



UNITED NATIONS **NATIONS UNIES**
United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

PR/2001/2

Tbilisi, 22 January, 2001

COORDINATING COUNCIL 12th SESSION

The twelfth meeting of the Coordinating Council for the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia will take place tomorrow, Tuesday, 23 January 2001, at the UNOMIG Headquarters in Sukhumi. The previous meeting was held on 24 October 2000 in Krtsanisi Government House in Tbilisi.

The Council was set up in accordance with the Concluding Statement on the outcome of the meeting between the Georgian and Abkhaz parties held in Geneva on 17-19 November 1997. It meets under the auspices of the United Nations and will be chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Georgia, Mr. Dieter Boden. The Georgian delegation will be led by State Minister Georgi Arsenishvili; the Abkhaz delegation - by de facto Prime Minister Viatsheslav Tsugba.

The Coordinating Council will consider matters concerning the improvement of security in the conflict zone, including the outcome of the sixth session of Working Group I, which was held on 13 December 2000 in Sukhumi. It will also have to look into the reasons for the non-implementation of agreements already reached, as for example, the one on the reburial of the mortal remains from Babushera. As usual, issues related to the refugees and internally displaced persons would figure prominently on the agenda. Measures towards the economic and social rehabilitation will be discussed on the basis of the recommendations of the third session of Working Group III held on 5 December 2000 in Tbilisi. Finally, an exchange of views is planned regarding the third Conference on Confidence-building Measures, which is scheduled to take place in Yalta in March 2001, at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine.

While the Council is not supposed to deal with the matter of status, its meeting will offer the opportunity to the sides to the conflict to address a number of practical issues where co-operation is in their mutual interest.

It is believed that the Council's meeting will contribute to the strengthening of the security network in UNOMIG's area of responsibility, the revival of efforts aimed at the economic and social rehabilitation in the zone of conflict, as well as to progress in the areas of confidence-building and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

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