

ATTITUDE OF THE GEORGIAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE AUTONOMOUS UNITS IN 1990-1991

ALEQSANDRE MOSIASHVILI

Associate Professor of Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University.
Adress: 2200, Georgia, City : Telavi, George Saakadze square №23.
Aleqsandre.mosiashvili@yahoo.com, +995599702969

ABSTRACT:

As a result of the first multiparty elections on October 28, 1990, instead of the communist regime, the national government came to power in the Republic of Georgia in the form of a bloc "Round Table - Free Georgia", Led by well-known dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia, leader of the National Liberation Movement. The new government inherited a bad legacy. Conflict zones were artificially created in different parts of Georgia. Particularly cautious approaches were needed to the regions with autonomous status. These were: the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Adjara (ASSR), the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia (ASSR) and so-called South Ossetia Autonomous District.

In order to determine the policy or methods used by Zviad Gamsakhurdia's government in relation to the mentioned regions, it is necessary to use the following methods: Description, comparison, methods of critical and systematic analysis (division of material into parts, evaluation of each part to achieve the result).

It must be said from the very beginning that Georgia is a small, unitary state. As for the autonomies, they were created only as a result of the Russian Soviet policy on the territory of Georgia almost a century ago (Bendianishvili, A. Daushvili, A. Samsonadze, M. Kokrashvili, Kh. Chumburidze, D. Janelidze, O. 2008. p. 411).

In the 1980s, the existence of an economic crisis in the USSR became apparent. In March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected Secretary General of the Central Committee of the CPSU. He tried to rectify the situation by pursuing a certain reformist policy - he started "perestroika", declared "democratization", "publicity" and so on. (Abashidze, Z. Bakhtadze, M. Janelidze, O. 2013. pp. 648-649).

These attempts have not resulted in overcoming the economic crisis. Instead, national liberation movements gradually began in various republics. Such a movement started in 1987 in Georgia as well. Attempts by the Kremlin central government to somehow halt or temporarily halt the process of disintegration of the USSR were unsuccessful. In such a situation, it was planned to artificially create conflict centers in different regions, especially in the territories of autonomous units as a result of provocations. The creation of one of the first centers seems to have been decided on the territory of the Ajara ASSR, Where, on December 10, 1988, the Soviet authorities decided to organize a bloody provocation between the indigenous youth of the mountainous regions of Adjara and the representatives of the Georgian National Movement. Its basis was to become a deliberate misinformation, as if the leaders of the national liberation movement: Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava, together with activists, were going to come to Batumi from Tbilisi and use force against the local Muslim population to

convert to the Christian faith. And those who resisted would be expelled from Adjara [[https://iberiana.wordpress.com/zviadgamsakhurdia / achara/](https://iberiana.wordpress.com/zviadgamsakhurdia/achara/)]. Eventually common sense prevailed and provocations failed, but tensions remained in the region even after the national government came to power.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia's policy was aimed at restoring Georgia's lost state independence and therefore he tried to remove the background of tension in absolutely peaceful and legally held forms. Such attempts are well expressed in the appeals or resolutions of that time, in particular: in one of the appeals made to the population of Adjara, Z. Gamsakhurdia seems to be trying to properly inform the population of Adjara (especially the mountainous region) based on the current situation. The appeal addresses the reasons why the Communist Party won far more votes than the national force in the October 28, 1990 elections: "We have not done the necessary work in Adjara, our opponents are left in the arena; They lied to the people, tarnished our name - the irreconcilable national movement; They spread compromising rumors ... We can no longer provide so much, we have not been able to reach people to see the true face of our movement." (**"Young Iverian", 1990. №123**). It must be said that the result of these multiparty elections was in fact decisive for the future of Georgia and therefore each vote had a special significance. So why did the representatives of the National Movement fail to provide proper work? What could be the reason for this? The answers to the questions are probably possible due to various factors. First of all, it must be said that the communist regime still in power had all the financial resources to fully finance the election campaign, but national forces didn't have. But such an explanation I think should not be entirely real reason. If they found the financial means to meet with the population of other regions (as it is known, the

Georgian National Liberation Movement had mainly private donors - A. M.), why not focus on allocating adequate financial resources to meet the voters of the mountainous region of Adjara?! It seems that the representatives of the Communist Party worked with really insidious methods that Zviad Gamsakhurdia needed to show the necessary prudence to avoid the allegedly planned provocations.

Then, we read in the appeal: "Only non-Georgian population can have autonomy in Georgia; The autonomy of Georgians in Georgia is, to say the least, a big inconsistency, so it should, of course, be abolished; In our opinion, the issue of its abolition should be raised by the Adjarans themselves: only in this case will the abolition be fair and natural. We will not interfere in the abolition of the autonomy of Adjara. " (**"Young Iverian", 1990. №123**). It can be said that there is no moment in the appeal that there is a desire to retaliate in any way based on the election results. Here we are talking only about reasonable, civilized, democratic approaches - that the issue of the presence or absence of illegally created autonomy of Adjara be decided by the people of Adjara themselves. There is another noteworthy moment: "There is a small amount of land in Adjara, our goal is, if the local territories are not enough, to give all the necessary lands in all other parts of Georgia ... Until now, we have been helping them in every way, and now, the official Georgian government will help everyone more. "Indeed, taking care of the problem of small land should have been one of the best ways to establish close and unwavering communication with the hard-worker population of Adjara. This should have been followed by the next reasonable steps, and indeed, if we look closely at the results of the subsequent elections, the result is already in sight (**Young Iverian, 1990. №123**).

