

SUPPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA ON PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ABKHAZIA

Georgia's 2003 "Rose Revolution" swept Mikheil Saakashvili into the presidency, reinvigorating the national government and stimulating efforts to strengthen the state and reintegrate the country. Following the successful reintegration of the semi-autonomous Adzhara region, the Government of Georgia has begun to address the separatist conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. President Saakashvili has made reuniting Georgia a priority and is committed to peaceful resolution, although some Georgian government officials appear to be preparing for a potential military solution. The Abkhaz conflict alone has claimed 10,000 lives and produced nearly 250,000 internally displaced persons. Once a prosperous tourist region, Abkhazia has seen little development since the conflict ended in 1994, and its January 2005 elections were not recognized by the international community.

Through its Support to the Government of Georgia on Peace Negotiations with Abkhazia project, awarded under the Instability, Crisis, and Recovery Programs (ICRP) IQC, AED will strengthen the Georgian office of the Presidential Advisor on Conflict Settlement Issues. The project's main objective is to support the Government of Georgia, through the office of the Presidential Advisor on Conflict Settlement Issues, in the development of a successful approach towards resolving the conflict with Abkhazia

through a comprehensive settlement which will address the issues of Abkhazia's future status within Georgia and the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The project will assist in producing three strategy documents for the office of the Presidential Advisor:

- Strategy for negotiations over Abkhazia.
- Public outreach strategy to complement the negotiation strategy.
- Strategy for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

The six-month project (Jun. 1, 2006 to Nov. 30, 2006) is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Caucasus/Georgia. The current funding level is \$190,732.

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