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Perspectives on Caucasus Issues

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PERSPECTIVES ON



CAUCASUS ISSUES

A REPORT ON THE FORUM OF THE CAUCASUS NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

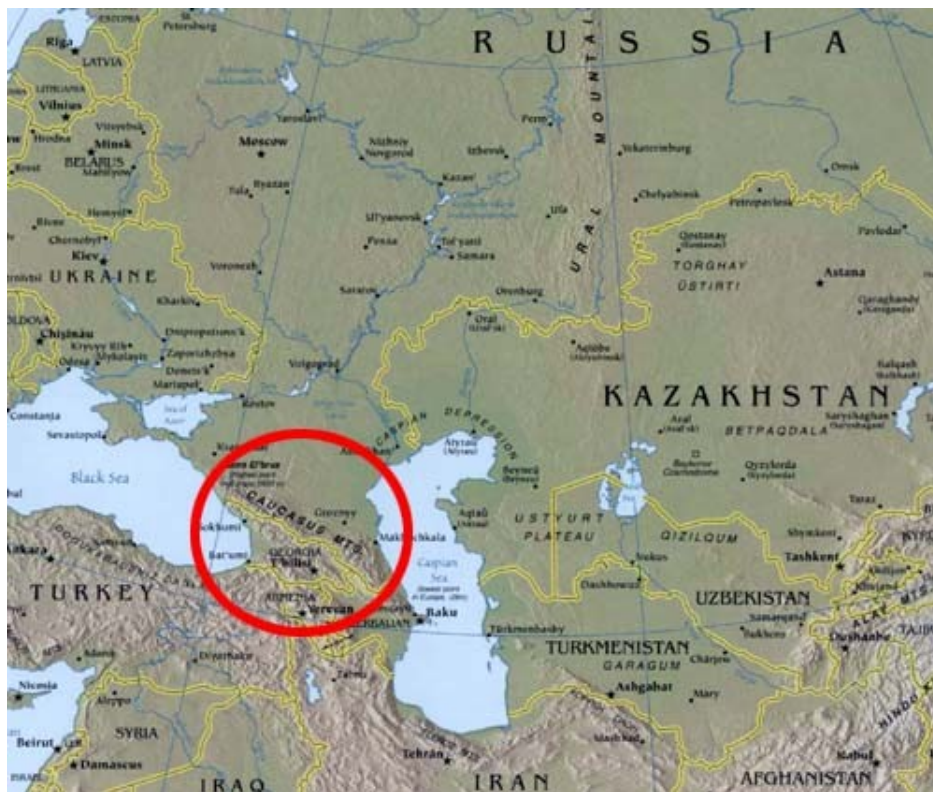
**Kislovodsk, Russian Federation
March 29-April 1, 2000**

Valeria Ciobanu, Author
Stephen Bowers, Editor

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The Caucasus Region within the Commonwealth of Independent States



SUMMARY

Background: From 29 March to 1 April 2000 several Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations, based in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and calling themselves the Caucasus Forum, met to discuss humanitarian issues in the northern Caucasus. The goal of their conference was to define the issues facing the region and to develop concrete steps to alleviate some of the more pressing humanitarian problems.

Key points:

The **Karachay-Cherkessia** Region is potentially the most explosive and dangerous part of the region. It has a population split along ethnic lines between the Russian and Cherkess peoples.

Mutual suspicion is high

Karahaev, the Russian leader, is ready for a dialogue with the Cherkess, but the Cherkess must be coached to the discussion table

Russian Central government in Moscow is perceived by both sides as an honest broker

Conflict in the Karachay-Cherkess Region would almost certainly spill over into the Kabardino-Balkaria Region.

Ossetia

Pressure for the union of North and South Ossetia is increasing

Ethnic conflict between the Ossetian and Ingush peoples in the area complicates this drive to union

Daghestan

Refugee population is the main problem in Daghestan as it has exacerbated ethnic tension (15,000 refugees in Daghestan from Chechnya)

Most of the "invaders" of Daghestan in 1999 were Daghestanis or Arabs and not Chechens

There is a great deal of anti-Chechen feeling in Daghestan as a result of the "invasion of Daghestan"

Chechens lay claim to the Aukh Autonomous Region within Daghestan as Chechen territory

There is ethnic tension between the Lezgin and Chechen peoples in Daghestan

Georgia - there is tension between the Kistins and Chechens living in Georgia.

