



Wilton Park



Image: NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Conference report

Security in the South Caucasus

Tuesday 20 – Thursday 22 March 2012 | WP1171



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The conference convened in Tbilisi, Georgia, supported by the British Embassy and the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A number of key politicians, officials, NGOs, academics, business people and conflict resolution experts gathered to seek to define policy options to develop conditions for safeguarding security in the South Caucasus. It took a comprehensive approach, addressing strategic and regional security concerns; economic security; energy security and political security; intra-regional relations and the role of the international community.

Key points

The aims were to assess initiatives and creative possibilities in three broad areas:

- Regional security: What role should international organisations play in promoting security in the region?
- Regional energy/economy: What are the opportunities for promoting intra-regional cooperation in energy and the economy?
- Regional democratisation: What are the opportunities and challenges in promoting good governance and democracy?

The Current Situation in the South Caucasus

1. Various and frank perspectives highlighted the urgent need for renewed and creative attention to the South Caucasus. Briefly reiterated, the region suffers from profound lack of trust, if not outright hostility between certain parties. Armed standoffs continue, with high risks of escalation. While parties made statements of their willingness to negotiate, and offered examples of unilateral initiatives and of their ability to have friendly relations with others, blame for failure of progress on peace was attributed exclusively to the other side.
2. The Georgian-Russian conflicts have lost some international involvement through Russian refusal to renew mandates, namely the OSCE for South Ossetia and the UN Observer Mission in Georgia which was responsible for Abkhazia, Georgia deeply regrets the loss of this international involvement. Some civil society initiatives have also ended. A new international format, the Geneva Discussions, was created following 2008. This is the only forum where all conflicting parties are present.
3. The Karabakh conflict continues to be a potential source of significant instability. Careful optimism existed in 2010 and early 2011. The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan had agreed the preamble to the Madrid Principles in early 2010 and subsequent OSCE and G8 statements were hopeful. The Kazan meeting of June 2011, however, delivered a joint statement but not a negotiated breakthrough. Civil society believed that forthcoming elections also mean that movement is unlikely in the next 18 months.

4. Certain phrases used at the conference helped sum up the current situation, each with a somewhat different emphasis on the dynamic of the conflicts and how they were perceived:
 - Onion layers – a metaphor of the multiple layers of implications stemming from conflict: international, regional, and state-level.
 - Gordian knot – recognition of a deeper interconnection of issues, and the need for creativity and different solutions to solve parts of the problem.
 - Frozen/refreezing/cracking – while much discussion on the South Caucasus has moved away from using ‘frozen conflicts,’ the term indicated possibilities of sudden, unexpected developments.
 - Pressurised region – relating to the conflicts, but also relating to the wider geographical area such as the immediate regional powers of Russia and Iran, which apply further pressure to the South Caucasus.
 - Figure skating versus ice hockey: most parties to the conflicts play according to one set of clear established rules, but another does not.

Regional security

What role should international organisations play in promoting security in the region?

5. International organisations, and NGOs also, unmistakably accord great importance to conflict resolution in the South Caucasus, as well as to encouraging prospects for economic development, democratisation and wider integration. The intergovernmental actors reinforce one another, particularly for the post-2008 Geneva Discussions which are co-run by the UN, OSCE and the EU. These contributions, plus those of other actors such as NATO, the Council of Europe (CoE) and international non-governmental organisations are reviewed below.

Geneva Discussions

6. Launched in August 2008, and based on the 6-point Medvedev-Sarkozy agreement of 12 August of that year, the talks contributed to the end of open hostilities and provided the basis for EU monitoring. The involvement of international organisations is evident from the talks being chaired by representatives of the OSCE, EU and UN, and are anchored to them. This format also represents the first time in the two-decade history of the Abkhaz-Georgian and South Ossetian-Georgian conflicts that the two conflicts are combined in one format, and common elements of both conflicts are addressed.
7. The talks are divided into two working groups, one addressing security issues, the other humanitarian and human rights issues. At the time of the conference, 18 rounds of discussion have been held, the next being scheduled for 28-29 March 2012. These sessions are discussions, however, and not negotiations. Work to date has only been in the working groups, with no plenaries held. The process includes regular consultations, with regional visits to all sides. The atmosphere after the war ‘has not at all been easy’ and talks have been on the brink of collapse. Although the Discussions do not address the issue of the status of the separatist entities, their status looms behind every point, and participants want to insert status issues into the content. Status is a trap in which the talks could have become stuck from the outset, but successfully have not. Georgia maintains that the entities cannot be treated as equals and denies that the conflict is with them, but rather with the Russian Federation. Russia states otherwise, presenting itself, instead, as a mediator in both conflicts.
8. The 12 August agreement lacked conflict resolution as an objective. The Discussions therefore have faced the challenge of moving from dialogue to concrete action, including Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). Discussions concentrate on the aftermath of August 2008 but implications arise from the earlier conflicts, including:

issues between Georgia and Russia, and how the Georgian contention that Russia had been involved in both of those conflicts prior to the 2008 war had been made apparent after it; the disputes between Georgia and Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the historical legacies, including Soviet-era status; and internal developments within Georgia and domestic perceptions of the conflicts.

9. The working atmosphere has improved and political issues have been kept outside the agenda. On the international level the World Trade Organisation (WTO) deal was important for demonstrating that problems can be overcome when common interests are recognised and disputes are kept outside. This provides hope for repetition in other areas. Areas of promise include: more enhancement of freedom of movement across conflict divides; use of the hotline; and the slow increase in CBMs as a result, for example, from meetings of law enforcement personnel. Comments encouraged more new thinking, including dialogue between Georgians and Abkhaz and South Ossetians. Civil society engagement and public opinion are essential to such dialogue.
10. When in the 1990s the Caucasus was outside the realm of the West, the region suffered disastrously. Russia was said to see both Euro-Atlantic integration and European energy initiatives negatively. However, 'normalisation' of relations cannot mean that Russia has a veto over how a country decides its foreign policy, including institutional membership. Support for Euro-Atlantic integration remains emphatically high in Georgia, while Azerbaijan cautions that interest in integration wanes dangerously as the Karabakh conflict continues unresolved. Armenia tries to keep strategic partnerships with both CSTO/Russia and NATO and, like other South Caucasus states, participates in the EU's Eastern Partnership.

The EU

11. The EU is clearly an important actor in the South Caucasus, with its role expanded as a consequence of the August 2008 war. All parties involved in the South Caucasus, including the Russian Federation, have a 'European' agenda. Not only does the EU account for 70 percent of the region's foreign trade, but the South Caucasus region's 'manifest destiny' is European integration. The Association Agreements were described as anything but small, affording equivalent status to that of Norway or Switzerland. Even with such an apparently potent magnetism, however, the influence of the EU remains constrained, and its actions considered boring or invisible.
12. The EU, through its Monitoring Mission (EUMM), has undertaken a role. By responding quickly with a deployment on the ground, the EU operated in an uncharacteristically proactive manner. The government of Georgia also welcomed this EU initiative. However, the EU cannot change current national positions and cannot force Russia militarily out of Georgia. Similarly, the EU cannot force compromises on Armenia and Azerbaijan; the sides must themselves be prepared to compromise. That said, EU contributions to the Geneva Discussions are important. The EU also supports conflict resolution, freedom of the media and good governance programmes in Armenia and Azerbaijan. (The EU's role in democratisation is discussed below). The EU itself was described as an 'anti-hegemony project', created from the bottom up to neutralise competition. Those who want its benefits must engage with it, and on its terms. Despite the EU's influence and power of attraction, there is nevertheless an impression in some quarters that it does not yet amount to the sum of its parts and that its engagement with the region could still be more effective.

NATO

13. Membership of NATO remains of central importance to Georgia. Georgia was targeted for its sovereign choices in 2008 and reference to a statement by Russian president Medvedev was given to demonstrate that the war was intended to keep Georgia outside NATO. While comments were made that Georgia will gain Alliance membership, time and the terms remain unspecified, Georgia's readiness for NATO

membership includes numerous indicators, including 80 per cent popular support (versus Balkans candidate countries with around 30%) and proportionately enormous contributions to NATO-led operations in Afghanistan. Concerns over double standards of entry requirements were raised, such as whether Finland or Sweden would require a Membership Action Plan. Georgian NATO membership might be a game-changer for the region.