Pays attention to Z. Gamsakhurdia addresses the staff of Batumi University, Which

focuses on an attempt by a certain group of provocateurs to falsify a speech made at a session of the Supreme Council, where it was alleged that Z. Gamsakhurdia accused the population of Adjara of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism. "Our people are wise and therefore no ambitious politician or careerist will be able to hostile in any part of Georgia against the common national unity ... I have planned meetings with the population of Adjara in the near future. It is clear to us that Adjara has endured a lot of hardships and now it still needs to be treated gently. With this in mind, prefects were appointed. We have selected such candidates, for whom the homeland, the nation, our country as a whole are the most important." **(Republic of Georgia, 1991. №45).**

All the above-mentioned practical activities were clearly reflected and now, it is possible to say that the new government, through its cautious and flexible policy, tried to maintain calm in the Adjara region, as well as to gain more support.

Let us now turn to the issue of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia. Tensions in the region have been around since the 1970s, and the Soviet government has done nothing to neutralize them. Moreover, it was with their encouragement and support that on July 15-16, 1989, as a result of certain provocations, bloodshed took place between Abkhazians and Georgians. After that, a state of emergency was declared, a curfew was introduced in Sokhumi, which only temporarily stopped the existing tension.

After coming to the helm of the country, the national government began to take care of the problem in the Abkhaz region. Despite the anti-state approaches of the separatist government of Abkhazia, encouraged by Moscow, to certain issues, the government of the Republic of Georgia was able to manage the processes from Tbilisi and bring them within

the constitutional framework. One of the main and most important issues in the light of these relations was the formulation of the composition of the Supreme Council of the Abkhaz ASSR: 28-26-11. This is how the number of pre-election districts was distributed, in which 28 seats belonged to Abkhazians, 26 to Georgians, and 11 to other nationalities living in Abkhazia. Consequently, if the Abkhaz separatists wanted to make an anti-state decision and be able to use the other 11 non-Georgian mandates in their favor, it would not be enough to carry out the intention, as they would need 2/3 of the total votes. They could not collect 2/3 for one simple reason - 26 seats belonged to Georgians. Thus, the separatists' dream of separating Abkhazia from the Republic of Georgia, despite the Kremlin's stance, was doomed to failure from the outset and, most importantly, simply forced the Georgian and Abkhaz sides to resolve all disputes through dialogue. Which looks quite attractive in terms of democracy and should be considered a victory for Georgian national policy. **(Gamakharia, J. 2004. pp. 12-13).** As for The situation here in the so-called South Ossetian Autonomous Region was quite complicated. As early as September 20, 1990, the Council of People's Deputies of the South Ossetian Autonomous District had adopted a resolution on the transformation of so-called "South Ossetia into a Soviet Democratic Republic" and the start of the separatist movement was not going to back down. **(Newspaper: "New Georgia", 1990. №10-11).** Due to the current situation, as there was a danger of violating the territorial integrity of the country, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia adopted the "Law on Abolition of the Autonomous District of Ossetia" **(Khositashvili, M. 2013. pp. 68-70).** Apparently, this was a forced retaliatory step against the illegally created Autonomous District in 1922, which was to finally determine the issue of its legal status.

Attention is drawn to the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia Z. Gamsakhurdia's appeal to Shida Kartli and st. To the Ossetian population of Tskhinvali, where, in addition to handing over weapons to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there is a call for reconciliation: ""Ossetians will retain all the rights of cultural autonomy that they had during the existence of the district, these rights will be further increased, expanded and even strengthened by the legislation of the Republic of Georgia, Provided that all refugees will return to Tskhinvali, Georgians and Ossetians will enjoy equal rights, their inviolability, work arrangements and peaceful life will be guaranteed throughout Shida Kartli ..." (**"Republic of Georgia", 1991. №44**). Such approaches should have been the basis for stabilizing the situation in the region, but unfortunately, such a thing did not suit Moscow, that is, the very force that was the initiator and main facilitator of provoking the conflict.