BACKGROUND: THE CAUCASUS FORUM



Alan
Parastaev

Between July 19-26, 1998, in the city of Nalichik, situated at the foot of the Elbrus Mountain, a number of Caucasus non-governmental organizations (NGO's) officially met to discuss for the first time the problems regional NGO's face in their daily activities, as well as the causes and the possible solutions to these problems. Among the main issues were the insufficient development of the civil society in the region and the partial or total isolation of the people of the Caucasus. As a result of these discussions, the participants proposed the creation of an intergovernmental structure that would coordinate the activity of the NGO's in the region and would contribute to the resolution of some of the most stringent problems of the Caucasus. To this end, representatives of over 20 regional organizations signed the so-called "Declaration of Elbrus" (see Annex 2 for a facsimile of the declaration). A new organization emerged: ***The Caucasus Forum***.

The goals of the Forum are to:

- Revive the Caucasus culture;
- Support common civic initiatives, aimed at cultivating a spirit of tolerance, develop political consciousness and create and sustain public awareness;
- Revive traditions of free and peaceful living in the area;
- Fight inter-ethnic hatred;
- Create a society based on trust and cooperation.

To reach its goals, the Forum has undertaken to do the following:

- Create and insure permanent contact and dialog among the regional organizations;
- Create a communication network among the Forum participants;
- Support and develop regional NGO's;
- Support projects initiated within the Forum.

For the Forum to function effectively, an Initiative Group was created to coordinate its activities. The Initiative Group was later designated as a Board which would include representatives of the founding organizations. The most important decisions are taken within the annual sessions of the forum. Between sessions, the work of the Forum is carried out by an Executive Group consisting of a representative secretary (periodically elected every 3-4 months) and an executive secretary, elected each year. Alan Parastaev is the current Executive Secretary of the Forum.



Kislovodsk - South Russia

The following is an account of the meeting of the Caucasus Forum which took place in Kislovodsk between March 29 and April 1, 2000. This is the official report of the meeting as drafted by Valeria Ciobanu and edited by Stephen Bowers. A full list of participants is attached in Annex 1.



Discussion group:
theoretical issues



Discussion group:
Chechnya-Ingushetia



Dr. Stephen Bowers,
Director of the
Center for Security
and Science, at the
Kislovodsk city gate

REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE CAUCASUS FORUM

March 29-April 1, 2000
Kislovodsk, Russian Federation

GOALS

The goals of the forum were:

- to discuss the results of the activities of the Forum during the last year;
- to develop the strategy of the Forum for the year 2000;
- to discuss the needs of the members of the Forum;
- to invite new members to participate in the activities of the Forum.

Also, the round-table of the NGO's of the Northern Caucasus was organized. The following issues were discussed on the round-table:

The influence of the war in Daghestan and Chechnya on the neighboring regions of the Northern Caucasus;

Peace-making, humanitarian and legal activities of NGO's in the Northern Caucasus

The development of joint initiatives to stabilize the situation in the Northern Caucasus, ease ethnic tensions, minimize the consequences of the war and prevent new conflicts.

Participants identified and discussed many possible ways of managing and preventing conflicts in the Caucasus region. Because of recent developments, special attention was paid to the Northern Caucasus.

During the conference the situation was discussed in small groups, and each of them concentrated on one of the following regions/issues:

Karachay-Cherkessia, including Kabardino-Balkaria and Ossetia

Daghestan

Chechnya-Ingushetia

the theoretical questions of peace-making in the Caucasus region

the situation in the Caucasus as a whole.

The materials about the regions, "non-regional" projects and ideas developed during the discussion are presented below:

Close-up of the Northern-Caucasus region



KARACHAY-CHERKESSIA

It was noted that conflict in this region is potentially the most dangerous since it would spill over to neighboring regions inhabited by related ethnic groups (Kabardins, Balkars, Adigs, Abkhaz). Moreover, the Russians, who constitute the majority of the population in Karachay-Cherkessia, may mobilize themselves around the Kazak movement. That may lead to dramatic changes in the situation in the Northern Caucasus.

