

The Political Trajectories that Preceded the Russian Invasion of Georgia in 2008

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Abstract

The political paths that preceded the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 were based on the fears that resulted from the occurrence of armed clashes between Georgia and its separatist regions for nearly two decades. Those fears included the Russian Federation, Georgia and the West in general and the United States in particular, depending on the interests of each of those parties; Therefore, the political side took a great deal of preserving the status quo, avoiding the use of force and the occurrence of an armed clash, However, the Georgian side torpedoed all these international, regional and local efforts. Because of the political recklessness he enjoyed, as well as the American encouragement to him; it was impossible for it to curtail the Russian role globally and regionally, but the Russian side refused to submit to those Western methods, and the political pursuit of those parties was joint and vigorous.

Keywords: Russian Federation, Georgia, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Russian neighborhood, post-Soviet space, NATO.

Introduction

Since the end of the nineties of the last century, the Russian Federation has made Efforts to re-establish the rules of regional order and security, and for this it has frozen all conflicts in its immediate vicinity that have undermined security and created instability in the country. The region, and the Russian Federation worked to prevent any power that had influence in the geography surrounding the Russian Federation, and tried to stand between the Western powers and Georgia after preventing the countries of the Western bloc from interfering in the region, despite the attempts of some Western countries to gain a foothold in those regions after they intensified

interest in it, but the Russian side was able to reduce the western tendencies (Anlar, 2013, pp.400-402).

Based on these perceptions, the Russian Security Council approved, on 24 May 2000, the principle of foreign policy of the Russian Federation (the Putin Principle), which included important issues such as caring for political, economic and military interests in fourteen years. Former Soviet republics, protecting the rights of the Russian ethnic minority and lays down the main provisions of the Russian doctrine (Основные положения Военной доктрины Российской Федерации, 1993), Since the geography of the Commonwealth of Independent States constituted the center of gravity of the power possessed by Moscow and Putin, any weakness in that geography posed a problem for the strength and survival of the Russian Federation. Therefore, Vladimir Putin wanted to increase Russian influence and provide stability in the Caucasus, which the Russian Federation considered its backyard (Report, Vol. II, September 2009, pp.7-8), Moscow decided to regain control over the post-Soviet regions, and the Putin administration tried to eliminate the risk factors that threatened Russian interests in the South Caucasus, and pursued a more powerful and serious strategy in energy investment operations in the region, as well as emphasizing the political aspect of regional politics (Kurban, & Ergün, 2020, p.26).

After the Russian administration promulgated the new citizenship law in 2002, it allowed citizens of the former Soviet Union to obtain Russian citizenship. Through a simplified procedure and began issuing Russian passports on a large scale, it allowed and encouraged residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as other troubled regions of the post-Soviet space, to become Russian citizens. The only legal requirement for obtaining Russian citizenship was that the person had a temporary residence permit issued by the Russian Federation (Report, Vol. II, September 2009, pp.165-166), In fact, Moscow has announced incentives for adopting Russian citizenship. Such as social security, payment of higher pensions, easier travel and educational opportunities, and by most estimates, almost all non-Georgian residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia have acquired Russian citizenship; As a result of that policy (O'Loughlin, et al, 2011, p.10).

According to some principles related to the application of soft power policies, humanitarian policies, and what is related to Russian citizens outside the borders of the Russian Federation, granting them passports, protecting citizens at risk and protecting their lands, as well as information warfare, the Russian administration saw those principles as justified in two complementary perspectives of the political ideas of the Union The Russian, the first: He is the one who indicated that Moscow must restore its role in world politics at any cost; In order to restore its status as a great power, and in this sense Vladimir Putin expressed his regret that the fall of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical

catastrophe of the twentieth century, which is a clear expression of the need to restore not only the vision of the Russian Federation, but also its position as a country capable of participating decisively in world politics (Villa, 2017, p.65), The second: that the Russian Federation should regain its position as an important civilization in the world, and not rely solely on its flexible relations with the West. After the divergence of those Relations in the Eurasian world (Grigas, 2019, p.515).

In that context, it seemed clear to Russian strategists that the encirclement of the former Soviet Union was not an assumption, and that both the European Union and NATO had plans to prevent operations to reconfigure the Russian Federation in direct outer space, i.e. the Soviet lands that were ruled by new countries after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Thus, the differences between Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili and Russian President Vladimir Putin became frequent and acquired a warning feature that was clarified during the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008, but those differences were not just an opportunity or a condition that was confined to the personal relations between the President of the Russian Federation as a superpower, and the President of Georgia As a small country, it formed a way of understanding Moscow's foreign policy; With the aim of restoring its prestige as a superpower and establishing direct control over the post-Soviet space (Grigas, 2019, p.516).

