conflict resolution efforts in the OSCE region remained a priority for the CiO, and the OSCE was actively engaged in bringing Georgia's conflicts "closer to resolution" through the GID and the IPRM, as well as "through projects in all three dimensions of security".[7] Given the relatively few opportunities to engage in Georgia's protracted conflicts (beyond the GID and the IPRM), however, questions have been raised about what role the OSCE can still play in their resolution.[8]

In this paper, I examine the OSCE's engagement in Georgia in the absence of a field operation and consider the prospects for "engagement without presence". I focus mainly on the relationship between the OSCE and Georgia in the context of the conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. This is not to say that the OSCE's engagement has been exclusively focused on conflict. Traditionally, it has gone well beyond the monitoring missions. The OSCE Secretariat in Vienna and various OSCE institutions, such as the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, have maintained active engagement in and with Georgia. Directly and indirectly, the OSCE has maintained its "presence" in Georgia, including via a number of confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the second and third dimensions.

This paper is supported by interviews with former and current political and diplomatic representatives in Tbilisi and Vienna.[9] It begins by briefly outlining the

history of the relationship between the OSCE and Georgia before turning its attention to the state of affairs following the 2008 war, with a particular focus on the OSCE's role and involvement in the GID. The paper presents the main constraints that the OSCE faces in relation to Georgia and Georgia's expectations of the OSCE. It concludes with recommendations on how both Georgia and the OSCE could play a more active role in Georgia's conflicts.

The OSCE in Georgia

On 24 March 1992, Georgia was admitted into the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The mandate of the initial CSCE Rapporteur Mission to Georgia was to "report to the participating States on progress in the Republic of Georgia toward full implementation of CSCE commitments and provide assistance toward that objective".[10] Given the rapidly deteriorating situation in the country, however, a decision was taken in November 1992 to establish what would become a seventeen-year mission in Georgia. The aim of the Mission was "to promote negotiations between the conflicting parties in Georgia which are aimed at reaching a peaceful political settlement".[11] Even though the Mission's mandate covered both Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, in practice the OSCE mainly concentrated on the latter conflict, while Abkhazia was largely left to the United Nations (UN). The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) was established in August 1993, and its activities largely centred on Abkhazia.[12] The OSCE had a human rights officer seconded to UNOMIG; therefore, one OSCE staff member was present as part of the international efforts in the territory.

This "division of labour" between international organizations remains a contentious issue in Georgia. Levan Mikeladze, Georgia's Ambassador to Austria and its representative in the OSCE (1996–2002), expressed his dismay at this in the late 1990s, asserting that "in many cases this is the main reason for negligence, ineffectiveness, and inactivity, while one organization is waiting for the other to act."[13] This issue was never addressed and remains a feature of the GID and the IPRM.

The GID was set up in the aftermath of the Russian–Georgian war and was initially tasked with overseeing the implementation of the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement between Georgia and Russia. It remains the only discussion platform to bring to the table all sides of the conflict – Georgia and Russia, as well as Sokhumi/Sukhum and Tskhinvali. Held quarterly, the GID also involves the United States as a participant and is co-chaired by the European Union (EU), the UN, and the OSCE.[14]

The IPRM, a spin-off of the GID, was established in February 2009. Within this mechanism, regular (usually monthly) meetings were held in Abkhazia (Gali),[15] and as of 2021 they continue to be held regularly in Ergneti, focusing on the South Ossetian context and including the participation of Russia. In the meetings, the security actors discuss everyday issues

of conflict affecting people's lives, and their main goal is rapid response on specific incidents.[16] The meetings have been co-facilitated by the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) (created in the aftermath of the 2008 war), the OSCE, and the UN.

The delimitation of boundaries between these international bodies manifests itself at these meetings as well. For instance, the meetings in Gali were chaired by the UN, with the participation of the EUMM, while in Ergneti they are co-facilitated by the EUMM and the OSCE.[17] Although the lack of progress in settling these conflicts cannot be attributed to this distribution of responsibilities, many in Georgia have the impression that this informal division of labour (in "spheres of influence", as one respondent put it) has not always been positive and could be more efficient – sometimes leading to competition among the Co-Chairs[18] and potentially distracting from the conflicts and issues at hand.

