



08-15-2008, 03:05 PM

#1

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**Oil and Israel behind Caucasus conflict**

Political Pipeline

<http://www.antiwar.com/orig/sahimi.php?articleid=13301>

How anti-Iran policy contributed to war in the Caucasus  
 by Muhammad Sahimi

Much has been written about the war between Russia and Georgia. Neoconservatives, as Justin Raimondo pointed out, have suddenly discovered the "democratic" republic of Georgia, which has been a historical "victim" of the Russian "empire." Never mind that not only was Georgia not a democracy before it was devoured by the Soviet Union in 1921, but also that the war, started by Georgia's forces, was a strategic blunder by Georgia's president, the confrontational, demagogic, American-trained lawyer Mikheil Saakashvili, who dared foolishly to take on his giant neighbor, thinking naively that NATO would rush to help him.

William Kristol, the "little Lenin" of the neoconservatives, who now has another outlet in the op-ed page of the New York Times, opines that the U.S. must not only give aid to Georgia, but must also help it become a member of the "League of Democracies" that John McCain has proposed. Never mind that in the Georgian "democracy" Saakashvili used police brutality to stop huge demonstrations after hotly disputed elections and shut down opposition publications, and never mind that when democratic elections in Palestine and Lebanon yielded results deemed undesirable by the U.S. (and people like Kristol), they were not only dismissed, but the voters were also punished by U.S. sanctions.

And, as Robert Parry noted, the same neoconservatives who backed the illegal invasion of Iraq, and are now threatening to attack Iran over its nonexistent nuclear threat, are suddenly discovering respect for the rule of law and international agreements. Even Bill Clinton's ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke, who supported the Iraq invasion, got into the act, writing in the Washington Post that "Whatever mistakes Tbilisi has made, they cannot justify Russia's actions."

Where was Holbrooke when the U.S. invaded Panama, helped the Contra thugs in Nicaragua, encouraged – and later supported – Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran, and was silent when the Saudi-Pakistani-created Taliban overthrew the internationally recognized government of Afghanistan?

In reality, the Russia-Georgia war involves three important elements:

The desire to encircle Russia with pro-U.S. clients in the former Soviet republics, from Ukraine to Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan, and by setting up missile "defense" systems in Poland and the Czech Republic that are intended for the Russians, but are justified by the bogus threats posed by Iran's missiles and its nonexistent nuclear weapons program.

Recognition, over strong and angry objection by Russia, of Kosovo as an independent state. I suppose so long as such unstable mini-states as Kosovo are clients of the U.S., their Islamic identity poses no problem to the neoconservatives. Most other Muslims, such as those in Iran, Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq are considered dangerous.

But perhaps the most important element has to do with the control of the routes for transporting oil and gas from Central Asia and the Caucasus region to international markets and, in particular, to Western Europe. If the U.S., pressured by the Israel lobby, had not pushed for bypassing Iran, we would have perhaps been in a different situation than what we have now between Georgia and Russia, with all of its geopolitical implications.

While many have written about the causes and consequences of the war, little emphasis has been put on the role that the U.S. government's failed policy toward Iran has played in this rapidly developing situation.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and the three independent countries that emerged on the shores of the Caspian Sea, namely, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, declared that they would respect all the old international and bilateral treaties that the Soviet Union had signed. Crucial among them were two friendship treaties that had been signed by Iran and the Soviet Union in 1921 and 1940. An article in both treaties stated, "No country can take unilateral action regarding the Caspian Sea." Therefore, the five countries of the Caspian area, particularly Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, could not unilaterally decide what to do about the resources of the Caspian Sea without the consent of the other countries.

Even aside from the old Iran-Soviet treaties that Russia accepted legal responsibility for after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the fact is that, according to all the international treaties, so long as a territory is in dispute, no country can take unilateral action regarding its resources and riches. A good example is the dispute between Iran and Kuwait over the Dorra gas fields in the northern Persian Gulf. Both countries have avoided any action toward developing the fields, waiting for their final status to be negotiated. But, supported by the U.S., Azerbaijan and later Kazakhstan took unilateral actions and contracted out disputed oil and gas fields. Compare this with a similar situation, the dispute between Iran and Qatar in the Persian Gulf over the giant South Pars gas field (the largest in the world). Iran, the "pariah" nation, did no work on the gas field until negotiations between the two countries resulted in a framework for the

field's development. Each country is now developing its own sector.

But that was not the end of the U.S. meddling in the affairs of that region, particularly its wrong-headed policy toward Iran. Equally important is how to transport the oil and gas from that region to the international markets. The issue has remained politically charged, contributing much to the war between Russia and Georgia.

There are several foreign-operated oil fields in the Caucasus region and Central Asia. The oil from the ChevronTexaco-operated field of Tengiz in Kazakhstan is transported through a pipeline north into Russia and by rail west to the Georgian Black Sea port of Batumi. A second line was built by the Caspian Pipeline Consortium to Novorossiisk in Russia on the Black Sea.

The Kashagan oil field in northeast Caspian is the largest of them all, but it is still being developed. In the southern Caspian, oil from the British Petroleum-operated field of Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli in the Caspian Sea has been producing several hundred thousand barrels of oil per day.