Today there is no monitoring of the situation in the republic, and there is no strategy that would help find a solution to the political deadlock.

Most of the members of the group that worked on this region concluded that the main strategy should be to prevent conflict through the development of a dialogue among the opponents.

Today the work is just beginning. In November representatives of the NGO's visited the region for a few days and, as a result, a report was prepared. The mission established contacts with the region's movements on both sides of the conflict. However, the dialogue among the opponents did not start since their representatives did not come to the Kislovodsk meeting where it was decided to organize a "contact group" on Karachay-Cherkessia.

These are some of the conclusions that the first mission to Karachay-Cherkessia made:

both sides think that corruption should be brought to an end but both sides also think that struggle against corruption is mostly the opponent's problem;
both sides think that unemployment is one of the main problems in the republic, and it is the result of wrong privatization;
both sides think that the republic should be governed on the principles of rotation and equal representation but both sides understand these principles differently;
paradoxically, the Cherkess side is partly satisfied by the fact that Derev did not win the elections because his victory would have created a situation when the Cherkess would not have the moral right to desire partition;
both sides consider the federal government of the Russian Federation the most legitimate mediator;
both sides prefer peaceful resolution of the conflict to an armed conflict.

The Caucasus Forum drew the following conclusions:

The society in Karachay-Cherkess Republic is divided along ethnic lines. The Cherkess and Karachaevs, even those who were friends in the past, now do not communicate with each other. To some degree, hostility exists in everyday life.

The conflict is deeply rooted and cannot be resolved on the governmental level without taking into consideration the opinion of each side and mobilizing local support for any decision.

The federal government is in a unique position with respect to this conflict. Since one of the sides in the conflict wants to change only internal borders in the republic, but not external, both sides seek the resolution of the conflict at the federal center. The federal government has an opportunity to work out a plan for the resolution of the conflict, which would include economic, social and political reforms.

The situation requires additional research. It is necessary to find out to what extent the demands of nationalistic leaders coincide with the opinion of the population.

The Karachaev side is ready for a dialogue and its objective is to convince the Cherkess side to accept the status quo, occupy vacant positions in the government, and continue to work together.

The Cherkess side is ready for a dialogue, and its objective is to convince the Karachaevs to separate peacefully.

The Caucasus Forum found it possible to do the following:

to create conditions for a dialogue on the non-governmental level, providing organizational and financial support;

to invite the representatives of both Karachaevs and Cherkess to the next meeting of the Forum;

to invite the youth of Karachay-Cherkessia to participate in the activities of the Forum;

to develop a program for the education of young leaders in the problems of information, civil society and conflict resolution;

to continue researching the situation in the republic;

to invite non-governmental organs of Balkaria to participate in the activities of the Forum;

to attract the attention of international organizations to the situation in Karachay-Cherkessia, encourage cooperation among the Russian federal center and organizations like the UN and OSCE in order to provide Karachay-Cherkessia with economic and other forms of help.

All participants agreed that there is a lot of work to be done.

The following steps will be made on the part of the Caucasus Forum:

The monitoring of the situation in the region, including cooperation with ethnic diasporas in neighboring regions (because of the difficult situation in Karachay-Cherkessia an independent research work in the republic is almost impossible).

The organization of meetings where NGO's and ethnic movements of the North-West Caucasus can start a dialogue. Karachay and Cherkess diasporas in neighboring regions can be used to help organize those meetings (for example, international center "Druzhba" in Kislovodsk and organization "The assembly of the peoples of Russia").

The organization of a permanent dialogue between the opponents and the creation of appropriate conditions for their meetings, mediation, etc.

The transition from a periodic dialogue to a permanent one, joint initiatives to bring together ethnic communities and involve the representatives of the government in the dialogue. The latter is facilitated by the dynamic situation that exists today in the republic and encourages people to change their jobs very often. They leave public organizations for positions in the government and vice versa, which makes it possible to influence the government through certain non-governmental organizations.

KABARDINO-BALKARIA

The situation in the republic largely depends on the situation in Karachay-Cherkessia, because Kabardins are ethnically and culturally close to the Cherkess, and Balkars are close to Karachayevs. Therefore, a conflict in Karachay-Cherkessia may provoke a similar split in Kabardino-Balkaria. The major challenge in the republic is to create NGO's capable of peace-making because despite seeming peace the ongoing processes in the republic can lead to a serious conflict in the future.

