



THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

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Office of the Press Secretary
August 13, 2008

Setting the Record Straight: President Bush Has Taken Action to Ensure Peace, Security and Humanitarian Aid in Georgia

The Wall Street Journal Inaccurately Claims The Administration Was Slow To Respond To The Conflict Between Georgia And Russia

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The *Wall Street Journal* asserts that "U.S. credibility is ... on the line as the Bush Administration stumbles to respond to the Russian invasion of Georgia. So far the Administration has been missing in action." (Editorial, "Bush And Georgia," *The Wall Street Journal*, 8/13/08)

President Bush and his Administration have taken aggressive action, both public and non-public, to manage this crisis.

Friday, August 8, 2008:

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice speaks several times with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and makes a statement calling for an immediate ceasefire.

"Senior U.S. officials and I have spoken with the parties and continue to work with them to seek an end to hostilities. The United States is working actively with its European partners to launch international mediation. We urgently seek Russia's support of these efforts." (Secretary Condoleezza Rice, "Russia Move Into Georgia," Press Release, 8/8/08)

- President Bush meets with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in Beijing and again that evening.
- National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley speaks twice with Prime Minister Putin's Foreign Policy Advisor Yuriy Ushakov.
- Defense Secretary Robert Gates speaks with Russian Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov as well as Georgian Defense Minister Davit Kezerashvili.
- Deputy Secretary Negroponte meets with Russian Charge.
- U.S. Ambassador in Tbilisi and Charge in Moscow remain in regular contact with Georgian and

Russian officials.

- U.S. Embassy Tbilisi releases State Department pre-positioned disaster packages – valued at \$1.2 million – to help those in need. The packages include basic medical supplies, tents, blankets, bedding, hygiene items, clothing, beds, and cots.
- Ambassadors Khalilzad and Wolff make statements in New York UNSC sessions from August 8 to 11 stressing the inviolability of Georgia's territorial integrity and calling on Russia to cease its attacks.

Saturday, August 9, 2008:

- Secretary Rice speaks with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.
- President Bush speaks with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.
- President Bush speaks with Georgian President Saakashvili.
- President Bush delivers a statement from Beijing.

"This situation can be resolved peacefully. We've been in contact with leaders in both Georgia and Russia at all levels of government. Georgia is a sovereign nation and its territorial integrity must be respected. We have urged an immediate halt to the violence and a stand-down by all troops. We call for an end to the Russian bombings, and a return by the parties to the status quo of August the 6th." (President George W. Bush, Statement On Escalation Of Violence In Georgia, Beijing, People's Republic of China, 8/9/08)

- National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley speaks with British Foreign Policy Advisor Simon McDonald.
- National Security Advisor Hadley speaks with French Diplomatic Advisor Jean-David Levitte.
- Defense Secretary Gates speaks with Georgian President Saakashvili.

Sunday, August 10, 2008:

- President Bush speaks with French President Nicolas Sarkozy.
- U.S. Ambassador John F. Tefft declares a disaster due to the effects of armed conflict in Georgia and USAID provides an initial \$250,000 for the local procurement and distribution of emergency relief supplies.
- U.S. begins airlift of Georgian troops home from Iraq.

- State Department officials meet with Russian Charge.

Monday, August 11, 2008:

- President Bush discusses the situation in Georgia during an interview with NBC.

"I said this violence is unacceptable – I not only said it to Vladimir Putin, I've said it to the President of the country, Dmitriy Medvedev. And my Administration has been engaged with both sides in this, trying to get a cease-fire, and saying that the status quo ante for all troops should be August 6th. And, look, I expressed my grave concern about the disproportionate response of Russia and that we strongly condemn bombing outside of South Ossetia." (President George W. Bush, Interview By Bob Costas, NBC Sports, Beijing, People's Republic of China, 8/11/08)

- Secretary Rice hosts a conference call with G7 Counterparts.
- Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Robert M. Kimmitt issues statement on support for Georgia's economy.

"Given its sound macroeconomic and fiscal policies and excellent progress in transition to a market economy, Georgia is well placed to weather the current crisis. Georgia's economy has been one of the strongest in the region owing to its proven record of reforms, and this reform effort deserves continued international support. The United States has strongly supported Georgia's reform and economic development programs and is prepared to join other countries to support the International Financial Institutions' future engagement to promote a vibrant economy that builds on the existing foundations." (Deputy Secretary Robert Kimmitt, Statement on Georgia's Economy, 8/11/08)

- President Bush speaks with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.
- President Bush delivers statement upon arrival at the White House calling on Russia to end this crisis.