The most economical way of transporting all that oil is by pipelines through Iran. For example, the Kazakh government drafted a framework agreement for construction of an oil pipeline from the Tengiz field to Belek on the eastern coast of the Caspian and from there to the Iranian port of Khark, on the Persian Gulf. The pipeline was supposed to pass through Tehran, Qom, and Esfahan. The estimated cost for the 900-mile pipeline was only \$1.2 billion. But, the U.S. strongly opposed this, and, as a result, the Tengiz oil is transported through routes that cost much more.

The French oil firm TotalFinaElf, with support from the National Iranian Oil Company, studied a pipeline that would take crude oil from Kashagan across the Caspian to the Iranian border. From there another pipeline was supposed to be built to transport the Kazakh oil across Iran to its Persian Gulf export terminals. The Russian pipeline operator, Transneft, and its Kazakh counterpart, KazTransOil, also carried out a feasibility study for developing a pipeline to Iran in order to link Omsk, in Siberia, with Iran's port Neka on the Caspian Sea. That pipeline would have allowed Russian, Turkmen, and Kazakh crude oil to be swapped for Iranian oil in its terminals on the Persian Gulf. Although some oil-swapping does take place between Iran and the Central Asian countries, U.S. opposition and pressure have prevented the pipeline from becoming a reality.

But the most contentious issue was about transporting Azerbaijan's oil to international market. All that had to be done was the construction of a pipeline from Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, to the Iranian border, a short distance away. From there, an Iranian pipeline, when upgraded, could have taken the oil to the Persian Gulf terminals. But the U.S., pressured by the Israel lobby, opposed this pipeline. Israel wanted to reward Turkey for having established close diplomatic and military relationships with it. Therefore, its lobby went to work in Washington to advocate an alternative route through Turkey.

The result is the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline that connects the Sangachal Terminal in Baku to the Marine Terminal in the Turkish port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean Sea, a 1,100-mile pipeline, 155 miles of which passes through Georgia. It was built at a cost of \$4 billion and was officially inaugurated on May 25, 2005.

The Baku-Tehran-Khark (BTK) pipeline could have been constructed at a fraction of the cost of the BTC pipeline. Another great advantage of the BTK pipeline would have been the fact that it would have passed through the politically stable Iran, whereas the BTC pipeline passes not only through Georgia, but also through the restive Kurdish areas of Turkey. The entire pipeline requires constant guarding in order to prevent sabotage. On Aug. 6, 2008, the pipeline was shut off by a major explosion and fire in the eastern Turkish province of Erzincan. The Kurdistan Workers Party took responsibility for the attack. The vulnerability of the Georgian portion of the BTC pipeline was also manifestly demonstrated when Russia bombed the areas around the pipeline's route in Georgia, just to send the "proper" message to the West.

One bogus justification for the construction of the costly BTC pipeline was that it would transport oil from several large Azeri oil fields to international markets, totaling 1 million barrels/day, without involving Iran or Russia. That has not happened. The Kurdashi field did not live up to the Italian oil firm Agip's expectations. TotalFinaElf failed to find any significant oil in the Lenkoran-Talysh field, and ExxonMobil could not find any oil in its Oguz and Zafar-Mashal concessions. Chevron's work yielded only lackluster results in its Absheron field. These failures would have made the BTK pipeline even more economical.

But all such advantages of the BTK pipeline were set aside. Instead a political pipeline was built, just to satisfy the Israel lobby. Its construction was also accompanied by numerous violations of human rights by both the Azeri and Turkish governments, which have been documented in the Czech documentary film Zdroj ("Source") and by Kurdish human rights activists.

But the U.S., following Israel's lead, was not yet done with its blind opposition to Iran's participation in the oil and natural gas market of the Caucasus and Central Asian regions, which would have made negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program more susceptible to success. The U.S. even pressured Kazakhstan to build a trans-Caspian pipeline from the Kazakh port of Aktau to Baku, in order to connect the Kashagan's oil to the BTC pipeline, which would have been a gigantic environmental disaster waiting to happen. But Russian and Iranian opposition killed that project.

Thus, had the U.S. not decided that, in order to isolate Iran to appease the Israel lobby, it would make a minor nation like Georgia the cornerstone of its policy in the Caucasus/Central Asia region; had the U.S. not demonized Iran, creating "threats" from its nonexistent nuclear weapon program to justify what it does in Europe against Russia; and had the U.S. agreed to economical oil pipelines through Iran, not a political one through unstable, war-torn regions in Georgia and Turkey, the Georgia-Russia war would not have seemed as significant, and the U.S. and NATO would not have looked so impotent. In fact, the war might not have happened at all.

But this is what happens when our foreign policy is held hostage by a foreign nation and its lobby.



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#2

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**Nasrallah: Georgia lost because of Israel**

Nasrallah: Georgia lost because of Israel

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7...582864,00.html>

In speech marking two-year anniversary of Second Lebanon War, Hizbullah secretary-general mocks Israeli political, military leadership: 'Gal Hirsch was defeated in Lebanon, and now lost the war for Georgia'.