OSSETIA

South Ossetia was the first successful region in the Caucasus in terms of conflict resolution. In 1996-1997, when summits were first organized, opponents agreed that political questions should be put aside so they could concentrate on economic

problems first. For instance, they decided to fulfill the obligations to restore what was destroyed during the war between Russia and Georgia. Although both sides make efforts to improve the situation, nothing has been done to restore the economy and the basic infrastructure of the region. For the two months prior to the conference, electricity was available for only four hours each day.

The representatives of regional NGO's believe that Russia and Georgia should be encouraged to be more active in their efforts. At this point the effort to integrate South and North Ossetia is intensifying. It is believed that everything depends on the representatives of North Ossetia. It is also believed that there are no clear perspectives on how the conflict will be resolved. While there are contacts on the personal level there is recognition that this is not enough. There is no guarantee that the present policy will continue if the leadership changes. Conference participants feel that everything depends too much on the president of Georgia personally and on the administration that he directs.

As to the conflict resolution, the Forum believes that a federal treaty must be signed between South Ossetia and Georgia. Although the 1991 referendum showed that the people of South Ossetia wanted to live in an independent state, it does not seem to be the right way to resolve the conflict.

The situation in the region is relatively stable but is complicated by the Osetino-Ingush conflict and the refugee problem.

There are several ideas as to how the Forum can help:

the creation of a "hot line" for refugees;

the publication of a photo album about refugees;

the organization of meetings among the children of Chechnya, Ingushetia and Ossetia, as well as summer camps for rehabilitation and elimination of mutual stereotypes;

the development of projects to help ease tensions in the zone of the Osetino-Ingush conflict.

DAGHESTAN

Today many problems in Daghestan are related to refugees from Chechnya. A lot of refugees remained from the previous war, and the second war produced another flow of refugees. Now there are more than 15 thousand people from Chechnya in Daghestan. The tragedy of those people is not only that they were expelled from their land, robbed and their relatives were killed but also that they were forgotten. The representatives of different organizations either misrepresent facts or simply ignore refugees. International organizations say that there are no refugees in Daghestan. But they do exist, and there is a database about them. As to the fighters who invaded Daghestan, most of them were not Chechens but Daghestani's themselves or Arabs. However, the attitude towards the Chechens worsened sharply, and now local NGO's and the government need to revive the traditions that have regulated Russo-Chechen relations for centuries. There is some activity in Daghestan to address this problem but it is not enough. Women

are more active than men and therefore the majority of public organizations are women's organizations. It is not always right to put all the burden on women's shoulders, like it happens these days.

According to the database created by Daghestan's NGO's, at this point t about 15,600-15,670 refugees from Chechnya are in the republic. In order to collect information about refugees, local NGO's had to promise those people help which in reality they probably will not get. Law enforcement officials were very interested in this database but they were denied the access to it since there is a belief that the police needs that information in order to deport refugees back to Chechnya. The registration of refugees is conducted by the regional non-profit organization "SOS-Save". The administration of the city of Khasav-Yurt issued an executive decision #71 on January 19, 2000 about the deportation of male refugees 10 to 60 years old from Daghestan, but the members of "SOS-Save" protested and the administration later canceled its decision. However, before the order was cancelled, some men were loaded in buses at night and driven out of Daghestan, which produced a conflict between the administration of Daghestan and the Russian military because the latter believed that the actions of the Daghestan leadership increase the number of fighters in Chechnya. The military argued that the Russians were forcing the Chechens out of Chechnya while the Daghestanis were forcing them back to Chechnya. This is genocide! If in 1944 the Chechens were forced into train cars and deported in 24 hours, now anyone can be killed anytime and nobody will be responsible for that. The police and the military are all drunk or under the influence of drugs.

