

Russian Invasion of Georgia

A Summary of Damage Inflicted by Russia on the Transport, Energy, Administrative, Social & Civilian Infrastructure of Georgia, as Well as on its Natural Resources

August 25, 2008

Explanatory Note

Russia's invasion is inflicting massive damage to the economy, infrastructure, and environment of Georgia. This document assesses the destruction caused by Russia during August 8-25, the period of ongoing occupation of Georgia.

The Russian army has significantly destroyed the country's transport, energy, administrative, social, and civilian infrastructure, as well as damaged environment. Their actions have inflicted severe damage to the property of hundreds of Georgian and foreign companies, and to the houses and flats of thousands of civilians. Russian military planes intentionally set fire to large swathes of Georgia's forests, resulting in a major environmental catastrophe and the potential loss of crucial natural assets, including endemic species.

The destruction by Russia catalogued in this document took place *beyond* the conflict zone, often close to Tbilisi. Damage caused by Russia inside the conflict zone cannot be assessed by the Government, since it has no access to the areas in question.

This document does not attempt to calculate the economic, environmental and commercial losses caused by Russia's invasion and occupation of Georgia, since large areas of the country are still beyond the reach of Georgian authorities. Thus the exact estimation of the damage in monetary terms is the task for future.

Types of infrastructure damaged:

- 1. Transport infrastructure**
- 2. Energy infrastructure**
- 3. Industrial enterprises**
- 4. Administrative, social & civilian Infrastructure**
- 5. Intentional Forest Fires**

1. Transport Infrastructure

Ports:

- August 9 and 13, Russian military jets bombed the Port of Poti on the Black Sea, in western Georgia. The bombs damaged Container Terminal #7, the largest and best-equipped terminal for handling containers. One of the two energy generators and fire control systems of the port were damaged.
- Russia's bombs killed 5 workers and injured more than 15 others. The Port of Poti is the main link on the TRACECA East-West transport corridor that handles cargo between Europe, Central Asia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- August 12, Russian troops have entered Poti Port and occupation of port is continuing till present.

Main Railway Bridge:

- August 16, Russian forces blew up the Grakali bridge on the central railway route connecting the eastern and western parts of Georgia. Passenger and cargo transport, including the transport of humanitarian aid was abruptly stopped.
- The destruction of the bridge has disrupted international cargo traffic between Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Azerbaijani oil exports through Georgia were stopped. Armenia was effectively cut off from the world. Petrol rationing is in force there, and food prices have risen dramatically.
- It will take at least two weeks to repair the bridge.
- Railway bridge in Marneuli 25 km from Tbilisi damaged.

Road Bridges:

- 17 August, Russian troops mined the road to the highly mountainous region of Svaneti (close to Abkhazia, Georgia, another conflict zone), thus potentially cutting off the region from the rest of Georgia and preventing goods and services from reaching its population.
- August 17, two bridges in Kaspi mined.

Railways:

- The Russian Air Force bombed the Kaspi and Senaki rail stations, located 52 and 230 km respectively from Tskhinvali, Georgia, thus destroying vital rail infrastructure

Maritime Blockade:

- Since August 10, Russia's Black Sea naval fleet has been blockading the territorial waters of Georgia, preventing ships carrying civilian cargo from entering the Port of Poti for example the cargo ship "Lotus – 1", loaded with wheat and other civilian goods, was prevented from entering Poti Port by Russian military forces (August 8-9).
- This is resulting in massive commercial losses for companies and transporters, and preventing needed supplies from reaching Georgia and other countries in the region. .

Civilian Airports:

- 9 August, Russia bombed Kopitnari Airport (20 km from Kutaisi, Georgia's second largest city, and a full 180 kilometers from Tskhinvali, South Ossetia). The main runway was damaged.

Civilian Radar Stations:

- 13 August, a civilian radar station serving the civil aviation system of Georgia, located 5 km north of downtown Tbilisi on Makhata Mountain, was bombed and destroyed by Russian warplanes.

Damage to Roads & Highways:

- August 9, Russian jets bombed the bypass road of the Rikoti road tunnel, which connects the eastern and western parts of Georgia, therefore cutting country's transport infrastructure.
- Several hundred kilometers of roads and highways have been mined and damaged by the movement of heavy Russian military vehicles and.

