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IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC.
a non profit 501 (c)(3) corporation, founded in 1932

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April 19, 2008

Statement by the Georgian Association In USA, Inc to Russian Decision of April 16th

Reacting to western recognition of Kosovo's declaration of independence, President Putin issued a decree on April 16th which opens direct trade, transportation, and political relations with the secessionist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This action is the latest in a long-standing campaign by the Russian Federation to - in effect - annex the separatist territories of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region also known as South Ossetia. By recognizing the de facto Abkhazian government's legal authority, Russia is condoning the brutal and immoral action of ethnic cleansing of 250,000 Georgians from Abkhazia in 1993.

In its attempt to integrate Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region into the Russian Federation, the Putin administration has implemented the following: direct military support for the separatist authorities; wide extension of citizenship to residents of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region without consultation with the Georgian government; the implementation of an economic embargo on Georgia and a discriminatory visa regime against Georgian citizens but excluding the two separatist territories. Illegal violations of Georgian air space occur on a regular basis including bombings of Georgian territory. De facto, direct rule by Russia has been imposed in Tskhinvali region through the appointment of Russian officials to senior executive posts.

All attempts by the Georgia government to restore the peace process through offers of maximal autonomy to both separatist regions including guaranteed representation in central executive and legislative bodies, free-trade zones, a federal structure for Georgia including the right of veto on all decisions concerning civil rights of Abkhazian and Ossetian citizens of Georgia, have been publicly rejected by the Russian Federation. Russia refuses to consider any change in the failed "peace-keeping" regimes in both territories.

International reaction to this violation of international law and the latest Russian threats to Georgian territorial sovereignty must be firm.

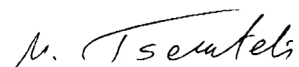
Reacting to President Putin's decree, Senator John McCain warned that "Russia is furthering its policy of de facto annexation that undermines security and stability in the region. Unfortunately, Russia's leaders have chosen a course of confrontation rather than cooperation." "Georgia is a small democratic state in a turbulent region. It must not be allowed to be undermined," said presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. She further added: "I also call on President Bush to immediately send a senior representative to Tbilisi to show our support for the government of Georgia. The United States should raise this matter in the United Nations Security Council, in a special 26+1 session of NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC), and in the NATO-Russia Council. Russia needs to hear a unified message from the United States and our European partners about our shared commitment to Georgia's security and territorial integrity."

Concerned members of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly warned that "this destabilizing decision undermines the internationally recognized sovereignty of Georgia."

We call on President of United States to instruct the US Department of State and the US diplomatic corps to no longer accept Russia's mediating role in the affairs related to conflicts in Georgia. By its recent decision, Russia recognized its own role as a participant in the conflict, rather than as an impartial mediator. The Georgian Association urges the international community as a whole to take a firm stand against this latest unilateral action by Russia and to put strong pressure on the Russian government to reverse its decision. This action is a threat to Georgia, to stability in the Caucasus, and to international law.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Mamuka Tsereteli
President



Stephen Jones
Secretary

