

*Создание Ссылки с гуманитарной помощью в
Тбилиси и Армению - 24 сентября 1997 г.*

Activity of LINKS
(The London Information Network on Conflicts and state-building)
and Caucasus Links during September 1997

*Решение репрессивных
ситуаций в Грузии
(создание ССЛК)
Ссылки - репрессивные!*

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The activity of LINKS and Caucasus Links and the programme of work for 1998 were discussed in Tbilisi at the end of September during a joint meeting of the Board of Directors of the two organisations and our International Advisory Council. The highly successful event bringing together the members of the three boards for the first time has confirmed the versatility with which these structures interact with each other.

At the end of September we hosted in Tbilisi a conference on the current state of Georgian-Ossetian relations. Our work on South Ossetia continued during this month as we intensified our work in support of the efforts of the two sides and of the international community to find a comprehensive and lasting political solution to the Georgian-Ossetian conflict.

During September also our work on behalf of the European Union Tacis Programme related to the establishment of the New Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus in Georgia continued at a steady pace.

1 September

Dennis Sammut (Executive Director of LINKS) and Zviad Mukbaniani (Executive Director of Caucasus Links) met the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Georgia, Ms Nino Ckoadze, to discuss issues related to the establishment of the New Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus.

2 September

Dennis Sammut and Nikola Cvetkovski (Director of Caucasus Links) met the head of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, Ambassador Michael Libal, to brief him on the recent initiatives of the two partner organisations related to Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

At the office of Caucasus Links British and Georgian NGOs held a commemoration of the life of Diana, Princess of Wales. Speakers from LINKS, the Halo Trust, and the British Ambassador to Georgia Stephen Nash, spoke on the work of Diana Princess of Wales in support of humanitarian issues, particularly her work in favour of the campaign to ban land mines.

3 September

Dennis Sammut and Nikola Cvetkovski met officials of the Norwegian Refugees Council to discuss issues related to work in South Ossetia.

4 September

On the initiative of Caucasus Links, British Ambassador to Georgia, Stephen Nash visited South Ossetia to acquaint himself with the situation in the region and the work of the international community.

The Ambassador, accompanied by Dennis Sammut and Nikola Cvetkovski held separate meetings with President Ludwig Cibirow, Chairman of Parliament Kosta Dzugaev and Foreign Minister Gagloiti. He also met the South Ossetia Centre for Social and Political Studies and visited the Tskinali Theatre and the Orthodox Church in Tskinali. Separate meetings were held with the Tskinali of the OSCE Mission and with the Commander of the Russian Peacekeeping Forces, generali Yuri Alexander Yuriv.

Dennis Sammut had a private meeting with the Chairman of the South Ossetian Parliament, Kosta Dzugaev. Current initiatives in support of the peaceful resolution of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict were reviewed.

5 September

Caucasus Links hosted a seminar of NGOs and activists in Tskinali, South Ossetia interested in environmental issues. The seminar was moderated by Nikola Cvetkovski.

In Tbilisi Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani had a meeting with Gogi Lazarishvili, Chairman of the Commission on the issue of the Tskinali Region in the Parliament of Georgia.

Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani later met Vakhtang Kolbaia, Deputy Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia to discuss the Abkhaz Issue.

In the evening Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani met Rezo Adamia, Chairman of the Commission on Defence and National Security of the Parliament of Georgia.

8 September

The Board of LINKS met in London. Present were all members (Richard Chambers, Anthony Hyman and Dennis Sammut). The Board discussed organisational issues.

10 September

Dennis Sammut met in Brussels with Helen Holm and Christopher Le Bretton of the Tacis Environmental Programme in DG1A of the European Commission to discuss progress in the project to set up a Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus in Georgia.

11 September

Dennis Sammut met in Brussels with Phillippe Bourel de la Ronciere, Anna Bramwell and Christine Heffner of the Directorate on Environment and Nuclear safety (DGXI) of the European Commission to discuss progress in the project to set up a New regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus in Georgia.

Dennis Sammut met in Brussels with David Geer, Lead Task Manager of the Tacis Democracy programme at the European Foundation for Human Rights to discuss issues related to the Democracy Programme.

12 September

Dennis Sammut visited the Regional Environmental Centre for East and Central Europe in Budapest to familiarise himself with the work of the centre, which is to be the model for the New Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus in Georgia. He met different section heads and got acquainted with many of the activities and procedures of the Budapest Centre.

15 September

Dennis Sammut met in Istanbul with the Director of the Black Sea Environmental Programme. Issues related to the forthcoming meeting between Georgian and Abkhaz environmentalists were discussed.

16 September

Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani had discussions in Tbilisi with Zurab Nogaidelli, Head of the International Office of the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia to discuss the forthcoming conference on Georgian-Ossetian relations.

Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani met the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Georgia Ms. Nino Ckoadze.

17 September

Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbaniani met with Vakhtang Kolbaia, Deputy Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia to discuss the Abkhaz issue.

18 September

Dennis Sammut and Zviad Mukbvaniani briefed officials of the European Union Delegation to Georgia on progress in the project to set up a New regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus in Georgia.

At the office of Caucasus Links in Tbilisi Georgian environmental NGOs met with funding agencies and donor governments to present to them the programme of activities to mark Black Sea Day.