The OSCE and the Geneva International Discussions

Signs of discontent on Georgia's part regarding the OSCE's role in the conflicts were already apparent in the 1990s, but it was the August 2008 war and the Russian objection that proved a major setback, ultimately bringing an end to the OSCE Mission in Georgia.[19] Questions about the OSCE's failure to avert the escalation of the situation in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia resurfaced, despite the intensification of its mediation efforts in the run-up to the August 2008 war.[20] Russia was particularly critical of the OSCE, accusing the Finnish Chairpersonship of conducting weak negotiations and the OSCE Mission in Georgia of providing slow or inadequate information to participating States in Vienna. This was also reflected in the OSCE's involvement in the ceasefire negotiations, as "[t]he Russian side preferred to negotiate with the EU rather than the OSCE" and the leadership role in these negotiations was seized by the EU presidency held by France.[21]

By the time of the first GID meeting in October 2008, the Co-Chairs faced "new realities" on the ground, as Russia had recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states and the parties "had already 'internalised the impossibility of full implementation' of the ceasefire agreement".[22] At the GID, the situation was further complicated by unclarity regarding which conflict was being mediated. For Georgia, the 2008 conflict was between the two countries – Georgia and Russia. For Russia and the two territories, however, this has been a conflict between Georgia on the one hand and Abkhazia and South Ossetia on the other, in which Russia has acted as a facilitator. Consequently, the approach taken by the international organizations involved has been marked by this lack of clarity. The EU tends to "gravitate […] towards primarily mediating the Georgia–Russia conflict, while the UN and OSCE are more engaged in Georgia–Abkhazia and Georgia–South Ossetia dynamics respectively".[23] From Georgia's perspective, this perceived unclarity has weakened the Co-Chairs' standing as mediators.[24]

After fifty-four rounds of the GID as of October 2021, the mood in Tbilisi seemed rather bleak. Nonetheless, many in Georgia appreciate the necessity of such a platform. As a former Georgian government official put it:

> You have to have it [the GID]; it needs to exist, but there will never be any breakthrough in Geneva if Moscow does not change its political stance. So, you have to continue and maintain this international format because you will have nothing better if you lose it. However, you should not have any illusions about what can be achieved through it.[25]

This raises the important issue of managing expectations. Each side must be realistic about what it can achieve within the framework of the existing dialogue formats and adjust its goals accordingly.[26] In the case of Georgia, Tbilisi must be realistic about its expectations of the OSCE. The OSCE has a more successful track record in conflict management than in conflict resolution.[27] Therefore, Georgia ought to keep any expectations concerning conflict resolution relatively low.

The OSCE and Georgia's conflicts: "Mission impossible"?

The history of the OSCE's engagement in Georgia and its standing in the GID may not support much optimism regarding the Organization's ability to resolve Georgia's protracted conflicts.[28] In the absence of a field mission, it has become even more difficult for the OSCE to do anything "important and fundamental", which would require a presence on the ground.[29]

Beyond the GID and the IPRM, the OSCE's main involvement in Georgia is through the activities of the Secretariat and its Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), the HCNM and ODIHR. Various projects and activities on issues such as youth dialogue, environmental cooperation, missing persons, and water sharing were always meant to support the GID and the IPRM. While these contributions to CBMs are undeniable, the OSCE Secretariat's involvement in such projects has diminished over time. Prior to the 2008 war, the OSCE was one of the main players (if not the only player) in various CBMs on both sides of the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. In 2021, however, direct engagement of this sort by international organizations in non-controlled Georgian territory was lacking, and some dialogue initiatives were being administered by the United Nations Development Programme. Although the OSCE would be "much better suited to such activities given its organizational experience and expertise",[30] the dependence of the OSCE's actions on Russia has made more extensive involvement unlikely.[31] As a former government official in Georgia observed: "if I had to choose whether to spend resources on deepening the relationship with the EU or the OSCE, for instance, of course I would choose the former because at the end of the day you can try a lot with the OSCE, but ultimately so much still depends on Russia there."[32]