Moscow began to view the conduct of its political affairs from the perspective of national security and the status of the Russian Federation in the near abroad. For example, the Rose Revolution in Georgia in late 2003 was quickly viewed by the Russian leadership as an undesirable development that could spread to other countries in the near abroad. At the expense of the vital interests of the Russian Federation, in favor of the United States of America and Western countries in general, and it can be said that Vladimir Putin confirmed that the revolutions that took place in countries close to abroad were not real democratic movements, but rather part of some of the developments designed by the West; to expand their interests in the backyard of the Russian Federation (Özkan, 2012, p.40).

At first, Georgia was willing to maintain good relations with the Russian side, as Saakashvili made his first official visit to the Russian Federation, and he met in Moscow with Vladimir Putin, on 11 February 2004, and the heads of some countries had attended. A good impression on both sides, but Putin asked the Georgian president two things, the first: to cancel Moscow's request to withdraw its military bases from Georgia, and the second: to keep the Georgian Minister of National Security, Valery Khaburdzania, who is close to Georgia. The Russians in his position and Mikheil Saakashvili were not prepared to meet those demands. Because the Russian military bases located on the territory of Georgia consider it a threat to its sovereignty, and in addition to

Georgia, there cannot be a person closely related to the Russian Federal Security Service as the head of Georgian national security, Khaburdjania was relieved of his post and re-appointed as Deputy Attorney General (Laaneots, 2016, p.23; sipelgad, 2016, p.23).

Saakashvili announced that Georgia's political track is heading towards Euro-Atlantic integration at the expense of weakening relations with the Russian federation. With the aim of deepening Georgia's cooperation with the European Union and NATO, and facilitating integration in the political, legal, military, economic and cultural spheres, the Office of the Secretary of State for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was established in 2004 in Georgia (Khachatryan, 2015, p.6). With the Georgian rapprochement with the European Union and NATO, and the development of relations on a personal level between Mikheil Saakashvili and George Bush Jr., there was an attempt by Tbilisi to distance itself from Moscow, which aroused the displeasure of the Kremlin (Anlar, 2013, p.267); Moscow did not allow the post-Soviet states, not even on the assumption that they could bring active military alliances closer to Russia's borders, as those alliances were openly hostile to the Russian Federation in terms of doctrine, and so the war was launched as a direct way to destabilize NATO and the EU. In his direct sphere of influence (Villa, 2017, p.60).

The Russian Federation had two main focuses in its policy towards Georgia over the years, the first: it aimed to isolate Georgia internationally and undermine its relationship with its partners in the West, and the second: it was based on a carrot-and-stick approach in its relationship with Georgia that could be used to influence its decisions regarding With foreign and security policy in the first place, the Russian side sought to take advantage of the fact that Georgia, despite being a central component of US policy in the South Caucasus and the post-Soviet space for most of the first decade of the 21st century, was not, at the same time, a vital component. In Washington's interests, and indeed Western interests in the post-Soviet countries will never coincide. those of the Russian federation (Nilsson, 2018, p.26-27).

At first, the Georgians declared their adherence to peaceful means and more than once declared their leader to avoid war. However, they soon listened to some calls that supported them to ignore Moscow's threats, as happened when they listened to the advice of Juri Luik, the Estonian Minister of Defense and former Foreign Minister, to ignore the threats of the Russian Federation, as did the Baltic States. In the 1990s (Aava, 2019, p.2018), the Russian political and military leadership began to act without any attempt to hide its plans related to Georgia. On January 26, 2006, the Russian National Security Council abandoned its support for a peaceful resolution of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict, the so-called plan. Boden(Sigwart, 2012, p.101), Moscow declared that it did not consider it a reliable means of negotiation on the status of Abkhazia

(Socor, 2006, p.1), and in March 2006, an agreement was reached between the Russian Federation and Georgia regarding the dismantling of the two Russian military bases in Georgia. Strangely enough, the withdrawal of Russian forces was before the deadline (Fedorov, 2008, p.4-5), While the Georgian government and the leadership of the armed forces were formulating an operational plan called "Clean Field", which was the basis for the unification of South Ossetia with Georgia, the Georgian side became firmly convinced that the Russian Federation would not interfere in the conflict, and the Russians skillfully exercised various means of persuasion with the Georgian government and its military leadership. Throughout the spring and summer of 2008, the message of the Russian administration, based on what it announced, was that it would not give up Abkhazia easily, but that South Ossetia represented a burden on it, and it could be obtained if Georgia wanted it, and that message succeeded in deceiving the entire political and military leadership of Georgia (sipelgad, 2016, p.50).