"Russia's actions this week have raised serious questions about its intentions in Georgia and the region. These actions have substantially damaged Russia's standing in the world. And these actions jeopardize Russians' relations – Russia's relations with the United States and Europe. It is time for Russia to be true to its word and to act to end this crisis." (President George W. Bush, Statement On Situation In Georgia, The White House, 8/11/08)

- President Bush speaks with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus.
- President Bush speaks with Polish President Lech Kaczynski.
- National Security Advisor Hadley speaks with French Diplomatic Advisor Levitte.

- President Bush speaks with Georgian President Saakashvili.
- Secretary Rice speaks with Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski.
- Department of Defense cancels naval exercise with Russia
- U.S. completes airlift of Georgian troops from Iraq to Georgia.

Tuesday, August 12, 2008:

- President Bush speaks with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.
- President Bush speaks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
- Secretary Rice makes a statement after meeting with the President at the White House.

"I want to make very clear that the United States stands for the territorial integrity of Georgia, for the sovereignty of Georgia, that we support its democratically elected government and its people. We are reviewing our options for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Georgia. But the most important thing right now is that these military operations need to stop. We will continue to work diplomatically on this matter and will continue our discussions with all the parties involved." (Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Remarks On Situation In Georgia, The White House, 8/12/08)

- USAID provides an initial \$250,000 for the local procurement and distribution of emergency relief supplies.
- U.S. Department of Defense announces cancellation of annual French-Russian-UK-U.S. (FRUKUS) military exercise.
- Secretary Rice discusses situation in Georgia in an interview with ABC.

"[W]e're concentrating right now on getting this conflict stopped, so that people can stop dying, on getting the Russians to stop their bombardment of Georgian infrastructure and even Georgian ports and towns like Gori. We are concentrating on the humanitarian assistance that Georgia will need. We're concentrating on getting an assessment of what Georgia will need, in terms of reconstruction, and in sending very strong signals of support to democratically elected government of Georgia and its people." (ABC News' "World News With Charles Gibson," 8/12/08)

Wednesday, August 13, 2008:

- President Bush speaks with Georgian President Saakashvili.
- President Bush speaks with French President Sarkozy.

- President Bush makes a statement in the Rose Garden. Announces he has asked Secretary Rice to travel to France for a meeting with President Sarkozy and then on to Georgia to personally convey America's unwavering support for Georgia's democratic government

"We expect Russia to honor its commitment to let in all forms of humanitarian assistance. We expect Russia to ensure that all lines of communication and transport, including seaports, airports, roads, and airspace, remain open for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and for civilian transit. We expect Russia to meet its commitment to cease all military activities in Georgia. And we expect all Russian forces that entered Georgia in recent days to withdraw from that country." (President George W. Bush, Statement On The Situation In Georgia, The White House, 8/13/08)

- Defense Secretary Robert Gates directs the U.S. military to begin humanitarian assistance to the citizens of Georgia.
- A EUCOM C-17 plane arrives in Tbilisi, Georgia carrying \$850,000 in medical supplies.
- Tonight a C-130 will arrive carrying an ESAT survey team to prepare the way for further humanitarian assistance.
- State Department is sending 104,000 doses of antibiotics in response to a request from the Georgian Minister of Health.
- State Department is supporting the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as it prepares to send a team of surgeons to Georgia to help treat victims of the conflict in South Ossetia. ICRC plans to deliver 15 tons of water treatment equipment and medical aid, which will provide clean water for 20,000 people and medicine for about 400 wounded.
- State Department is supporting the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is moving stocks from one of its emergency warehouses in Dubai; 21,000 blankets, 1,850 tents, and 8,000 jerry cans should arrive in Tbilisi today. UNHCR also purchased locally emergency supplies (\$250,000).
- USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Washington-based regional team is coordinating U.S. humanitarian response activities, maintaining close contact with U.S. Embassy Tbilisi and partners on the ground.
- USAID is coordinating the U.S. response efforts with the international community, including the European Commission, the UN, NGO partners and the Government of Georgia.

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Return to this article at:

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