The invasion of Daghestan's settlements by the Chechen fighters is considered to be the source of tensions between Chechnya and Daghestan although there is an opinion that the Chechens were in the minority among the invaders. Or maybe something was done to provoke such a reaction? Umar Djavtaev believes that the invasion played a positive role for the leadership of Daghestan because the threat from without consolidated the weakening structure of power in the republic. But this logic makes sense only for those who understand the politics of Daghestan. Ordinary people perceive the situation differently - they were asleep when attacked by a Chechen. Before that invasion the attitude towards the Chechens had been very positive, especially towards refugees. For instance, every family of Chechens-Akins had invited 30-40 refugees from Chechnya to live with them. There had been many refugees in every house. More than 250 thousand refugees had lived in Daghestan in the wake of the first war. Now, thanks to NGO's, the attitude towards them is not as aggressive as it was right after the invasion. The letter sent to the Forum of Central Asia in Kazakhstan also helped a lot. In fact, genocide was being prepared against the Chechens in Daghestan. Letters calling to destroy all Chechens were distributed across the republic.

By now, not even one Chechen is registered in Daghestan since the leadership of the republic officially refused to register refugees from Chechnya. And nobody pays any attention to registration laws. Governmental officials work with other children, primarily from Daghestan itself. There are Chechen students who study in Makhachkala but they are still not registered and their status is based on temporary documents valid for three months. The attitude towards refugees is negative since they live in Daghestan illegally. The Chechens themselves do not want to register because they are afraid of possible repercussions. The registration

procedure includes video taping and taking fingerprints, which is a violation of human rights, and people do not want to go through that.

Today there are refugees from different ethnic groups in Daghestan, and the government pays enough attention to them, but ignores the Chechens. There is also tension in Georgia between Kistins and Chechens. When the Chechens started receiving humanitarian aid from Georgia and other regions, the Kistins felt ignored. As a result, tensions developed between these two ethnic groups.

The refugee problem in Daghestan dates back to the year 1989. Its sources were the following:

the division of the Lezgin people who were divided by new borders when the Soviet Union disintegrated;

the refugee flow of the Lezgins from the Central Asia, when about 9 thousand people came to the Derbent region.

These problems were aggravating as refugees were coming from different regions and the Chechen war was being prepared.

There was an attempt to teach people how to survive and coexist in these circumstances. Joint Azeri-Lezgin congresses were organized on economic and women's issues in order to find common ground and improve the situation.

Psychological rehabilitation is very important for refugees. But they all survive by themselves, and it was decided to organize seminars in schools with teachers and students. The youth center "Mir" was organized to propagate the ideas of non-violence and peaceful coexistence.

There is a lot to be said about a divided nation. One hundred meters divide the Lezgins; some of them live in Azerbaijan, some others in Daghestan. There was no communication at all between the two at the beginning of the conflict, as all infrastructure and economy were destroyed. The whole nation was supported by sheep breeding. The Lezgin sheep flocks, which in summer grazed in Daghestan and in winter in Azerbaijan, were destroyed. Another example: when someone dies, he or she cannot be buried where his or her ancestors were buried. That was a big problem in 1994 and 1995.

There is also a problem about the use of water. 70 per cent of water was given to Azerbaijan when the Soviet Union was still in existence. Now the unique Samur forest in Daghestan suffers from the lack of water. There are nationalistic movements which say they will create an independent Lezgistan. Now the representatives of those organizations are peaceful but at some point they may become a very destabilizing factor. The job of the NGO's is to help the Lezgins coexist peacefully with the other nations. If you think about it, people need to fight for water and territory. Do you understand? Officially, there are about 250 thousand Lezgins in Daghestan and 400 thousand Lezgins in Azerbaijan.

At this point there is one more important problem in Daghestan. Everybody knows that the Chechens were repressed in 1944. In 1957 the law was passed about the rehabilitation of repressed nations. Before the Chechens were deported from Daghestan in 1944, they had their own autonomous region - Aukh county. After the deportation the county was eliminated and new Novolakh county was established. According to the 1957 law, repressed nations were rehabilitated politically, culturally, territorially, etc.

The Chechens of Daghestan were hoping that their Aukh county would be restored and they would be given an opportunity to keep and develop the traditions of the Chechens of Daghestan. In 1991 the 3rd Convention of the peoples of Daghestan decided that both rehabilitation and restoration would be finished by the year 1996. And now that program would have been already realized if economic and financial situation in Russia had not worsened. Before the 1990s the republic had been economically independent and had been able to help other republics. 60 percent of the budget was based on the military industry, 12 percent on the agricultural sector, etc. But since 1994, because of the Chechen conflict, industry has been in decline and now 85-80 per cent of the republic's budget is supported by the federal center. There is a lack of resources in the republic. The restoration of the Aukh county will take a long time if sponsored like it is sponsored now.

