

COMMUNIQUE on the second round of negotiations between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides in Geneva

The second round of negotiations on a comprehensive settlement to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict took place on 11-13 January 1994 in Geneva under the aegis of the United Nations with the facilitation of Russia and with the participation of a representative of the OSCE and a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The negotiations were held in accordance with Security Council resolutions 849 of 9 July 1993, 854 of 6 August 1993, 858 of 24 August 1993, 876 of 19 October 1993, 881 of 4 November 1993 and 892 of 22 December 1993.

It was noted that the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding of 1 December 1993 are, for the most part, being implemented.

An exchange of prisoners has taken place on the principle of "all for all".

Representatives of UNHCR have undertaken a first preparatory visit with a view to examine the feasibility of voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons to their places of permanent residence.

There had been an increase in the number of international observers in the conflict zone.

On 15-16 December 1993 in Moscow a meeting took place of the group of experts consisting of representatives of the parties to the conflict, the United Nations, the Russian Federation and an observer of the OSCE to prepare recommendations on the political status of Abkhazia.

At the same time it was noted that hostilities took place in individual areas of the zone of conflict carried out by uncontrolled armed groups, as a result of which part of the population experienced new privations.

Work to find the missing and dead had not yet begun.

During the course of the second round of negotiations in Geneva the Parties emphasized the need to continue efforts for the early achievement of a comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

(1) The Parties reaffirmed their commitment not to use force or the threat of force against each other.

(2) The Parties agreed that the establishment of favourable conditions for further progress towards a political settlement and the practical implementation of agreements will be promoted by the deployment of a full-scale peacekeeping operation in Abkhazia. They have appealed to the UN Security Council at its forthcoming consideration of the activities of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIC) for an appropriate expansion of its mandate, *inter alia*, to entrust it with control of the non-resumption of hostilities in the zone of conflict. The Parties continued to favour the deployment in the conflict zone of UN peacekeeping forces or other forces authorized by the United Nations. They expressed their mutual consent to the use of a Russian military contingent as part of such forces.

Within five days after deployment in the zone of conflict, in accordance with a decision of the UN Security Council, of an additional number of international observers and following the arrival of peacekeeping forces the Parties shall carry out the withdrawal of all armed units, with their weapons and military equipment, from the Inguri River and other possible lines of active confrontation in the conflict zone to a distance to be determined by the officers commanding the peacekeeping forces and UNOMIC, with the agreement of the parties. Simultaneously, international observers and peacekeeping forces will enter the areas thus formed.

There shall be complete disarmament and withdrawal of all kinds of volunteer units and individuals participating the conflict. Inspections by international observers are permitted at crossing points on the Psou River.

The Parties appeal to the Security Council for an intensification of the international civilian presence in the conflict zone and for this purpose it would be necessary to deploy appropriate civilian experts who will assist in resolving the problems of refugees and other humanitarian issues.

(3) In the view of the Parties a resolution of the problems of a settlement would be promoted by the establishment of a special voluntary fund under the aegis of the United Nations.

(4) The Parties will continue to work out a Quadripartite Agreement on the voluntary return and repatriation to Abkhazia of refugees and displaced persons.

The Parties have agreed to establish a special commission on refugees consisting of the Parties, the UN and the Russian Federation which will begin work on 25 January 1994.

The Parties agreed to begin on 10 February 1994 the implementation of the phased process of the return of refugees and displaced persons to Abkhazia, and as a first step to the Gali region. The Parties will take necessary measures to ensure the safety of refugees, displaced persons and personnel involved in this operation. The Abkhaz side has the primary responsibility for the reception and security of the refugees and also of the above-mentioned personnel. Moreover, to render them assistance in creating a safe environment conducive to the return of refugees and displaced persons.

The Parties are counting on effective assistance from UNHCR and, *inter alia*, on the commencement as soon as possible of operations in the zone of conflict by an interim division of UNHCR.

(5) The Parties recognize that the primary objective is a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict and that all efforts are contributions to its achievement. They agreed to continue discussions of the problem of the political status of Abkhazia taking into account mutual interests. The next meeting of experts on this issue will take place in Moscow beginning on 8 February 1994. Their report will be considered at the next meeting of the parties and will be sent to the UN and the OSCE.

The UN, The OSCE and the Russian Federation call upon the parties to proceed from the need to observe the territorial integrity of Georgia and fully to ensure the interests of the entire multinational population of Abkhazia, this being the fundamental principles of a comprehensive settlement.

(6) The Parties expressed their interest in the establishment no later than 15 February of an international commission to assist in economic recovery in Abkhazia with the participation of international and national organizations. Among its highest priorities must be the restoration of vital facilities, transport, communications, airports, bridges and tunnels.

(7) The Parties to the negotiations agreed to hold their next meeting on 22 February 1994 in Moscow or Geneva.

For the Georgian side **J. Ioseliani**

For the Abkhaz side **S. Jinjolia**

In the presence of:

From the UN **E. Brunner**

From the Russian Federation **B. Pastukhov**

From the OSCE **V. Manno**

13 January 1994