From the OSCE's perspective, some of the restrictions that successive Geor-

gian governments have placed on international organizations out of fear of "creeping recognition" of secessionist entities have further hindered attempts to find long-term solutions. For instance, questions regarding the status of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia have been excluded from all discussion formats. Notably, if one of the Co-Chairs were to attempt to "discuss such issues in Geneva, they would be declared persona non grata the next day".[33] Discussions concerning the status of these territories have thus become particularly dogmatic in Georgia. As a former Georgian civil servant pointed out, "we seem to be more concerned with form than with content."[34] In this regard, Georgian politics on this topic lack a clear direction,[35] and there is uncertainty about what the OSCE has to offer.[36] As some in Georgia acknowledge, these issues must be addressed "before we start thinking about the OSCE's greater involvement".[37]

This lack of progress has been frustrating and has led to lethargy concerning many of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE region.[38] Moreover, maintaining the status quo has become desirable to all parties involved.[39] As Jaba Devdariani notes:

> from the outside, from the international mediation perspective, the chances of escalating the conflicts in Georgia are rather low, but at the same time resolving these conflicts is impossible in the near future. Therefore, no one is rushing and trying to invest any political capital in these conflicts. So, while we are in this latent phase, no one is going to be interested in this.[40]

Philip Remler has dubbed this phenomenon "protracted conflict syndrome": a condition where all parties to the conflict (and in some cases conflict mediators) have accepted that the "conflict will not be resolved for the foreseeable future" and "have adapted to that expectation".[41] Some also think that there is little appetite among participating States of the OSCE "to take a more active role in Georgia's conflicts, whether that would be with a field mission or without it".[42] On the other hand, conversations with OSCE officials reveal that the Organization is trying to do its best while navigating complex sets of constraints emanating from its institutional structure and consensus principle.[43]

Conclusions and recommendations

Despite its limitations, the OSCE has the necessary tools "for addressing many of the current challenges" in the region.[44] Below, I outline steps that could be taken (both by Georgia and by the OSCE) to make the most of them and to overcome lethargy regarding Georgia's protracted conflicts:

- **The Georgian government to set more realistic goals.** If Georgia wants international actors to engage more actively in its conflicts, it must first overcome "protracted conflict syndrome" and set itself a clearer agenda with more realistic goals. In other words, it must better articulate

"what it wants, where it needs help the most, and what it can offer".[45] As long as Georgia is comfortable with the status quo and lacks a longer-term strategy (beyond the removal of Russian troops stationed in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia), it cannot expect the international community to play a more active role in these conflicts.

- **Georgia to take more responsibility and initiative.** More than a decade has passed since the active phase of the conflict, but much of the infrastructure around the administrative boundary lines (ABLs) still needs rebuilding. Some areas have been rehabilitated with the help of international funding (including through the OSCE) and with Georgian taxpayers' money, but Georgia must take greater responsibility for devising a clear plan and a longer-term strategy.
- **Revisit the question of re-opening an OSCE presence in Georgia in a status-neutral format**. Re-opening a mission in Georgia may seem unrealistic, given that neither Georgia nor Russia has changed its position on the issue. Nonetheless, one option is to re-establish an OSCE presence in a different, status-neutral format. The UN's "roaming presence" could serve as an example in this regard.
- **Support wider regional initiatives and discussions.** Georgia's "Peaceful Neighbourhood Initiative" and other region-focused discussions could open up new regional possibilities.[46] Such discussions would allow for an OSCE presence – such as an office or locally recruited project staff, as a start – to support projects and regional initiatives that do not directly focus on the conflict context(s). In addition, Tbilisi should take a more pragmatic approach to the OSCE's wide portfolio in the area of comprehensive security. Of course, Russia's involvement remains an issue. Given that Russia's consent is needed to re-establish any field presence, whether as an activity under the OSCE Unified Budget or through extra-budgetary projects, stronger leadership from the OSCE could potentially convince Russia that an OSCE presence in the region is in its interest.[47]
- **Extend the timeframe of the OSCE Co-Chairs in the GID.** OSCE Co-Chairs of the Geneva format rotate formally every year, in contrast to the EU and the UN Co-Chairs, who usually remain in their posts for several years. This significantly limits what they can achieve. The practice of some Chairs having Special Representatives for two years should become the rule, and longer-lasting mandates should be envisaged.[48]
- **Strengthen institutional support.** Greater OSCE involvement in the region would require greater support from the Organization. This relates first and foremost to funding and political support from its participating States. For the annually changing Chairpersonships, this also implies an understanding of continuity and the earmarking of sufficient funds for their Special Representatives, for both projects and staff. Moreover,

to promote linkage with the Secretariat, acting as institutional memory for each Special Representative, a stronger "one-OSCE-team" approach could further consolidate engagement with the GID and the related process. For instance, one member of the Secretariat could be Deputy of the Special Representative, just as a CPC member is co-moderator in Working Group II in Geneva.