"The entire front line of the army's brass stepped down because of the war. Gal Hirsch, who was defeated in Lebanon, went to Georgia and they too lost because of him," laughed Nasrallah.

Hirsch, a brigadier-general in the reserves, served as commander of the IDF's Galilee Division during the war and resigned in its wake. In recent years he consulted the Georgian army on the establishment of elite units and rearmament, and gave various courses in the fields of combat intelligence and fighting in built-up areas.



*Gal Hirsch - Lost to Hizbullah, then used this experience to help Georgia lose - Good going, General! They NEED you in Ukraine... (since you are undoubtedly job-hunting now)*

"Relying on Israeli experts and weapons, Georgia learned why the Israeli generals failed," proclaimed Nasrallah, "what happened in Georgia is a message to all those the Americans are seeking to entangle in dangerous adventures."

MORE FROM YNET:

War in Georgia: The Israeli connection

For past seven years, Israeli companies have been helping Georgian army to preparer for war against Russia through arms deals, training of infantry units and security advice

Arie EgoziLatest Update: 08.10.08, 11:53 / Israel News

The fighting which broke out over the weekend between Russia and Georgia has brought Israel's intensive involvement in the region into the limelight. This involvement includes the sale of advanced weapons to Georgia and the training of the Georgian army's infantry forces.

The Defense Ministry held a special meeting Sunday to discuss the various arms deals held by Israelis in Georgia, but no change in policy has been announced as of yet.

"The subject is closely monitored," said sources in the Defense Ministry. "We are not operating in any way which may counter Israeli interests. We have turned down many requests involving arms sales to Georgia; and the ones which have been approves have been duly scrutinized. So far, we have placed no limitations on the sale of protective measures."

Israel began selling arms to Georgia about seven years ago following an initiative by Georgian citizens who immigrated to Israel and became businesspeople.

"They contacted defense industry officials and arms dealers and told them that Georgia had relatively large budgets and could be interested in purchasing Israeli weapons," says a source involved in arms exports.

The military cooperation between the countries developed swiftly. The fact that Georgia's defense minister, Davit Kezerashvili, is a former Israeli who is fluent in Hebrew contributed to this cooperation.

"His door was always open to the Israelis who came and offered his country arms systems made in Israel," the source said. "Compared to countries in Eastern Europe, the deals in this country were conducted fast, mainly due to the defense minister's personal involvement."

Among the Israelis who took advantage of the opportunity and began doing business in Georgia were former Minister Roni Milo and his brother Shlomo, former director-general of the Military Industries, Brigadier-General (Res.) Gal Hirsch and Major-General (Res.) Yisrael Ziv.

Roni Milo conducted business in Georgia for Elbit Systems and the Military Industries, and with his help Israel's defense industries managed to sell to Georgia remote-piloted vehicles (RPVs), automatic turrets for armored vehicles, antiaircraft systems, communication systems, shells and rockets.

According to Israeli sources, Gal Hirsch gave the Georgian army advice on the establishment of elite units such as Sayeret Matkal and on rearmament, and gave various courses in the fields of combat intelligence and fighting in built-up areas.

'Don't anger the Russians'

The Israelis operating in Georgia attempted to convince the Israeli Aerospace Industries to sell various systems to the Georgian air force, but were turned down. The reason for the refusal was "special" relations created between the Aerospace Industries and Russia in terms of improving fighter jets produced in the former USSR and the fear that selling weapons to Georgia would anger the Russians and prompt them to cancel the deals.

Israelis' activity in Georgia and the deals they struck there were all authorized by the Defense Ministry. Israel viewed Georgia as a friendly state to which there is no reason not to sell arms systems similar to those Israel exports to other countries in the world.

As the tension between Russia and Georgia grew, however, increasing voices were heard in Israel – particularly in the Foreign Ministry – calling on the Defense Ministry to be more selective in the approval of the deals with Georgia for fear that they would anger Russia.

"It was clear that too many unmistakable Israeli systems in the possession of the Georgian army would be like a red cloth in the face of a raging bull as far as Russia is concerned," explained a source in the defense establishment.

For instance, the Russians viewed the operation of the Elbit System's RPVs as a real provocation.

"It was clear that the Russians were angry," says a defense establishment source, "and that the interception of three of these RPVs in the past three months was an expression of this anger. Not everyone in Israel understood the sensitive nerve Israel touched when it supplied such an advanced arms system to a country whose relations with Russia are highly tense."

In May it was eventually decided to approve future deals with Georgia only for the sale of non-offensive weapon systems, such as intelligence, communications and computer systems, and not to approve deals for the sale of rifles, aircraft, sells, etc.

A senior source in the Military Industry said Saturday that despite some reporters, the activity of Georgia's military industry was extremely limited.

"We conducted a small job for them several years ago," he said. "The rest of the deals remained on paper."

Dov Pikulin, one of the owners of the Authentico company specializing in trips and journeys to the area, says however that "the Israeli is the main investor in the Georgian economy. Everyone is there, directly or indirectly."

Georgian minister: Israel should be proud  
"The Israelis should be proud of themselves for the Israeli training and education received by the Georgian soldiers," Georgian Minister Temur Yakobashvili said Saturday.