19 September

Dennis Sammut met at Caucasus Links in Tbilisi with the visiting delegation from Amnesty International.

Nikola Cvetkovski visited Tskinali where he met the Chairman of the South Ossetian Parliament Kosta Dzugaev and Presidential Advisor Kosta Kochiev to discuss the forthcoming conference on Georgian Ossetian relations being organised by LINKS and Caucasus Links in Tbilisi.

21 September

Dennis Sammut met at the Caucasus Links office with representatives of the internally displaced persons from Abkhazia to discuss issues related to Cultural, educational and youth issues. The meeting was attended by Svetlana Ketsba, Minister of Culture of the Abkhaz

Autonomous Republic (in exile) and Deputy Minister of Culture of Georgia, Academician Professor Otar Jordania, Rector of the Sukhumi Branch of Tbilisi State University, Napoleon Milorava, Head of the Department of Youth Affairs of the Government of Abkhaz Autonomous republic (in exile), Tiniko Adzami, Chairman of the Alliance of Youth Organisations of Abkhazia, Giorgi Atsiani, Director of the Abkhaz Children's Theatre, Shota Insali, Chief Choreographer of the Young Children's Assembly of Abkhazia and Mamuka Maisuradze, representative of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic (in exile). During the meeting problems of the refugee community in the field of education, culture and youth affairs were discussed.*

Zviad Mukbaniani participated in a seminar held at the Port of Batumi on a cruise ship carrying world religious leaders and leading environmentalists focusing on the relationship between religion and environment. Amongst those attending were the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Catholicos Patriarch of All Georgians and the European Union Commissioner on Environment and Nuclear Safety.

22 September

Dennis Sammut met at the State Chancellory of Georgia with officials of the Unit CIS and Peaceful Caucasus to discuss issues of interest.

23 September

Dennis Sammut met with Marco Borsotti, United Nations Resident in Tbilisi to discuss issues related to South Ossetia.

25 September

At the office of Caucasus Links in Tbilisi an all Party Parliamentary Delegation from the United Kingdom met with more than twenty Georgian NGOs to discuss the role of civil society in the present Georgian situation. The meeting was chaired by Caucasus Links Director Nino Kadagidze. The British Parliamentary Delegation was led by Jim Cousins MP and included the Baroness Smith of Gilmorehill.

The work of LINKS in Central Asia was discussed at session of the working group on Central Asia attended by Anthony Hyman, Paul Bergne and Dennis Sammut.

26 September

A Board Meeting of Caucasus Links was held in Tbilisi. The board meeting was attended by all members (Nikola Cvetkovski, Nino Kadagidze, Dimitri Medoev, Zviad Mukbaniani and Dennis Sammut). In addition Anthony Hyman (Director of LINKS) and Paul Bergne and Professor Kazbeg Sultanov (Members of the International Advisory Council) attended as guests. The meeting reviewed the current work of Caucasus Links and agreed on a rotating chairmanship of the Board on a six months basis. It also appointed the Board's Legal Advisor and external auditors and agreed on the programme and budget for 1998.

27 September

A Board meeting of LINKS was held in Tbilisi. All members (Richard Chambers, Anthony Hyman and Dennis Sammut) were present. The meeting reviewed the work of LINKS and approved the budget and programme of activities for 1998.

A joint meeting of the Board of Directors of LINKS, the Board of Directors of Caucasus Links and the International Advisory Council took place in Tbilisi. All directors of LINKS and Caucasus Links and Mr Paul Bergne, Mr Bruce Clarke, Professor Christopher Mitchell and Professor Kazbeg Sultanov from the International Advisory Council were present. Professor John Darby was unavoidably absent and sent his apologies.* The joint meeting reviewed the work of LINKS and Caucasus Links and heard reports from Dennis Sammut, Richard Chambers and Zviad Mukbaniani. The meeting divided into working groups on Caucasus Issues, Publications and Fund Raising.

28 September

The joint meeting continued in Tbilisi. It heard reports from the working groups. The budget and Programme of activity for 1998 of the two organisations were discussed. The meeting had a comprehensive review of the fundraising strategy of the partner organisations for the coming year. It also agreed on a plan of action for work on Central Asia. The joint meeting agreed on increasing the number of members of the International Advisory Council to eight. Decision on the three new members will be taken at the next joint meeting to be held in London in Spring 1998.*

29 September

The Conference "Georgian Ossetian Conflict: Is lasting peace a reality or an illusion" organised by LINKS and Caucasus Links was held at the Metechi Palace Hotel in Tbilisi with the participation of delegations from Tbilisi and Tskinali, as well as the international community. The Baroness Smith of Gilmorehill welcomed the participants on behalf of the organisers. Representatives of the two sides exchanged views on developments in the current negotiations. Representatives of the international community spoke about efforts at finding a lasting solution to the conflict and for the economic rehabilitation of the conflict zone.*

A delegation headed by the Deputy Chairman of the parliament of South Ossetia travelled to Tbilisi for the conference. The delegation was accompanied on its journey to and from Tbilisi by representatives of Caucasus Links and by a special security unit provided by the President of Georgia. In the evening the Directors of Caucasus Links hosted a reception for the participants of the Conference at the Office of Caucasus Links.

** reports of these meetings are available on request*

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