2. Energy Infrastructure

International energy pipelines:

- Areas adjacent to all three international pipelines—BTC, SCP, and Baku Supsa—were attacked by fighter jets between August 8 and August 12.
- The bombed locations were 20 km east of Tbilisi, far beyond the conflict zone. Several bombs were dropped only 5 meters from the Baku Supsa oil pipeline on August 8. Russian rockets caused an explosion on the 27th kilometer of the Baku-Supsa crude-oil pipeline near Tbilisi.

Electricity:

- August 12, Russian bombers damaged electricity transmission lines leaving more than four thousand civilians without power.
- Three transmission lines connecting the western and eastern parts of Georgia also have been damaged: "Kavkasioni" and "Kartli 2," and "Liakhvi" .
- At present, the eastern and western parts of Georgia's energy infrastructure are operating as separate systems.

3. Industrial Enterprises

Aircraft plant:

- August 10, an aircraft plant adjacent to Tbilisi International Airport was bombed twice with long-delay blasting bombs. The landing strip and adjacent infrastructure was destroyed.

Cement factory:

- August 12, a cement factory in Kaspi owned by German manufacturer Heidelberg Cement was bombed; the factory is 30 km from Tbilisi.

Wine factory:

- August 16, Russian jets dropped unidentified devices on the wine factory in the village of Okami, in the Kaspi district, 52 kilometers from Tbilisi.

4. Administrative, Social & Civilian Infrastructure

Administrative buildings:

- Russian forces and paramilitary troops have robbed and damaged nearly all the administrative buildings they have occupied. A precise damage assessment can only be made after the Russian Army withdraws.

Damage to Civilian Police Equipment:

- August 18, Russian armored vehicles intentionally drove into and damaged several police cars in Kaspi, 52 kilometers from Tskhinvali.

Schools and Kindergarden:

- Four schools in Gori district - Gori school #7, Nikozi, Tviti and Karzji schools were partially destroyed and several schools were damaged.
- As a result of Russian jets bombing a kindergarden in Gori was destroyed.

Cemetery:

- August 11, Bombs hit a cemetery and fields near Batumi, 15 kilometers from the Georgian-Turkish border.

Hospital:

- August 12, a bomb exploded in the backyard of the hospital in Gori (30 kilometers from Tskhinvali), killing a doctor and significantly damaging the hospital.

University:

- August 12, the University of Gori was hit by numerous bombs, destroying parts of the main building in the central square of the city.

Market:

- August 12, the main market in Gori was bombed.

TV Broadcasting Station:

- August 12, Russian troops destroyed the Gori TV broadcasting station. As a result, TV and radio broadcasting has been interrupted in Gori and surrounding areas. One employee was killed, three wounded.

Tele-communication:

- More than 30 base stations of leading mobile operators "MAGTI" and "GEOCELL" in Gori and Kaspi were completely destroyed.
- Two fiber-optic lines, following the railway and the highway in Gori and Kaspi were damaged.

Civilian Homes:

- In every territorial-administrative unit invaded by the Russian Army, its forces have robbed and/or burnt civilian houses. A precise assessment of damage can only be made after the Russian Army withdraws.
- Thousands of houses in villages across South Ossetia and in the villages north of Gori have been looted and burned. A precise assessment is impossible at the moment, but the likely scale of the damage is suggested by satellite maps of burning Georgian villages published by UNOSAT.

5. Environmental Damage

Forest Fires:

- According to UNOSAT, about 450 hectares of forest in southwestern Georgia, about 108 kilometers from Tskhinvali, burned after being intentionally set ablaze by Russian military helicopters on August 15. This has caused an ecological catastrophe and damaged the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park.
- August 16, helicopters set fire in the Kaspi district and in Surami, Khashuri district.
- August 20, Russian military helicopters dropped fire setting bombs in Djevera (Gori district) and in Kiketi, 10km west of Tbilisi. The latter area was firebombed again after the fire was put down the next day.

<http://unosat.web.cern.ch/unosat/asp/>