Yakobashvili is a Jew and is fluent in Hebrew. "We are now in a fight against the great Russia," he said, "and our hope is to receive assistance from the White House, because Georgia cannot survive on its own."

"It's important that the entire world understands that what is happening in Georgia now will affect the entire world order. It's not just Georgia's business, but the entire world's business."

One of the Georgian parliament members did not settle Saturday for the call for American aid, urging Israel to help stop the Russian offensive as well: "We need help from the UN and from our friends, headed by the United States and Israel. Today Georgia is in danger – tomorrow all the democratic countries in the region and in the entire world will be in danger too."

Zvi Zinger and Hanan Greenberg contributed to this report

First Published: 08.10.08, 09:59



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#3

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Registered User



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'Inspired' by Israel, Georgia's FM seeks closer strategic ties

By Yossi Melman

"We are interested in a strategic partnership with Israel at the same level as our strategic partnership with the United States," Foreign Minister Gela Bezhuashvili of Georgia told Haaretz yesterday.

Bezhuashvili, who in the past served as his country's defense minister, would not elaborate on what he means by "strategic cooperation." However the phrase is understood as a code for arms and other security-related purchases, such as upgrading of planes, tanks, artillery, and border monitoring equipment.

Such such as upgrading of planes, tanks, artillery, and border monitoring equipment.

Such cooperation existed without fanfare until the beginning of 2005, and included a deal with Elbit defense electronics to upgrade 25 of Georgia's MIG fighter jets, communications equipment, and brief military advisors. But under pressure from Russia, Israel has since limited itself to selling Georgia only defensive weapons.

Bezhuashvili, 40, studied law at the University of Kiev and in Texas, and furthered his education at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. As Georgia's foreign minister for the past two years, he guiding a pro-Western foreign policy toward European Union and NATO membership.

Troubling ties

But troubled relations with Russia are casting a pall over these efforts. Since Georgia declared its independence in 1991, Russia has supported two separatist groups in Georgia, from the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Numerous flare-ups between the Georgian army and the separatists have occurred, in which the casualties occasionally include Russian officers.

"Since 2001, we are part of the struggle against global terrorism," Bezhuashvili said. "Our soldiers are in Iraq, the Balkans and Afghanistan, and we don't harbor terrorists. However to my regret, relations with Russia are deteriorating."

According to Bezhuashvili, Russia wants relations with Georgia to be those of "client-patron."

Russia has also raised the cost of gas and oil to Georgia, and has banned the import of wine and mineral water from Georgia.

To improve its economic situation, Georgia wants to encourage Israeli investments to raise the trade balance beyond its present rate, which according to Georgia's ambassador to Israel, Lasha Zhvania, is an unsatisfactory \$20 million annually.

"We admire the spirit and commitment of the people of Israel to their country," Bezhuashvili said. "We are inspired by it." During his visit, Bezhuashvili met with President Shimon Peres and Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik, and will meet today with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.



<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/915881.html>

(this article is dated Wed., October 24, 2007)



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#4

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Georgia's Israeli arms point Russia to Iran  
By Peter Hirschberg

JERUSALEM - With the eruption of fighting between Russia and Georgia, Israel has found itself in an awkward position as a result of its arms sales to Georgia. Israel is now caught between its friendly relations with Georgia and its fear that the continued sale of weaponry will spark Russian retribution in the form of increased arms sales to Iran and Syria.

After fighting broke out late last week between Georgia and Russia over the breakaway provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Israel's Foreign Ministry over the weekend recommended suspending the sale of all weapons and defense-related equipment to Georgia, the daily Ha'aretz newspaper reported.

The paper quoted an unnamed senior official saying that Israel needed "to be very careful and sensitive these days. The Russians are selling many arms to Iran and Syria and there is no need to offer them an excuse to sell even more advanced weapons."

Israel's immediate concern is that Russia will proceed with the sale of the S-300 anti-aircraft missile system to Iran, which would help it defend its nuclear installations from aerial attack. Israel, like the US, believes that Iran's nuclear program is aimed at developing a bomb, and Israeli leaders have refused to rule out the possibility of a pre-emptive strike aimed at derailing Iran's nuclear aspirations.

Israel recently conducted a major aerial exercise over the eastern Mediterranean and Greece that was widely viewed as a rehearsal for a possible strike against Iran's nuclear installations. But with the US and Europe resorting to diplomatic pressure in the form of sanctions to deter Iran, Israel is loathe to anger Russia, which until now has opposed harsher sanctions on Tehran.

Israel's relations with Georgia have been close, partly because there is a large Georgian Jewish community in Israel. In recent years, ties have also taken on a military dimension, with military industries in Israel supplying Georgia with some US\$200 million worth of equipment since 2000. This has included remotely piloted planes, rockets, night-vision equipment, other electronic systems and training by former senior Israeli officers.

"Israel should be proud of its military, which trained Georgian soldiers," Georgian Minister Temur Yakobashvili told Israel's Army Radio in Hebrew shortly after the fighting erupted.