- **Increase investment in CBMs across the ABLs in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia.** CBMs remain powerful tools that governments and regional and international actors can use when "faced with difficult choices over whether and how to engage with unrecognized entities".[49] Although there are limits to what they can achieve at the state level, the spill-over effects of CBMs and their impact on local communities are undeniable.[50]
- **Make resources available.** The individual participating States of the OSCE should make funds and other resources available to the CiO, the Secretariat, and the CPC in order to engage in further CBMs in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. This should continue to take the form of extra-budgetary, individual initiatives from OSCE participating States as long as there is a Russian veto in the Permanent Council on a full-fledged presence. This must also be carried out with the participation of the Secretariat.
- **Increase synergy among international mediators**. Whether perceived or real, competition among international actors can only harm conflict resolution efforts. Better coordination and making the most of different areas of expertise would benefit conflict resolution efforts.

Notes

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2 Levan Mikeladze, "Georgia and the OSCE", in: IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 1999, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000, 93-104, p. 97.

3 The Tskhinvali region is the name used by Georgia to refer to the territory of what was formerly known as the Autonomous *Oblast* of South Ossetia. Given the sensitivity of this issue, I use the term "Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia" throughout.

4 Before the war, the overall number of OSCE staff members in Georgia was 183 (46 international and 137 local staff). See: OSCE, Survey of OSCE Field Operations, SEC.GAL/118/21, 13 September 2021, p. 54, https://www.osce.org/secretariat/74783

5 Ibid.

6 Vladimir Socor, "OSCE RIP in Georgia", in: Eurasia Daily Monitor, 6 (126), The Jamestown Foundation, 1 July 2009, https://jamestown.org/program/osce-rip

-in-georgia/; Silvia Stöber, "The Failure of the OSCE Mission to Georgia – What Remains?", in: IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2010, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2011, 203-220.

7 OSCE, "OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Linde concludes visit to Georgia, reaffirming OSCE's strong support", 17 February 2021, https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/478738

8 Interviews with current and former government officials in Georgia, Tbilisi, September–October 2021.

9 The interviews were conducted online in 2021. Information on some of the respondents has been left intentionally vague in order to protect their anonymity.

10 Tedo Japaridze, cited in CSCE, First Additional Meeting of the Council, Helsinki Additional Meeting of the CSCE Council, 24 March 1992, p. 17, https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/9/29121.pdf

11 OSCE, cited above (Note 4), p. 49.

12 UNSC, Resolution 858 (1993) Adopted by the Security Council at its 3268th Meeting, on 24 August 1993, S/RES/858(1993), 24 August 1993, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/171724?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header; UNOMIG operations in Georgia also ended in 2009 after Russia vetoed the further extension of its mandate. See UNOMIG, "Georgia – UNOMIG – Background", United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unomig/background.html

13 Mikeladze, cited above (Note 2), p. 98.

14 Teona Giuashvili/Jaba Devdariani, "Geneva International Discussions – Negotiating the Possible", in: Security and Human Rights 3-4/2016, 381-402, p. 382.

15 The Gali IPRM saw lengthy suspensions between 2012 and 2016 and has not met since 2018. See Civil Georgia, "IPRM meeting suspended over 'Otkhozoria-Tatunashvili list'", 27 June 2018, https://civil.ge/archives/245157

16 Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, "Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM)" (n. d.), https://smr.gov.ge/en/page/27/incident-prevention-and-response-mechanism

17 EUMM, "The 54th IPRM meeting takes place in Gali", European Union External Action, 21 March 2018, https://eumm.eu/en/press_and_public_information/press_releases/6249/; OSCE, "103rd Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting takes place in Ergneti", 18 November 2021, https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/504685

18 Online interview with a government official in Georgia, 9 October 2021.

19 Stöber, cited above (Note 6), p. 203.

20 Ibid, p. 215.

21 Ibid, pp. 217-218.

22 Giuashvili/Devdariani, cited above (Note 14), p. 385.

23 Ibid., p. 387.

24 Ibid.

25 Online interview with Sergi Kapanadze, former Vice-Speaker of the Parliament (2016–2020) and Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia (2011–2012), 29 September 2021.