There is a discrimination against the Chechens in terms of professional training, which violates the rehabilitation program. Last year in Geneva the Caucasus Forum named this problem. It was classified as a violation of laws and programs concerning the Chechens-Akins.

CHECHNYA AND INGUSHETIA

Now, because of the current situation, there are not any programs going on in Chechnya (with the exception of humanitarian aid which is not in the area of IOO), but it may be possible to start some activity there in summer.

Nevertheless, at the Kislovodsk meeting, some possible directions were discussed for projects that may be started right away:

A mission-trip of the NGOs' representatives to Chechnya for making the future work plans (and creation of a quick reaction group).

Struggle with ethnical stereotypes, such as: Chechens are a criminal nation.

OTHER DIRECTIONS FOR NGOS' WORK

Beside regional projects, two more packages of ideas were developed during the Kislovodsk meeting:

theoretical aspects of peacemaking actions in the Caucasus region;
"interregional" directions of NGOs' work in the Caucasus.

“THEORETICAL” ISSUES

The “theoretical” group worked out the following priorities:

Translation of literature related to the conflict (from both English to Azerian and from Azerian to English)

Creation of a “virtual library”: theory and practice, (communication system in and out of the region)

Information exchange: spreading of information (in and out of the region)

Expert comparative studies (comparing of different conflicts by the scientists). On this, the question was raised: of what nationality should be the people who will do the studies? They should be picked according to their specialization and competence.

As first steps the following actions were suggested:

Creation of an experts’ council on issues of peacemaking initiatives. This must be an authority structure, which will include a wide variety of specialists.

Creation of a web site in order to escape “trash” and chaos in presenting the material.

Translation of the papers and website resulted.

INTERREGIONAL PROJECTS

While working out the “interregional” projects and priorities, a table was drafted outlining possible activity directions for further action, and at the same time the different initiatives were graded as to the emergency and complexity of their fulfillment within the borders of the Caucasus NGOs’ Forum (see Table 1).

Here is the key to interpreting Table 1:

H- “high”

A-“average”

L-“low”

A-H or A-L in case if the members of the discussion couldn’t come to an agreement regarding a certain problem.

Table 1: Caucasus Problems and Priorities

Name of the project	Seriousness of the problem	Complexity of accomplishment	Urgency of the problem	Necessary resources
Meeting of ex-combatants	H	L	H	Experience,

				people, interest
Youth parliament of North Caucasus	A-L	H	L	Interest
Scientific-Practical conference on the problems of "Caucasus diplomacy"	A	A	A-H	Experience, people, interest, partially means
Creation of a mobile group of trainers	H	L	H	Experience, people, interest, means
A quick reaction group (monitoring, peacemaking, humanitarian aid)	H	A	H	Experience, people, interest
Educational programs: local training (youth leadership)	L	H	A-L	Interest
Educational program: gain of work experience	L	H	A-L	Interest
CF Prize "Prometei" (in journalism, peacemaking)	L	L	A-L	Interest
Youth bulletin	A	H	A	Mail, people, interest
Training in solving conflicts, in organization, planning	H	A	H	Experience, people, interest, means

CONCLUSIONS

Several important decisions were made on the meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Forum. The official report about that meeting is being finished.

The Forum is transformed into a permanent conference of non-governmental organizations of the Caucasus devoted to the principles of the Elbrus declaration and strengthening the ties among the peoples of the Caucasus. All NGO's from the Southern and Northern Caucasus, Southern Russia, as well as international NGO's working with the Caucasus are invited to participate.

It was decided to move the main office of the Forum to Tbilisi for one year. In one year it will be moved back to the Northern Caucasus (Vladikavkaz, Nalchik or Sochi). It was proposed that the practice of moving the main office every year should become regular in order to involve different regions in the activities of the Forum.

It was tentatively decided to devote the next meeting of the Forum to the traditions of the "folk diplomacy" in the Caucasus.