Israel is not a major supplier of arms to Georgia, with the US and France supplying Tbilisi with most of its weaponry. But the arms transfers have attracted media attention partly because of the role played by some high-profile Israeli figures, including former Tel Aviv mayor Roni Milo, who conducted business in Georgia on behalf of Israel Military Industries.

According to media reports, Brigadier General Gal Hirsch, a senior commander in the 2006 Lebanon war who resigned after the release of a highly critical report on the way the war was conducted, served as an adviser to Georgian security forces.

Further attention was drawn to the Israel-Georgia arms trade earlier this year when a Russian jet shot down an Israeli-made drone being operated by the Georgians.

Even though weapons transfers were modest in scope, Russian diplomats began increasingly relaying to Israel their annoyance over its military aid to Georgia, including the special forces training provided by security experts. Israel decided about a year ago to limit military exports to defensive equipment and training.

New contracts weren't approved as the arms sales were scaled back. Georgia's request for 200 advanced Israeli-made Merkava tanks, for example, was turned down.

There were reports in Israel that the sale of the tanks didn't go through because of a disagreement over the commission that was to be paid as part of the deal. But Amos Yaron, the former director general of the Defense Ministry, insisted it had to do with "security-diplomatic considerations" - a clear reference to the sensitivity of the arms sales to Georgia. Israel, Yaron added, didn't want "to harm Russian interests too much".

Asked about the motivation to initially engage in the sale of weaponry to Georgia despite concerns it might anger Russia, Yaron replied: "We did see that there was potential for a conflagration in the region but Georgia is a friendly state, it's supported by the US, and so it was difficult to refuse."

(Inter Press Service)

[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle\\_East/JH14Ak02.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/JH14Ak02.html)



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#5

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Registered User



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Israel-Georgia Friendship Alley opened in Tbilisi  
May 9, 2008  
Georgian Public Broadcaster

The Israel-Georgia Friendship Alley has been opened near the upper block of Tbilisi State University earlier today, May 9. The alley opening is dedicated to 60th anniversary since foundation of State of Israel. 60 trees, brought from Israel, have been symbolically planted as part of the festive opening ceremony. Trees will be also planted in Kutaisi, Vani and Bazaleti.

"60 years have passed since David Ben-Gurion declared independence of Israel. To celebrate this date we decided to symbolically plant 60 trees brought from Israel to lay a foundation of Israel-Georgia Friendship Alley, which will remind every student of multi-century ties and friendship of the two countries," Ambassador of Israel to Georgia Shabtai Tsur said.

Israel declared itself an independent state on 14 May, 1948, three years after the end of World War II and the death of six million Jews in the Holocaust.

<http://georgiandaily.com/index.php?o...id=134&lang=ka>



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#6

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Israeli citizens from Haifa, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gush Dan and Jerusalem of Georgian origin hold the Georgian flags and chant anti-Russian slogans during a human chain protest along the sea front in Tel Aviv on August 14, 2008, in front of foreign embassies, including the US embassy, the president of the European Union, the French embassy and that of Russia. Russian forces entered neighbouring Georgian territories after Georgian troops clashed with separatist South Ossetian troops from the break away region of south Ossetia. South Ossetia, broke away from Georgia in the early 1990s and has an unrecognised government is supported by Moscow.



<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26208317/displaymode/1176/>



08-15-2008, 06:28 PM

#7

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A supporter of Russian-backed rebel regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia holds up a placard reading "Child killer Saakashvili, he killed 2,000 civilians in South Ossetia " during a demonstration in front of the Georgian Consulate, to protest against Georgia and USA on August 13, 2008 in Istanbul.

(The above language is from MSNBC's website)

Turkey plays both sides against the middle. They are Muslims and thus they have to keep up something of a facade of Muslim solidarity (if they don't want to get lynched by the population - I am talking about their "leaders"), but they are to a large extent an Israeli client state and an American pawn. Israel has its greasy hand way up Turkey's butt.



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#8

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Registered User



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This is from a pro-Israel blog and it contains the comments of the blogger:

Israel Trains Georgian Soldiers

Georgian minister Temur Yakobashvili yesterday told Israel Radio that the recent Georgian military success against Russian Tank divisions is all a result of Israeli training.

"Israel should be proud of its military, which trained Georgian soldiers," Yakobashvili, who is Jewish, told Army Radio in Hebrew. He was referring to a private Israeli group Georgia had hired.

Yakobashvili, Georgia's minister of reintegration, said this training enabled Georgia to defend itself against Russian forces in the warfare that erupted last week in the separatist region of South Ossetia, Georgia.

Yakobashvili said a small group of Georgian soldiers were able to wipe out an entire Russian military division, thanks to the Israeli training.

"We killed 60 Russian soldiers yesterday alone," said Yakobashvili. "The Russians have lost more than 50 tanks, and we have shot down 11 of their planes. They have sustained enormous damage in terms of manpower."

I had no idea that we were actually training military squads from other countries. I wonder how this benefits us.