14. In terms of the South Caucasus more widely, although NATO is not a conflict resolution mechanism itself, NATO is part of the European democratic value system, and supports fully the efforts of the EU, OSCE and UN to resolve peacefully these regional conflicts. NATO has not supplied weapons to any party to the conflict, while concerns were raised about Russian supplies. NATO maintains clear principles – territorial integrity is a solid principle which the Alliance will not revoke. NATO's bilateral engagements in the South Caucasus region are important, and NATO forums provide stability.

OSCE

15. Apart from its essential roles in democratisation (see below), the OSCE maintains a mediating role in both the Geneva Discussions (see above) and the Karabakh conflict. The Minsk Group which spearheads the OSCE's efforts at resolving the Karabakh conflict received particular attention in view of the Group's 20th anniversary that coincided with the meeting. There was a strong sense that the Group, co-chaired by France, Russia, and the USA, has not been able to advance the peace process far enough and that the anniversary held little cause for celebration. An RFE/RL interview with Minsk Group co-chair Robert Bradtke that coincided with the meeting was felt to have helped answer questions about the Minsk Group's standing and role. Despite statements against Azerbaijan that it sought to alter or supplant the Minsk Group format, and that the Minsk Group was too little of a "Group", discussions generally reiterated that both the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents want that format, and that no other format is on offer. Some suggestions were made that some parts of the Basic Principles could start to be implemented. In view of the relative lack of progress, one speaker suggested consideration of a 'mini-package,' which might include Armenian withdrawal from one or two provinces and the borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey being opened, as well as Nagorno-Karabakh being allowed an information office, for example, in Brussels. Others, however, reiterated the view that nothing is settled until everything is settled.
16. The Minsk Group has tried CBMs; monitoring along the ceasefire line, however, is insufficient because of its infrequency and at announced times, despite continuing deterioration of the situation along the Line of Contact, added concern is the absence of a mechanism to review jointly incidents occurring along the Line. The situation concerning Karabakh was noted frequently to be fragile, with risks of tension escalating from incidents on the ground and from an unrelenting and destabilising arms race.

NGOs

17. Major international NGOs were integrally involved in the conference discussions. NGOs reported that activity has become more difficult, with the space for dialogue squeezed after 2008: some dialogue processes initiated since then, especially between Georgia and South Ossetia, are similar to the early measures undertaken in the 1990s. In that respect, things have gone backwards.
18. Despite concentration in other sessions on state-level/international organisation diplomacy, Track I½ and/or Track II measures were stated as both necessary and possible. NGOs stated that internally displaced persons (IDPs) were often forgotten, but instead should be at the heart of attention to the conflicts.

Developing economic/energy potential

Economic development generally

19. The general benefits and importance of economic development were made clear, in themselves and, especially, on a regional basis. The South Caucasus conflicts were repeatedly stated to be the primary obstacles to regional economic development and stability. Deep concern for the economic potential and the wellbeing of the people of the South Caucasus as a whole were evident. Various national, bilateral and multilateral economic initiatives were noted, and encouragement for region-wide initiatives advanced. The Inguri hydroelectric facility which has continued operating and supplying powers on both sides of the river was held up as an example of objective benefit being harnessed by conflict parties, and other such examples were encouraged, such as whether Armenia and Turkey could cooperate in generating power from common rivers.
20. Economic incentives were frequently suggested as 'carrots' for peace, although some objected to the prospect of rewards being offered without peace as a requirement.
21. Quite apart from the implications of the conflicts, trade in the South Caucasus remains underdeveloped and the gains could be immense. Trade is the engine of growth for small and larger economies, and open borders are essential for economic growth and poverty reduction. The region's biggest economic constraint remains closed borders. Worldwide evidence demonstrates conclusively that they harm economies. Open borders were said to be economically beneficial for all parties. The Northern Distribution Network, while not involving Armenia, demonstrated that the region could function and generate economic benefits. The region's geographical location affords it strong potential as a transit route, and is subject to continuing economic interest. Georgia in particular states its natural position as a bridge and therefore a transit route. Accounting for 80 per cent of the region's economy, Azerbaijan speaks of being the region's economic locomotive and of its willingness to intensify regional economic relations.
22. Despite conflicts and several sets of bilateral diplomatic non-recognition, trade relations have developed and expanded. In dollars terms, Turkish-Armenian trade is greater than Turkish-Georgian. Nevertheless, exports remain low in all three countries by standards for fast-growing countries. Although Azerbaijan has taken initiatives for trade diversification, and has advanced in agro-processing, diversification is challenging in oil-rich countries. Azerbaijan was encouraged to accelerate talks for entry into the WTO. Armenia has the untapped potential of ICT and broadband development and could leapfrog over closed borders. Its airport storage facility offers economic potential and could target foreign markets. Armenia's distinctive position as the region's sole nuclear-energy provider presents a regional asset but also, following from Fukushima, a matter of regional safety. However, the economic and energy discussions generally underscored Armenia's isolation. Separate from the conflict, Armenia was encouraged to foster greater regional economic development in order to slow the progress of its outmigration.
23. Some other areas of consideration for the South Caucasus region included the establishment of a trust fund for the region to incentivise regional cooperation, although this idea raised practical considerations such as sources of funding. The attraction of Caucasus-wide tourism, agriculture- especially organic- and the development of SMEs were noted. All three South Caucasus countries have requested regional conferences; such meetings have been held on transport issues, albeit quietly, and economic interlocutors report that in these forums Armenians and Azerbaijanis do listen to each other's views.
24. Domestically, Georgia was noted as a frontrunner in economic reforms, including in creating conditions for investment, the drastic reduction in corruption, and tripling its GDP in a decade.

