



Remarks With Georgian Foreign Minister Davit Bakradze Before Their Meeting

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Washington, DC
April 23, 2008

[View Video](#)

SECRETARY RICE: Good morning. I am very pleased to welcome the Foreign Minister of Georgia, my colleague, to this meeting. We will discuss a number of issues in our very good bilateral relationship with Georgia.

But I will assure the Foreign Minister, as I did President Saakashvili a couple of days ago, that the United States is firmly committed to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia, that we support Georgia's efforts to make certain that the people of Abkhazia and South Ossetia feel fully a part of Georgia, and that we are very concerned at the recent move by the Russian Federation, the presidential decree that was issued. I've had an opportunity to raise these issues with Foreign Minister Lavrov by phone. And then just on the margins of the Iraq neighbors meeting that just took place in Kuwait, I also raised them.

Again, our commitment to Georgia and to its territorial integrity is firm. These are issues that should be worked out, state to state, between Georgia and Russia. And there should be no question as to Georgia's integrity and Georgia's full incorporation into the international community. And I might note that the United States also feels strongly that Georgia's future is a transatlantic future. Thank you very much for joining me here.

FOREIGN MINISTER BAKRADZE: Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Rice. I'm indeed delighted and honored to be here just to continue the tradition of good cooperation, strategic cooperation and partnership which exists between our countries and between our nations. Indeed, the time for Georgia is now challenging and the primary issue is how to handle those challenges which we faced recently in terms of conflict resolution and challenges to territorial integrity of Georgia.

And of course, we want to consult our American friends and we want to plan joint actions how to improve chances for peaceful resolution of the conflict, how to implement the peace plan, and including those recent proposals initiated by Government of Georgian President Saakashvili. And we are all interested in promoting peaceful resolution of the conflicts based on the territorial integrity of Georgia.

We are very grateful for such a clear and unconditional support of Georgia's territorial integrity. And I do hope and I do believe that with such a clear support, we will be able to overcome challenges, including challenges created by recent unilateral Russian steps which we see as potentially very dangerous and provocative.

So, thank you very much and I'm delighted to discuss all these issues. Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, did you discuss the drone issue with the Russians? Have you spoken --

SECRETARY RICE: We've -- I'm going to talk with my colleague about this. And I've discussed the full range of the issues with the Russians, yes.

2008/310

Released on April 23, 2008

[↑](#) BACK TO TOP

Published by the U.S. Department of State Website at <http://www.state.gov> maintained by the Bureau of Public Affairs.