Annex 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE NORTHERN-CAUCASUS NGO FORUM

Name	Organization	City
Natalya Ablova	Office for Human Rights and Observance of the Law	Bishkek
Aimurza Aitukaev	"Vainah" (Chechen for "Fighter")	Makhachkala
Rustam Bagaev	"Laman Az" ("The Voice of the Mountains") Youth Organization	Groznyi
Bremner David	International Allert	London
Zaur Borov	"Adiga Hasa" (NGO for the rights and culture of the Cherkess in Kabardino-Balkaria)	
Roman Gashaev	"Laman Az"	Groznyi
Manana Gurgulya	"Civic Initiative. The Man of the Future" Foundation	Suhum
Manana Djardjanya	International Center for the Study of Conflicts and Mediations	Tbilisi
Umadghiri Dahgkilikov	"Assa" Youth Organization	Nazran'
Umar Djavtaev	"SOS" Regional Charity Organization	Hasavyurt
Alexander Dzadziev	Center for Research in Sociology and Humanistic Sciences - Vladikavkaz Administrative Institute , Northern Ossetia	Vladikavkaz
Valeriu Dzutsev	Center for Public Development and Peace	Vladikavkaz
Dinaev Adlan	"Laman Az"	Groznyi
Paata Zakareshvili	The Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development	Tbilisi
Alidar Zeinalov	The Center for Human Rights	Baku
Lada Zimina	The Center for the Study of Management	Alma Ata
Alexandru Iskandarean	Caucasus Research Center	Moscow
Andrei Kamenschikov	"Non Violence International"	Moscow
Batal Kobahya	Center for Humanitarian Programs	Suhum
Janna Krikorova	Institute for Popular Diplomacy	Stepanakert
Zarina Kanukova	"Oshamaho" Journal	
Diana Kerselyan	"Civic Initiative. The Man of the Future" Foundation	
Anzor Kushabiev	Kabardino-Balkaria Humanistic Research Institute	Nalichik
Natalya Meshalkina	"Drujba" Center for Peace	Kislovodsk
Tamara Osmanova	The Center for Social and Psychological	Derbent

	Rehabilitation	
Ludmila Pavlichenko	The Union of the Women in the Don area	Shahta
Alan Parastaev	Center for Humanistic Research and Initiatives	Tskhinval
David Petrosean	Journalists for peace, democracy and cooperation in the Caucasus. News Agency "Noian Tapan"	Yerevan
Yulia Plahotnikova	Non Violence International	Moscow
Vladimir Saveliev	"Drujba" Center	Kislovodsk
Larisa Sotieva	Caucasian Council for Refugees	Vladikavkaz
Vladimir Suhov	Non Violence International	Moscow
Gevork Ter Gabrielyan	International Alert	London
Yulia Tischenko	Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Studies	Kiev
Elena Golidina/ Lene Ensen	Danish Council for Refugees	Stavropol'
Valeriu Uleev	"Fair" Organization	Djalal-Abad
Oleg Tsevtkov	The Institute for Humanistic Research	Maikop
Malhaz Chemya	Institute for the Problems of Refugees and Minorities	
Valeria Ciobanu	William R. Nelson Institute - Moldova	Chisinau
Reizat Chermaeva	"Mothers' Shelter" NGO - Daghestan	Hasavyurt
Maxim Sheveliov	NGO Caucasus Forum	Nalichik

FACSIMILE OF THE DECLARATION OF ELBRUS

Эльбрусская Декларация

Мы, представители ряда неправительственных организаций Кавказа, собрались в г. Нальчик, у подножия Эльбруса, 19-26 июля 1998 г. и учредили Кавказский Форум неправительственных организаций. Отмечая, что многие проблемы на Кавказе сегодня связаны с недостаточной степенью развитости гражданского общества, разобщенности и изоляции народов Кавказа друг от друга, Форум ставит перед собой следующие цели:

- укрепление доверия и взаимосвязи между народами Кавказа
- возрождение кавказской культуры
- поддержание совместных гражданских инициатив, направленных на формирование толерантности, развитие политической культуры, утверждение гражданского сознания, возрождение традиций мирного сосуществования, преодоление этнической неприязни и предрассудков.

Основными задачами Форума является:

- обеспечение возможности регулярного контакта и диалога на Кавказе;
- установление общей эффективной коммуникационной сети между участниками форума;
- поддержка и развитие НПО;
- поддержка конкретных проектов, инициируемых в рамках основных направлений деятельности форума.