25. The region was encouraged to think of infrastructural developments, both for their physical benefits but also as a means to facilitate trade. Russia and Turkey, with stronger economies, could provide export markets and investment, although Russian investment can be politically motivated. A positive gain from Georgia's loss of Russian markets is that it had been forced to diversify. Although economic relations have been complicated by the 2008 war, existing Georgian contracts with Russian interests have still been met. Weaker European economies mean less capital for the Caucasus.

Energy specifically

26. As important as pipelines through the Caucasus are, the West can still be said to lack an energy strategy for the South Caucasus. The energy transit corridor must be developed dramatically in the next decade.
27. The importance to the world's oil supply of the Caucasus pipelines was demonstrated by the fact that eight per cent of free market oil transits the region, conducted by companies that operate under market conditions. The Caspian is also one of the world's few areas where the private sector in energy provision remains key and continues to grow. One estimate mooted was that the region could supply 20-25 per cent of the world's growth in non-OPEC oil in the next two decades.
28. Pipelines need security but also provide it. They are a hallmark of integration. However, tangible risks to pipelines exist; they do not cross the width of Azerbaijan but only that much of the country as permitted by the Karabakh conflict zone. Russia demonstrated the vulnerability of the pipelines in 2008 by bombing close to but not actually hitting them; they remain vulnerable to attack, although the source(s) of attack were not fully specified.
29. The extent to which pipelines offer peace remained debatable, with reminders that Armenia was offered the 'peace pipeline' in the 1990s and questions were asked about how willing it is now to negotiate over Karabakh for a share of regional development. Some stated that oil revenues were directly proportional to threats over Karabakh. Nevertheless, Caucasus pipelines are considered to be soft security providers, and they also give essential stakes to other powers, such as the United States.
30. Apart from their potential roles in promoting cooperation and peace, the pipelines operate below capacity. The two other major suppliers that could participate in the energy corridor are not ready, for different reasons, to do so. Kazakhstan's President Nazarbaev had agreed with Azerbaijan to develop Trans-Caspian oil transportation, but, following the 2008 war, Kazakhstan redirected much of its oil supply through Russian facilities. That agreement consequently remains unfulfilled. Development of the Kashagan oil field in the northern Caspian Sea from around 2017 holds further prospects, although the main destination for Kazakhstani oil after Russia is not the West but China.
31. Despite early encouragement, Turkmenistan declined to take part in the plans for the South Caucasus energy corridor. Although Turkmenistan is unusual among energy states for being primarily a gas, rather than oil, supplier and although gas needs to be either piped or shipped as LNG, Turkmenistan nevertheless takes little interest in how and where its gas goes once beyond its borders. Debate ensued on the challenges of involving Turkmenistan in future energy cooperation in the Caspian/Caucasus region. This included how much Turkmenistan would balance the attraction of the EU's lucrative market against its expectations of democratisation. A further consideration in Turkmenistan's calculations was China, which requires no such domestic changes and also already absorbs much of Turkmenistani debt through the consumption of its gas.
32. In summary, economic development must be a carrot not stick – it should not be a condition for peace. Countries must demonstrate that they want to do business. The contrast between the absence of visas for Georgia, the relative ease of securing them for Armenia, and the difficulties for Azerbaijan was suggested as an indication of their readiness to do business with the wider world. While the economic cannot be

decoupled from conflict resolution, the economy cannot provide all conflict resolution. That said, a final call was made for increased participation in the economy of the South Caucasus, and the Kalashnikov to be swapped for business activity.