26 Stefan Wolff, "Conflict-solving mechanisms and negotiation formats for post-Soviet protracted conflicts: A comparative perspective", Stockholm Centre for Eastern European Studies, November 2021, pp. 17-18, https://www.ui.se/globalassets/evenemang/bilder-till-programmen/sceeus/conflict-solving-mechanisms-and-negotiation-formats-for-post-soviet-protracted-conflicts-a-comparative-perspective-sceeus-hrs-no-5.pdf

27 Online interview with an OSCE diplomat, 17 November 2021.

28 In fact, as one diplomat at the OSCE put it, there was a danger of the OSCE "becoming the icebox for Russia's frozen conflicts" (Ibid.).

29 Interview with Sergi Kapanadze, cited above (Note 25).

30 Online interview with Jaba Devdariani, former Head of the Department of International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia (2012–2013), 14 October 2021.

31 While Moscow's influence on the situation is undeniable, it should be noted that in some instances Russia has worked in favour of the OSCE, giving it "a clear comparative advantage over other players". In certain cases, the OSCE was able to cross into non-Georgian-controlled territory to observe the situation because Russia is a participating State. The same cannot be said for the EUMM. Moreover, one could argue that the UN is more restricted in its actions given Russia's position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Online interview with an OSCE official, 12 November 2021.

32 Interview with a former government official in Georgia, Tbilisi, September 2021.

33 Günther Baechler, "Using the Status Quo as an Opportunity: OSCE Conflict Management Exemplified by the South Caucasus", in: IFSH (ed.), OSCE Yearbook 2019, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2020, 139-150, pp. 144-145.

34 Online interview with a former Georgian civil servant, October 2021.

35 Ibid.

36 Online interview with an OSCE official, 12 November 2021.

37 Interview with a former Georgian civil servant, cited above (Note 34).

38 See Vladimir Socor, "Will the EU Shake off Its Lethargy Over the Protracted Conflicts in the Black Sea Region? (Part Five)", Eurasia Daily Monitor, 18 (127), The Jamestown Foundation, 10 August 2021, https://jamestown.org/program/will-the-eu-shake-off-its-lethargy-over-the-protracted-conflicts-in-the-black-sea-region-part-five/

39 Baechler, cited above (Note 33), p. 146.

40 Interview with Jaba Devdariani, cited above (Note 30).

41 Philip Remler et al., "Protracted conflicts in the OSCE area: Innovative approaches for co-operation in the conflict zones", OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, December 2016, p. 12, http://osce-network.net/file-OSCE-Network/documents/Protracted_Conflicts_OSCE_WEB.pdf

42 Interview with a former Georgian civil servant, cited above (Note 34).

43 Online interview with OSCE official, cited above (Note 36).

44 Interview with Jaba Devdariani, cited above (Note 30).

45 Ibid.

46 In June 2021, the prime minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili, announced the decision to set up a commission to "develop and implement Georgia's State Strategy on De-Occupation and Peaceful Conflict-Resolution". In September 2021, he also announced the launch of the "Peaceful Neighbourhood Initiative" to "facilitate" and "implement" dialogue and confidence building in the wider South Caucasus region. See Georgian Journal, "PM establishes government commission to develop and implement Georgia's State Strategy on De-Occupation and Peaceful Conflict-Resolution", 22 June 2021, https://georgianjournal.ge/politics/37158-pm-establishes-government-commission-to-develop-and-implement-georgias-state-strategy-on-de-occupation-and-peaceful-conflict-resolution.html; Commonspace EU, "Georgia launches 'Peaceful Neighbourhood Initiative' but gives few details", 25 September 2021, https://www.commonspace.eu/index.php

/news/georgia-launches-peaceful-neighbourhood-initiative-gives-little-details

47 I am grateful to one of the reviewers for raising this point.

48 For more on the advantages of a longer timeframe for Special Representatives, see also Wolff, cited above (Note 26), p. 16.

49 Nino Kemoklidze/Stefan Wolff, "Trade as a Confidence-Building Measure in Protracted Conflicts: The Cases of Georgia and Moldova Compared", Eurasian Geography and Economics 3/2020, 305-332, p. 310.

50 Ibid.