4. Stresses that the resolution of the Transnistrian issue constitutes a crucial element for promoting political stability and economic prosperity in the Republic of Moldova and in the whole region; stresses the need for a peaceful solution to the conflict, in line with the UN Charter and Conventions and OSCE declarations and with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders;

5. Calls on all parties to the conflict to refrain from any measures that would lead to a further escalation of the situation and to return immediately to the negotiating table in the 5+2 format and work towards a speedy and transparent solution of the conflict;

6. Calls on the Council, the Member States and the Commission to continue to give their fullest support to a political and peaceful solution of the regional conflicts in the neighbourhood which the EU shares with the Russian Federation, and urges them to discuss these matters at their next meetings with the President and government of the Russian Federation;

7. Calls on the government of Moldova to undertake confidence-building measures and put forward new proposals for the inhabitants of Transnistria, providing positive incentives in order for them fully to support a peaceful reunification of the state, with minority language rights and local autonomy being safeguarded;

8. Condemns the continued repression, harassment and intimidation of representatives of the independent media, NGOs and civil society by the self-proclaimed Transnistrian authorities;

9. Regrets the lack of significant progress in the EU talks on visa facilitation and a readmission agreement with Moldova; calls on the Council and the Commission to speed up the procedure leading to the conclusion of a visa facilitation agreement with Moldova and to ensure its implementation; considers it unfair and discriminatory that Transnistrian citizens holding Russian passports are benefiting from the possibility of travelling to the EU more easily than Moldovans, which is contributing to increased tensions over the Transnistrian region and acting as a disincentive to settlement of the dispute;

10. Expresses its satisfaction with Ukraine's decision of March 2006 to impose new customs regulations on its border with Transnistria, in line with international law;

11. Welcomes the good results achieved by the EUBAM on the border between Moldova and Ukraine, which was established in March 2005 and is playing an important role in fighting corruption, illegal trade and trafficking by improving transparency and building up appropriate operational and institutional capacities in Moldova to ensure effective border control, thus contributing to the eventual settlement of the Transnistrian conflict;

12. Expresses its strong and continuing support for the efforts of the Moldovan people to establish a fully functioning democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, which are essential for ensuring the progress of reforms;

13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the government and parliament of Moldova, the government of Romania, the government of Ukraine, the government of the Russian Federation, the US government, the Secretary-General of the OSCE and the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

P6_TA(2006)0456

South Ossetia

European Parliament resolution on the situation in South Ossetia

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its previous resolutions on Georgia, in particular that of 14 October 2004 (1),
— having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2006 on the European Neighbourhood Policy (2),

having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 26 February 2004 on EU policy towards the South Caucasus (1) and to its resolution of 26 May 2005 on EU-Russia relations (2),

— having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 July 1999,

— having regard to the Presidency declaration of 20 July 2006 on recent developments in Georgia — Abkhazia and South Ossetia,

— having regard to the conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council meeting of 16-17 October 2006,

— having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the situation in South Ossetia is deteriorating, with incidents, shootouts and clashes between Georgian and Ossetian forces and police units in recent months causing deaths and injuries,

B. whereas the Government and Parliament of Georgia have questioned the existing format of the negotiating process, the composition of the peacekeeping forces and the mechanisms of the peacekeeping operations stemming from the ceasefire agreement of 1992,

C. whereas the two sides have put forward two separate peace plans which contain many common elements that could and should be used as a basis for fruitful negotiations; whereas the Joint Control Commission (JCC) has lately proved incapable of producing significant results,

D. whereas the Russian Federation, by issuing passports to the residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, is complicating the process of peaceful conflict resolution in the conflict zones in Georgia,

E. whereas South Ossetia decided to hold a referendum on self-determination together with the presidential election on 12 November 2006,

F. whereas Georgia has moved to the stage of 'Intensified Dialogue' with NATO with a view to becoming a full member of that organisation,

G. deeply worried at the diplomatic crisis between Georgia and Russia following the recent arrests of four officers from Russia's military intelligence service by the Georgian counterintelligence services on allegations of espionage and the subsequent recall of the Russian ambassador to Moscow for consultations,

H. whereas on 2 October 2006 the Russian authorities interrupted all land, air and sea links with Georgia, including mail communications, although the four officers had been released to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and are now back in Russia,

I. whereas a number of seriously discriminatory measures have been taken by the Russian authorities against Georgians living in Russia on the grounds of their ethnicity, including the deportation of nearly 700 Georgians from Moscow to Tbilisi and the alleged harassment of Georgian worshippers, businessmen and schoolchildren under the pretext of a clampdown on organised crime and illegal immigrants,

J. whereas in early 2006 the Russian Federation imposed a ban on the import of agricultural products (wine, fruit and vegetables) from Moldova and Georgia, which is considerably harming the economic development of both countries,