<http://www.theisraelsituation.com/>



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#9

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## Israeli Has \$1 Billion Invested in Georgia

(IsraelINN.com) The Israeli-Georgia connection is estimated to be worth \$1 billion, according to a former Georgian ambassador to Israel. The Jewish state and private investors have provided military assistance and advisors to Georgia, **where pipelines pump oil destined for Israel**. A new pipeline is being built to bypass Russian territory.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Israeli companies in Georgia have begun evacuating their staff and that Israeli tourists are leaving for home.



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#10

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Monday, August 11, 2008

Russia angered by Israeli drone sale to Georgia

TEL AVIV — Israel has acknowledged the sale of unmanned aerial vehicles and other Israeli security support to Georgia which has prompted complaints and threats from Moscow.



Officials said the Defense Ministry approved the sale of several tactical UAV systems to Georgia in 2007, Middle East Newsline reported. They said Georgia has used the unidentified UAVs for border reconnaissance missions.

Georgia has credited Israeli military assistance after claiming the destruction of at least 11 Russian combat aircraft and 50 main battle tanks.

"Israel should be proud of its military, which trained Georgian soldiers," Georgian Reintegration Minister Temur Yakobshvili told Israel Army radio on Aug 10.

"We killed 60 Russian soldiers just yesterday. The Russians have lost more than 50 tanks, and we have shot down 11 of their planes. They have sustained enormous damage in terms of manpower."

Russia has complained of the Israeli UAV sale to Georgia. In May 2008, the Russian Army shot down an Israeli UAV along the Georgian border. The UAV was not identified.

The Russian demand for Israel to stop military sales came amid the intensification of fighting with Georgia and carried with it the implicit threat of increased aid for Israel's enemies.

Israel has countered with complaints about Russia's military exports to Iran and Syria. Moscow, like Israel, has responded by insisting it sells only defensive systems.

Meanwhile, Israel has been divided over whether to continue weapons sales to Georgia, Middle East Newsline reported.

Officials said the debate pits the Defense Ministry against the Foreign Ministry. They said the Foreign Ministry has advocated a suspension of all weapons sales and support services to Georgia while the Defense Ministry sought to continue exports.

"The question is whether there should be a temporary suspension of arms exports to Georgia during the war with Russia," an official said.

In addition to UAVs and other defensive systems, industry sources said Israeli firms have also sold rockets as well as night-vision systems to Tbilisi.

On Aug. 10, the Israeli Defense Ministry, which has overseen an estimated \$200 million in military exports to Georgia, convened senior staffers to review the Foreign Ministry recommendation. Officials said the ministry decided to continue to approve exports for non-lethal systems for military and security applications in Georgia.

"The Defense Ministry has been conducting a very wise policy," Amos Gilad, director of the Defense Ministry's political-military bureau, said. "It has taken all factors into account. Defensive systems have

been sent, and they have not upset the strategic balance."

Moscow has also asserted that Israeli trainers were advising the Georgian military on how to shoot down Russian combat aircraft and disable main battle tanks.

In December 2007, Israel decided to end the sale of offensive military systems to Georgia, but did not cancel any contracts. Officials said Israel came under pressure from Russia, who warned that such sales would be deemed a hostile act. France and the United States have been leading arms exporters to Georgia.

Still, Russia has pressed Israel for a complete military embargo on Georgia. Officials said the Israeli Foreign Ministry was concerned that Moscow could retaliate by selling advanced weapons to Iran and Syria.

"The Foreign Ministry, and this includes the minister, does not want to give Russia a pretext for selling advanced systems to Iran and Syria," the official said.

For its part, Israel has warned Russia not to export the S-300PMU-2 air and missile defense system to Teheran. Western intelligence sources said S-300 components have already arrived in Iran and were expected to be assembled into operating systems in early 2009.

[http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtri...0419\\_08\\_11.asp](http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtri...0419_08_11.asp)



08-15-2008, 08:19 PM

#11

[neozapatista](#)

Registered User



Join Date: Feb 2004  
Location: Occupied North bank  
Posts: 1,699

The fighting between Georgia and Russia that erupted over the weekend is expected to put a freeze on new investments from Israel, while current projects and investments are continuing for the time being.

"The current crisis will leave its mark on the flow of new investments by Israelis to Georgia," Itsik Moshe, president of the Israel-Georgia Chamber of Business, told The Jerusalem Post in a telephone interview from Tbilisi on Sunday.

"The fighting did not come as a big surprise to Israeli investors active in the area and about half of the 50 Israeli investors are staying in the area and the remainder has decided to go back. We don't believe that the situation will damage current investments.

Here in Tbilisi the atmosphere could be compared to being in Tel Aviv - business as usual - while at the same time Sderot is hit by rockets or if Israel were to enter the Gaza Strip," he said.

Moshe added that the chamber had not received any requests from Israelis to withdraw their investments or to transfer funds from banks in Georgia.

The value of realized Israeli investments and projects in the country amounts to \$700 million to \$800m, according to the chamber.

"The three most prominent Israeli real estate projects in Georgia are continuing building, including the \$100m. shopping mall project build by Eyal Ofer in the center of Tbilisi," Moshe said.

Speaking to the Post, Alexander Kipiani, economic councillor at the Embassy of Georgia in Tel Aviv, said economic activities such as customs processing were continuing as much as possible.