На учредительном собрании форума создана инициативная группа по координации его дальнейшей работы.

Форум открыт для неправительственных организаций всех регионов и народов Кавказа, которые разделяют основные цели и направления деятельности Форума.

В связи с нарастанием напряженности в ряде регионов Северного Кавказа, Форум выражает свою обеспокоенность и считает необходимым поиск путей для нормализации обстановки на Кавказе.

Учредительная сессия Форума стала возможной благодаря программе по построению доверия между НПО Грузии и Абхазии, по гранту от ТАСИС Европейского Союза, и при содействии международной НПО по разрешению конфликтов Интернейшнл Алерт.

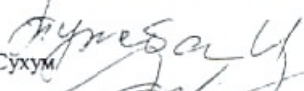
Нальчик, пансионат «Долина Нарзана», 24 июля 1998г.

Учредители Форума:

Георгий Хуцишвили, 
Манана Дарджания,
Международный Центр Конфликтологии и Переговоров, Тбилиси

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Антон Иванов, 
Независимый эксперт (предотвращение конфликтов), Лондон

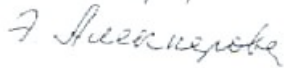
Нателла Акаба, 
Центр Поддержки Демократии и Прав Человека, Сухум

Нодар Сарджвеладзе, 
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Алан Парастаев, 
Дмитрий Медоев, 
Юго-Осетинский Центр Социальных и Политических Исследований, Цхинвал

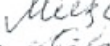

Михаил Берошвили, 
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Нана Девдариани, 
Объединение Женских Организаций Грузии, Тбилиси


Эльмира Алекперова, 
Центр Программ для Развития, Баку

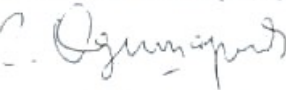
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Центр Социальных и Гуманитарных Исследований, Владикавказ

Эльдар Зейналов, 
Залиха Тагирова, 
Правозащитный Центр Азербайджана, Баку

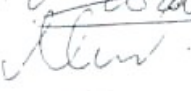
Леван Микаа, 
Абессалом Лепсая, 
Общество «Апейш», Сухум

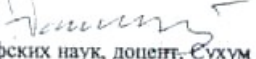
Александр Кухнианидзе, 
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Роман Дбар, 
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Писатель, Тбилиси

Николос Манавариани, 
Тележурналист, Тбилиси

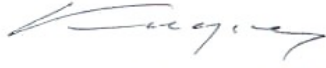
Ара Недолян, 
Гнозис, Ереван

Олег Дамеция, 
Кандидат философских наук, доцент, Сухум и Майкоп

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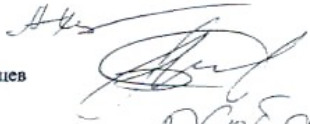


Энвер Кисриев,
Социолог, Махачкала

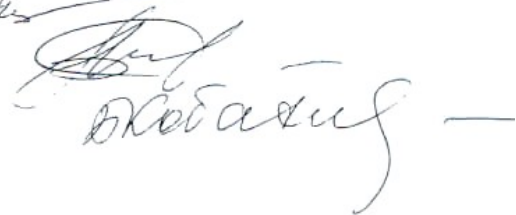


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Valeria Ciobanu works with the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs and is the Director of the William R. Nelson Institute of Moldova. She is a lawyer who previously worked with the Moldovan President's Documentation Service. She has focused much of her activities on the problem of human rights. In 1997 and 1998 she worked with the Moldovan Helsinki Committee for Human Rights as a lawyer, programs coordinator and program assistant. In this capacity she organized workshops on Human Rights in the Penitentiary System of the Republic of Moldova, on the Rights of the Refugees and of the Internal Displaced Persons in Republic of Moldova, as well as on Human Rights in Electoral Platforms of Political Parties. She participated in several international seminars on human rights in Poland, Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Canada. Valeria is fluent in English, Russian and Romanian.

The Report was translated by Irina Mkrtychyan of Armenia and Yulii Kurnosov of Russia. Cristina Hanganu of Romania helped with the translation and technical editing of this document while Dr. Stephen Bowers was responsible for editorial work.