Despite the fact that on December 12, 1990, by the resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia, Emergency rules were declared on the territory of Tskhinvali and Java districts (**"Republic of Georgia", 1990. №8**) The situation was still difficult. There was bloodshed against Ossetian extremists (including Ossetian militants from the North Caucasus - A.M.) and Georgian law enforcers (Georgian volunteers, armed groups, locals and others also fought. At that time, the Georgian army was only in the process of formation and did not participate - A. M.). Effective action was needed to stop the negative processes that had begun. In such conditions, the meeting of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR Boris Yeltsin and the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Georgia Zviad Gamsakhurdia took place on March 23 in Kazbegi on the territory of the Republic of Georgia, as a result of which an interstate relations agreement was signed. The document

provided conditions for improving the situation in Shida Kartli and Tskhinvali regions. Of course, such a meeting should be considered a positive step in itself. Especially since it was from the Russian Soviet military bases in the region that weapons were distributed to the separatists, and in general, there was an active participation of Russia in these processes. Thus, the participation of the leader of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic in the process of resolving the issue was important. It is also noteworthy that the leadership of the Republic of Georgia was able to bring the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR to Georgia. Prior to that, for decades Georgia was ruled by puppet authorities, who only came to Moscow themselves to get directives on any issue. This time, we are dealing with a meeting of the leaders of the two equal republics on equal terms, where even the advantage of the Georgian side is felt in a way, based on the meeting held on the territory of the Republic of Georgia. But, most important is the fact that the meeting did not remain a formal issue. It is true that the Russian side did not fulfill its obligations under the treaty and continued to be grossly involved in the negative processes, but one thing is certain: Boris Yeltsin signed the document, Which read: "As a result of a joint action agreement to stabilize the situation in the region of the former South Ossetian Autonomous Region ..." (**Khositashvili, M. Jgerenaia, E. 2015. p. 270**). With this signature, he actually acknowledged the abolition of the South Ossetian Autonomous District, which could be considered one of the most important events. Thus, as it is known, after winning the elections of October 28, 1990, the national government of Georgia ruled the country until January 6, 1992. This was happening under the most difficult inheritance conditions. Not to mention the financial, economic or other problems, one of the most important issues is to maintain the territorial

integrity of the country. According to the Kremlin calculations, artificially stirred so-called Ethnic conflicts should have become a serious obstacle for the country on the way to restoring state independence. But in the name of the national government, it should be noted that with the right approaches, tensions in the Adjara region were eased, Abkhaz separatism was not given a go and the existing negative charge was replaced by a regime of dialogue. It should also be noted that the majority of the population on the territory of Abkhazia was ethnically Georgian, and the above wording 28-26-11 seemed to put the Abkhazian side in an advantageous position, but judging by the results, It may be noted that this was a genius calculation, which, on the one hand, clearly showed goodwill towards the Abkhazians, and, on the other hand, did not allow their separatism. The result was also appropriate. Until January 6, 1992, when the national government in Georgia was responsible, there were no unpleasant incidents between Abkhazians and Georgians, which should be considered the greatest merit of the ruling bloc "Round Table - Free Georgia" and its leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia. The abolition of the illegally created autonomous region of South Ossetia should be considered the only legally correct decision based on the current situation, which was finally signed by the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and should be considered a great diplomatic and political-legal victory.

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საკვანძო სიტყვები: აჭარა, პროვოკაცია, სეპარატისტები, ეროვნული ხელისუფლება, აფხაზეთი, ბოევიკები.

რეზიუმე

1990 წლის 28 ოქტომბრის პირველი მრავალპარტიული არჩევნების შედეგად საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის სათავეში კომუნისტური რეჟიმის ნაცვლად მოვიდა ეროვნული ხელისუფლება ბლოკ „მრგვალი მაგიდა _ თავისუფალი საქართველო“ სახით, რომელსაც ცუდი მემკვიდრეობა ერგო. საქართველოს სხვადასხვა ადგილებში ხელოვნურად იყო შექმნილი კონფლიქტური ზონები. განსაკუთრებით ფრთხილი მიდგომების გამონახვა იყო საჭირო ავტონომიის სტატუსის მქონე რეგიონების მიმართ. ასეთები კი იყო: აჭარის ავტონომიური საბჭოთა სოციალისტური რესპუბლიკა (ასსრ), აფხაზეთის ავტონომიური საბჭოთა სოციალისტური რესპუბლიკა (ასსრ) და ე. წ. სამხრეთ ოსეთის ავტონომიური ოლქი. ეროვნული

ხელისუფლების სასახელოდ უნდა აღინიშნოს, რომ სწორი მიდგომებით განმუხტულ იქნა დამაბულობა აჭარის რეგიონში, არ მიეცა გასაქანი აფხაზურ სეპარატიზმს და არსებული ნეგატიური მუხტი დიალოგის რეჟიმით ჩანაცვლდა. უკანონოდ შექმნილი სამხრეთ ოსეთის ავტონომიური ოლქის გაუქმება კი შექმნილი მდგომარეობიდან გამომდინარე მიღებულ ერთადერთ სამართლებრივად სწორ გადაწყვეტილებად უნდა განვიხილოთ, რაც საბოლოოდ რსფსრ-ის უზენაესი საბჭოს თავმჯდომარის ხელმოწერითაც გაფორმდა და უდიდეს დიპლომატიურ და პოლიტიკურ-სამართლებრივ გამარჯვებად უნდა ჩაითვალოს.