"There is a heavy situation and we hope that it is temporary, but Israeli investments in the country are not connected to military actions," said Kipiani. "We don't think the risk is real. We believe that those investments are safe."

Bilateral trade between Israel and Georgia amounted to \$56m. in 2007, out of which \$54m. were exports, according to the Israel Export Institute.

"For Georgia, this war is about fighting out an independent position. Georgia wants to show the business community that it is free - a country that is more Western and one that is seeking economic development and cooperation," Moshe said.

In addition to real estate and tourism, other areas in which there is great potential for Israeli investment and joint projects in Georgia are hi-tech, mass transit and transport.

"We are also seeing great interest from hi-tech companies, in particular software companies that are seeking to penetrate the market in Georgia," said Moshe.

In recent years, Georgia has taken much pride in its economic progress, attributing this success to the dramatic reforms introduced by the new, dynamic government in the aftermath of the 2003 Rose Revolution that displaced President Eduard Shevardnadze.

These included the introduction of a new tax code whereby the number of taxes were reduced from 22 to seven, with social taxes reduced from 36 percent to 20%, income tax from 30% to 12%, and taxes on corporate profits from 20% to 15%.

Customs duties were abolished with the exception of those imposed on a limited number of agricultural goods, and labor laws were changed to allow employers to hire and fire freely, with no impositions such as minimum salaries or on the number of working hours. There's also a one-stop shop for all licenses and permits, and foreign investors are entitled to exactly the same rights as local investors.

<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satelli...cle%2FShowFull>



08-15-2008, 08:35 PM

#12

[neozapatista](#)

Registered User



Join Date: Feb 2004  
 Location: Occupied North bank  
 Posts: 1,699

Conflict stems Georgia oil, gas pipeline flows  
 Tue Aug 12, 2008 12:22pm EDT  
 By Daniel Fineren

LONDON (Reuters) - BP (BP.L: Quote, Profile, Research, Stock Buzz) closed a Caspian oil pipeline and stopped pumping gas through Georgia as fighting continued on Tuesday, forcing neighboring Turkey to look to Iran for gas.

The British oil major denied that either pipeline had been damaged in the fight between Georgia and Russia over South Ossetia but said it had decided to stop pumping until the conflict died down.

"We have checked those and there are no reports of any impact to any of the pipelines," the BP spokesman said, adding that the pipelines would resume normal exports when it was safe to do so.

The closure of the Western Route Export Pipeline (WREP), which takes crude from the Caspian port of Baku in Azerbaijan to the Georgian port of Supsa on the Black Sea, further limits BP's export options from the land-locked Caspian Sea after a fire damaged its key Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) link to Turkey last week.

That export route closure forced offshore Azeri fields to cut output from 800,000 barrels per day to 250,000 bpd, according to trade sources. WREP could have been carrying up to 155,000 bpd until it was shut on Tuesday.

#### GAS EXPORTS

BP has also stopped pumping gas from the Shah Deniz field in the Caspian Sea into the South Caucasus Pipeline which takes it from Baku to Turkey through the Georgian capital Tbilisi.

"It is still exporting into Turkey, what has been suspended is the pumping at the Baku end. The Shah Deniz is pumping far less in at that end," the BP spokesman said.

BP said there were several days worth of gas supplies already inside the 692-km long pipeline which could be sent to Turkey, while a senior source at Turkish pipeline operator Botas said it should be enough for at least a week.

If the conflict has still not died down enough for BP to turn the gas pumps in Baku back on, Turkey will need to make up for the lost supplies by turning to Iran.

"The resulting gas needs will be met from Iran," the Botas source said. "There will not be any supply problems."

Oil production continues at the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli oilfields in the Caspian Sea despite the closure of the BTC pipeline they usually export through and its recent stand in, the 830-km WREP line to Supsa.

"The fields are still running but at reduced rates because of other routes for exports," a BP spokeswoman said.

The closure leaves BP with a 100,000 bpd pipeline to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiisk or a railway line that could export up to 50,000 bpd via Georgia's Black Sea port of Batumi as the only available export options.

(Additional reporting by Orhan Coskun and Alex Lawler)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-O...080812?sp=true>



08-15-2008, 08:44 PM

#13

[neozapatista](#)

Registered User



Join Date: Feb 2004  
 Location: Occupied North bank  
 Posts: 1,699



Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan Oil Pipeline: "State within a State"  
 August 9, 2008 - 9:29 am

The 50-metre wide corridor, through which the pipeline runs, is a virtual state within a state. It is governed by the Inter-Governmental Agreement signed by the participating countries. The agreement largely exempts BP and its partners from any laws in the three countries by allowing the consortium to demand compensation should any legislation (including environmental, social and human rights laws) make the pipeline less profitable. The pipeline passes through a national park in Georgia and several other environmentally sensitive sites. Critics claim that land has been taken from local farmers without proper compensation.

BP has invested at least \$15 billion in Azerbaijan. An article on the Asia Times website last week commented: "According to Baku's street wisdom, the man who really rules Azerbaijan is David Woodward, BP's chairman, known as 'the viceroy', a walking oil atlas with more than three decades working for the company from Scotland to Abu Dhabi and from Alaska to Siberia. Woodward and BP mercilessly spin that BTC is the cleanest and safest pipeline ever built. Georgian peasants and English non-governmental organisations beg to differ."