(2) OJ C 117 E, 18.5.2006, p. 235.
K. whereas the unilateral movements for independence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia are not being supported by any international organisation and continuing efforts are being made under the auspices of the OSCE and the United Nations to restore the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia,

L. whereas the EU must increase its support for the ongoing efforts to resolve the conflicts in Georgia and the South Caucasus region, in cooperation with the OSCE and other parties,

1. Reiterates its call for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and its commitment to support the peace process, and calls on all parties to act responsibly by refraining from unilateral steps and inflammatory and aggressive statements which serve to exacerbate the situation and may degenerate into violence;

2. Reaffirms its full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and calls on the Russian authorities to fully respect the sovereignty of that country within its internationally recognised borders;

3. Strongly condemns the attempts by movements in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia to establish independence unilaterally;

4. Calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to withhold support from all of these movements and to give its fullest support to the multilateral efforts to find a solution to the conflicts in its neighbourhood;

5. Condemns the fact that South Ossetia will hold a referendum on independence on 12 November 2006, and reminds the parties that a similar referendum on independence in 1992 was not internationally recognised;

6. Notes that the stagnated peace process needs to be relaunched, and calls for an enhanced and combined effort by the European Union and the OSCE to bring the parties back to the negotiating table, based on the progress made in the initial stages of the two peace plans;

7. Calls, in that connection, on both parties to sign the joint document on refraining from the use of force and on security guarantees and to engage in constructive negotiations in order to overcome the present stalemate; regrets the fact that the meeting of the JCC, which took place in Vladikavkaz on 12-13 October 2006, did not yield any results;

8. Takes the view that the full demilitarisation of, and a reduction in the number of weapons in, the conflict area, with the exception of the OSCE joint peacekeeping force, is a fundamental element of conflict prevention and a first essential step towards further confidence-building measures; therefore calls on Russia to refrain from holding military exercises and displaying any kind of military force in close proximity to Georgia's territorial waters;

9. Stresses that neutral, effective and impartial peacekeeping operations are essential for resolving territorial conflicts in Georgia; looks with interest, in that connection, to new proposals concerning the existing tripartite joint peacekeeping force deployed in the conflict area around the ceasefire line between Georgia and South Ossetia; points out that a new force should incorporate an element of police support, to combat crime and lawlessness; stresses that the EU should be prepared, if necessary, to commit troops to a new peacekeeping force;

10. Considers it unfair and discriminatory that South Ossetian citizens holding Russian passports can travel to the EU more easily than Georgians, a state of affairs which contributes to increased tensions over the South Ossetian region and acts as a disincentive to a settlement of the dispute;

11. Calls on the Russian state authorities to halt immediately all acts of repression and harassment carried out and all accusations made by representatives of official state institutions against ethnic Georgians living in Russia;
12. Calls on the Russian authorities to rescind all the measures recently taken against Georgia and against the Georgian population on its territory; calls, further, on the Russian authorities to lift their unjustified import ban on products from Moldova and Georgia;

13. Calls on Russia to accept the realities which emerged after the end of the Cold War and to abandon outdated thinking about exclusive zones of influence;

14. Calls on the Council to keep on making every effort to defuse the tension and rebuild confidence between Georgia and the Russian Federation and prevent the present diplomatic crisis from escalating further; urges the Council and the Commission to find ways to help Georgia overcome and counterbalance the economic and social repercussions of the measures taken in Moscow;

15. Calls on the Council and the Commission to include the question of frozen conflicts and their resolution on the agenda for the next EU-Russia summits;

16. Welcomes the conclusion and the signing of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan for Georgia; expects that the implementation thereof will give a further boost to the political and reform process in that country; welcomes the statements by the High Representative for the CFSP, Javier Solana, who recently said that the EU intends to become more actively engaged in the resolution of conflicts in Georgia, and calls on the Council to provide the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus with all the necessary means and resources to make this action more effective and visible;

17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the President and Parliament of Georgia, the President and Parliament of the Russian Federation and the de facto authorities in South Ossetia and the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OSCE.

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Export of toxic waste to Africa

European Parliament resolution on the export of toxic waste to Africa

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (the Basel Convention), adopted on 22 March 1989 and approved on behalf of the Community by Council Decision 93/98/EEC, (1) and the ban pursuant thereto on all exports of hazardous waste from the OECD to non-OECD countries,


— having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas around 500 tonnes of chemical waste have been dumped in several areas in the neighbourhood of Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, where 5 million people live,

B. whereas eight people have died so far and some 85 000 have been taken to hospital for treatment for nosebleeds, diarrhoea, nausea, eye irritation and breathing difficulties; whereas the consequences of this dumping of toxic waste may be far-reaching, including soil contamination and surface and groundwater pollution,