

**UNOMIG: Briefing to the Security Council on the**  
**7th April Commemorative Meeting of the Group of Friends**  
**(21 April 2005)**

Mr President,

1. I am grateful for this opportunity to brief Council members on some recent developments relating to the United Nations-led Georgian-Abkhaz peace process.

2. On 7 and 8 April 2005, senior representatives of the Group of the Friends of the Secretary-General met in Geneva under my chairmanship. Special Representative Tagliavini also participated. This was the fifth Geneva meeting of the Friends since February 2003. This series of meetings is intended to offer the Members of the Group and the Secretariat a means to take stock of political progress in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict settlement and to encourage advances by the parties through discussions on three major areas: political and security issues, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and economic cooperation.

3. The Georgian and Abkhaz sides participated in the meeting. The Georgian delegation was headed by Mr. Giorgi Khaindrava, State Minister for Conflict Resolution, the Abkhaz side was led by Mr. Sergei Shamba, de-facto Foreign Minister. This was the first time that both parties attended this kind of meeting since July 2003 and, indeed, their first engagement with one another since the suspension of contacts in July 2004.

4. On the first day, we held separate discussions with the representatives of the two sides, and both sides were then present together during the final session on the second day when they and the Friends made their closing statements. The parties also had opportunities to meet informally with each other and with international representatives on the margins of the meeting. Let me summarize the main points that emerged during the discussions.