Democratisation

33. The Council of Europe (CoE), to which all South Caucasian states also belong, serves as a fundamental and powerful motor for democratisation and ensuring the rule of law and respect for human rights. This includes the voluntary acceptance by South Caucasian governments of obligations under the European Court of Human Rights, and collective mechanisms for monitoring. The CoE seeks effective cooperation, and, not only looks at domestic transitional shortcomings, but also assists authorities to improve constitutional and electoral laws and the functioning of the judiciary.
34. In short, democratisation and related values remain at the heart of European international organisations' engagement with the South Caucasus. Issues were raised about the order of the implementation of such values and relations with Western institutions, and the accountability of all entities to those values. For some present, Western norms, values and standards should follow integration. For European institutions, however, these values are fundamental, and relations with others follow from them. Concern was expressed that integration is losing its appeal for some parties to the conflicts.
35. While international organisations are aware that the South Caucasus is still operating under the legacies of the Soviet era and that 20 years may not be such a long period in which to overcome them, security cannot be established in the long run without democracy, rule of law, and human rights. Some regional representatives pointed out the urgency of internal stability to be able – in the context of conflict – to be outwardly strong. Balance between security and good governance in conflict situations is required. The prominence of presidencies in the Georgian and Azerbaijani polities was noted, some implying that the systems were too centralised.
36. Democratisation remains a core requirement of European institutions. Evidence was given of both the ability of normative institutions to assist positive change in the South Caucasus and the ability, conflict notwithstanding, of all three countries to make important changes.
37. Democracy watchdogs only concentrate on the behaviour of states and are not well-suited to deal with non-state actors. While not an excuse for governments to behave less-democratically, this oversight of de facto states is important.
38. Caution was also urged towards some (unnamed) groups that claim to be 'democratic' but which only advanced sectarian interests. Concern was expressed that such groups operate instrumentally, only advocating part of what would otherwise be recognised as the full meaning of human rights.
39. Population displacements due to wars also raised questions about the meaning and the monitoring of democracy. How, it was asked, in Abkhazia could the development of 'democracy and civil society' be countenanced when the existing population supports 'ethnic cleansing and a policy of apartheid'? 'With 80% of the population Abkhazia missing, 8/10 voters could not take part in recent so-called "elections"'.
40. Democratisation can have positive knock-on effects. While issues were raised regarding Georgia's democracy and judiciary, democracy was emphasised as its only option, which would also provide a good example for others in the region, such as Russia. The 2012 elections in two South Caucasian countries present an important opportunity to demonstrate their democratic intentions.
41. Democratisation is integral to any peace solution: parties must prepare their citizens for compromise; this is part of the price conflict settlement. Frank debates are needed among key stakeholders, and must go beyond politicians to the population at large.

Both NGOs and international organisations demonstrate commitment and willingness to increasing inter-societal dialogue. Political pluralism is integral to making the level playing field that will facilitate conflict resolution.

42. We can take positive example and encouragement from the Northern Ireland conflict, which only recently seemed intractable and unresolvable. With political will and some ability to take personal risk, remarkable progress was made in comparatively little time.

Executive summary of suggestions

The following is a list of key suggestions emerging from discussions, though not all of these ideas found unanimity of support.