The Bush administration has not hesitated in supporting the corrupt Azerbaijan dictatorship. Heydar Aliyev, a long-time Stalinist party boss, ruled the republic as his personal fiefdom from 1969 as part of the Soviet Union, then in the 1990s as a separate country. After his death in 2003, his son Ilham, notorious as a playboy, casino owner and vice-president of the state oil company SOCAR, took over the reins. According to Transparency International's global corruption index, Azerbaijan ranks 140 out of 146 countries.

On May 21, Azeri riot police waded into an opposition protest of some 500 people with batons, arresting at least 45 people. The demonstration was called to demand amendments to the country's electoral laws, the creation of an independent public broadcaster and the prosecution of the killer of journalist Elmar Guseinov, a critic of the regime shot dead in early March outside his apartment. The government banned the protest, declaring that the timing was "inappropriate" just days before the pipeline's opening.

A report by Human Rights Watch last month criticised neighbouring Georgia, hailed this month by Bush as "a beacon of liberty", for failing to guarantee the end of torture and duress to extract confessions from prisoners. "The new government... has taken some steps to address abusive practices, but these efforts have proven inadequate to stem them. Moreover, some of the government's new law enforcement policies appeared to trigger new allegations of due process violations, torture and ill-treatment," it stated.

All three participating countries are desperate for income. The pipeline will take six months to fill and is projected to reach a flow of one million barrels a day by 2008. Once fully operational Azerbaijan is expected to accrue \$29 billion a year in oil revenues and Georgia and Turkey \$600 million and \$1.5 billion in annual transit fees respectively.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the standard of living in both Georgia and Azerbaijan has plummeted, with the annual average per capita income currently at just \$730 and \$710 respectively. Little or none of the projected pipeline income will be used to end the social crisis in these countries. One measure of the indifference to the plight of ordinary people is the consortium's token spending on "community and environmental investment"—estimated to be just \$30 million compared to construction costs of \$4 billion.

As far as Washington is concerned, the pipeline's projected economic benefits are just one element of a more far-reaching plan. The BTC is a convenient lever for the US to extend its political influence and to buttress its military presence in Central Asia to the detriment of its rivals—particularly Russia and China. The Bush administration has already used its "war on terrorism" to establish military bases for the first time in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Now the US is using "pipeline security" as the pretext for forging closer military ties with Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Speculation that the US is seeking to base troops in Azerbaijan was heightened by last month's visit to Baku by US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. In congressional testimony earlier this year, US commander in Europe General James Jones declared that the US was interested in creating a special "Caspian guard" to protect the BTC. The Wall Street Journal reported in April that the US plans to spend \$100 million on such a force, including the establishment of a command centre in Baku. Concerned over Russian opposition, Azerbaijan has to date been reluctant to commit itself.

Russian hostility to Washington's growing intrusion into Central Asia was spelled out by Mikhail Margelov, head of the international affairs committee of the country's parliamentary upper house. "Russia's attitude to proposals made by some politicians that this task [pipeline security] should actually be delegated to the United States, is firmly negative. Russia will always oppose the presence of any foreign military contingents within the countries of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]," he commented.

<http://highboldtage.wordpress.com/20...ithin-a-state/>



08-15-2008, 09:03 PM

#14

[neozapatista](#)

Registered User



Join Date: Feb 2004  
Location: Occupied North bank  
Posts: 1,699

'Obama a risk to Israel,' warns respected Israeli figure

Tuesday, 12 August 2008

Wednesday, August 06, 2008 Israel Today Staff

Former Israeli cabinet minister and respected international figure Natan Sharansky warned American Jews this week that voting for Democratic candidate Barack Obama in the upcoming presidential election would risk Israel's future.

Speaking on Shalom TV, a Jewish cable network that reaches 18 million American households, Sharansky avoided the rampant conspiracy theories regarding Obama, but did note that his lack of a positive record vis-a-vis Israel should raise concerns.

With Obama, said Sharansky, "nobody can know for sure what will be. It can happen to be good. It can happen to be very bad. It's a risk."

Also of concern is Obama's tendency to surround himself with advisors who are either hostile toward the Jewish state or advocate sacrificing Israeli interests for American interests.

By contrast, Sharansky said that Republican candidate John McCain, whom he has known personally for 20 years, has a long, strong record of support for Israel.



Quote

08-15-2008, 09:06 PM

#15

**Bilbo Baggins**  
Registered User

Join Date: May 2003  
Location: The Shire, Middle Earth  
Posts: 9,026  
Blog Entries: [1](#)

Time for Iraqi Resistance to start detonating more Iraqi oil export pipelines-keep the west busy on **multiple fronts!**

Clue No. 1 for stormfront flunkies:

"Those were happier days when there was still close friendship between folk of different race..."-Gandalf, Fellowship of the Ring; J.R.R.Tolkien

capitalism/fascism-two sides of the same coin.

Jewish people united to SMASH zio-nazism!:

<http://www.jewsagainstzionism.com>

Quote

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