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**UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA AND CIS PKF CONDUCT FOUR-DAY
JOINT PATROL THROUGHOUT KODORI VALLEY**

On 13-16 December UNOMIG, jointly with the Commonwealth of Independent States Peacekeeping Forces (CIS PKF), resumed multi-day patrolling of the lower and upper Kodori valley. The joint patrol enjoyed freedom of movement throughout the Kodori valley with security guarantees and full cooperation from both sides. UNOMIG thanks them for the comprehensive arrangements that made the successful completion of the patrol possible.

The patrol was launched on 13 December from Sukhumi and travelled along the lower Kodori valley, staying the first night at the CIS PKF Checkpoint 107 on the outskirts of Lata. On 14 December, the patrol, comprising UNOMIG military observers, UN police and CIS PKF officers moved into the upper Kodori valley and into the Ptish valley north of Chkhalta. There, it monitored the de-commissioning and destruction of an array of small arms ammunition, rockets, shells and grenades, which were part of the weaponry reported by the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) to have been seized during the July 2006 operations. At the time of the last joint patrol on 12 October 2006, UNOMIG had observed these ammunition and heavy weapons, but had not inventoried them.

On 14 December 2006, MIA officials handed over to UNOMIG an inventory of the seized weapons detailing separately (i) those that had been taken out of the valley and transferred to the Ministry of Defence; (ii) those that were still retained by the MIA in the valley; and (iii) those to be destroyed.

The MIA indicated that the first category included six 120 mm mortars, six 82 mm mortars, anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons, as well as ammunition, mines and shells. This category could not be verified by the patrol. The second category included a total of 13 rifles, three RPG-7s, 26,850 rounds of small arms (5.45 and 7.62mm) ammunition, 1,439 x 12.7mm ammunition, 3,000 x 23mm and 239 x 30mm ammunition, 29 grenades and 15 x 40mm shells, which were inspected in storage by the patrol. The third category, namely about 2,900 rounds of small arms ammunition, 236 rockets (57mm and 80mm), 191 shells (73mm and 122mm) and 21 grenades, most of them

unserviceable, was destroyed. The joint patrol stock-checked this lot of ammunition against the inventory presented by the Georgian authorities and witnessed its destruction on 14 and 15 December.

The patrol continued along the length of the Kodori valley, overnighting at the UNOMIG team base in Adjara, to the Saken/Omariskara road junction. As the Khida Pass was closed due to adverse weather conditions, the patrol returned along the same route. It observed that police stations and security posts have now been established throughout the valley. The two armoured recovery vehicles (MTLBs) that had been seen on 12 October were inspected again, this time in a logistics base in Gentvich: they bore the evidence of recent use for vehicle recovery; the patrol confirmed that they continued to have no weapon-mounting capability. The patrol observed a visible strength of about 250 uniformed personnel, all bearing MIA identities. The patrol did not observe any deployment of heavy weapons. The patrol then overnighted at CIS Checkpoint 107, returning to Sukhumi via the lower Kodori valley on 16 December.

Only time constraints prevented the patrol from visiting all parts of the upper Kodori valley. The joint patrol was given complete freedom of movement and provided effective security.

UNOMIG appreciates the arrangements made by both the Georgian and Abkhaz sides and the cooperation of the CIS PKF. It will discuss the findings of the joint patrol with the two sides and the CIS PKF. In doing so, it will seek ways and means to enhance further mutual confidence and transparency, and will encourage dialogue in relation to the two sides' security concerns in the Kodori valley. The Mission also emphasizes the great benefit of regular patrolling; and proposes to maintain the momentum gained recently by conducting further day-long and multi-day joint patrols throughout the valley.

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