- Concerns and fears of parties were expressed, heard and understood; however, additional, even small steps to reassure other parties are needed by all parties and expected by other interlocutors.
- Existing negotiations platforms should continue; no others are or will be on offer and attention should not be distracted from them.
- Existing unilateral renunciations of the use of force in all South Caucasian conflicts should be applauded; those parties still not having done so should be strongly re-encouraged to do so.
- Geneva Discussions demonstrate some successes despite considerable obstacles, and in order to facilitate progress in other areas should continue to avoid derailment on status issues.
- The EUMM should have access to all territories; such prohibition was considered unacceptable.
- Georgia wants and expects NATO membership, makes disproportional contributions and maintains that membership increases regional security.
- Practical initiatives that (re)foster local engagements across conflict divides should continue to be encouraged and develop. These can and are taken by different actors; the Georgian state's facilitation of medical treatment is one example. Efforts by NGOs to regain initiatives from before 2008 are to be welcomed.
- Basic Principles for the Karabakh settlement have been reaffirmed at summits; any alternative is extremely unlikely. However, disappointment with the MG format comes from lack of progress, and popularity of Euro-Atlantic integration is suggested consequently to be at risk.
- Further political will is strongly needed. Rather than sticking to "nothing is settled until all is settled," a mini-package was suggested by one speaker by which, for example, Armenian forces withdraw from 1-2 provinces in return for the opening of borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey, and Nagorno-Karabakh be permitted an information office in, for example, Brussels.
- The security and CBM initiatives proposed thus far should continue to be encouraged, including, for example, the withdrawal of snipers and provision for independent investigation of incidents along the Line of Contact in the Karabakh conflict.
- National governmental initiatives to facilitate engagement and welfare across conflict divides are to be noted and encouraged, such as the Georgian supply of medicines to Abkhazia, and the travel of Abkhaz patients to Georgian facilities.
- Societal engagements are remarkably limited; mutual, positive histories of the region are being lost. While international organisations and NGOs are supporting media initiatives, far more must be done.
- Calls for the common identity of the South Caucasus region to be recognised should be

capitalised upon

- Successful conflict resolution elsewhere has involved statements of regret or apology.
- NGO work has been squeezed; pre-2008 initiatives have been lost, access to Karabakh remains an issue and capacity-building in entities is questioned.
- General political pluralisation should continue; this is an unambiguous expectation of European institutions and demonstration of commitment to engagement
- European institutions are willing and able to continue to assist in the process of democratisation and the enhancement of the rule of law and of human rights, and they can demonstrate examples of positive cooperation with governments of the region.
- Progress on democratisation provides examples for the wider region, including for Russia, and this holds further benefits for the region.
- Consideration of how democracy and respect for human rights are undertaken in the region should apply to all entities; these should not be terms used merely rhetorically in order to project legitimacy.
- South Caucasian Presidents say that peace is not possible because populations remain unready. Political pluralism will be a requirement for any peace agreement to work.
- Economic development is crucial for the region; trade and open borders are essential.
- All 3 South Caucasus countries have requested regional conferences and such interaction should be encouraged.
- Agreement between Russia and Georgia to facilitate Russian entry into the WTO was a major achievement; mediation between Armenia and Azerbaijan on trade continues and should be promoted.
- Economic and energy discussions reaffirmed Armenia's isolation, despite some indications of national initiatives and potential.
- Existing pipeline facilities operate below capacity; calls were made for a more systematic Western strategy for the energy corridor, including questions of how to engage Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.
- Absence of Russian participation at the conference equalled its reaffirmation of the status quo. Despite difficulties of access to Russian decision-making, the Russian Federation nevertheless needs to be engaged further.
- Turkey is recognised as a major actor in the region and should be engaged further.
- Encouragement can be taken from the apparent intractability of the Northern Ireland conflict, with deep-seated, religious, territorial and nationalistic dimensions, and which, after decades of stalemate, ended in an unexpectedly fast and substantial resolution.
- The welfare of IDPs/refugees must be central to all thinking and initiatives.

Conclusion

One representative of a South Caucasus government stated that the Wilton Park conference demonstrated that the region was no longer a distant one about which outsiders knew nothing and cared little.

Quite apart from its cultural richness, the South Caucasus is unambiguously recognised not only as a region of immense strategic and economic importance but also one of great and protracted human suffering. The conference gave opportunity for parties to the conflicts to present their concerns and positions. The very many outside actors present – non-governmental, other national governments and intergovernmental organisations – all reiterated their previous efforts and continuing willingness to support the search for peace and development of the region. Although the countries of the South Caucasus consider the Euro-Atlantic area of paramount importance to them, many conference participants also emphasised that the South Caucasus must be willing to engage fully with Euro-Atlantic governments and organisations in order to secure a just and lasting peace.

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