In July 2006, the Georgian parliament passed a resolution calling on the government to take immediate measures to accelerate the withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers from South Ossetia, who had been deployed there since 1992, meanwhile the Georgian parliament obtained pledges from the international community to deploy replacement international units. As for the peacekeepers, South Ossetia Defense Minister Anatoly Barankevich stated: "If the Russian peacekeepers withdraw, we will do everything we can to resist the aggression of the Georgian armed forces" (Callesen, 2020, p.426), This led to an exacerbation and tension in relations between Tbilisi and Moscow, and the Russian Foreign Ministry described the decision as provocative, and said that it aims to inflame tension. The decision also raised fears in South Ossetia that a new Georgia offensive was imminent. With the aim of returning the separatist region to the control of the central Georgian government (Karadağ, 2019, p.204-205), After this decision was ratified, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov immediately rejected the decision. As a politician rather than a military man, Lavrov stressed that it was more appropriate to try to rebuild trust between Georgia and the leaders of its breakaway republics, and stressed that Moscow had tried together with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United States. Nations; To promote a political settlement of the two conflicts, 500 Russian peacekeepers deployed to South Ossetia were part of a force that included equal numbers of Georgian and Ossetia soldiers (van Peski, 2011, p.357).

Although Georgia initiated the conflicts, what is controversial is that the Russian Federation, the world power, was more responsible for it, and had a share in the progress of the war, after the Russian side rejected the conciliatory attempts presented and suggested by Saakashvili, even before the start of the war (Weinstein, 2004, p.30),

However, it should be noted that most of Saakashvili's settlement plans were in favor of Georgia, contrary to what South Ossetia and Abkhazia aspired to, and the Georgian Prime Minister tried to communicate with the Russian Federation on these issues, and to provide an opportunity for reconciliation, the dialogue had to be confiscated, and those plans were leaked Georgian to the media at the time (Asmus, 2010, p.12), It was understood that Moscow's decision to establish legal and diplomatic relations with South Ossetia and Abkhazia lay behind Moscow's indifference to dialogue and negotiations with Georgia. in Abkhazia; And in order to consolidate the decision taken, and to increase peacekeeping forces in the region, this led to an increase in the concerns of the Georgian government, which appealed to the international community; To help, I received a cautionary answer from Georgia's greatest ally - the United States - who warned Saakashvili against waging an unwinnable war and, because of this climate, And the Georgian president was left between two options, either war or peace, because he was able to choose a non-negotiable path. It is the option of war (Babayeva, 2017, p.42), and Dmitry Medvedev confirmed this in the statement he made later. And he said: "Russia showed restraint and patience, we repeatedly called for the resumption of negotiations and did not deviate from this position even after the unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence, however, the proposals that we have constantly made to the Georgian side to conclude agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on non-recourse to force remained without. The paper was, unfortunately, ignored by NATO and the United Nations. It is now clear that a peace settlement was not part of the Tbilisi plan. The Georgian leadership has been systematically preparing for war and reinforcing its sense of impunity thanks to the political and material support provided to it by foreign advocates about it" (CD/1849, 2008, p.2), Dmitry Medvedev also decided to intervene in the conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia; In order to defend Russian citizens, after the Russian president declared the right to protect people of Russian origin and their citizens abroad (Blank, 2008, p.39).

The challenge facing the Russian Federation in Georgia is directly related to the Policies of the other great powers. The United States of America did not hesitate to challenge the Russian position in its bilateral relations with Georgia in the political, economic and military aspects, and in order to obstruct the increasing Western efforts in Georgia, Moscow used its political and military capabilities. And it was ready to carry out a military operation against Georgia (Larrabee, 2010, p.308), and thus the Russian administration drew a red line, and whoever crossed it must prepare to direct the Russian Federation with its military force (Anlar, 2013, p.394).

The foreign policy hypothesis of the Russian Federation, along with the USA and China, and to a lesser extent with India and Brazil, held that it was the only country capable of an independent foreign policy, and that

seemed to derive from the state. its size, wealth of natural resources, and nuclear weapons; Because it was based directly on the growing economic and military capabilities that allowed Moscow to represent its national interests more strongly than in the past, as Putin emphasized in 2008 (Dembinski, et al, 2008, p.5).

During the few pre-war months, the Russian Federation did its best; In order to obstruct diplomatic efforts that came late, by Washington and European capitals, Aimed at a political solution to the frozen conflicts in Georgia, and in particular Moscow led the discussion of the peace plan presented by German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Who sought to solve the problem of Abkhazia to a dead end, The Russian Foreign Ministry supported the demands, made by the regime in Sukhumi, that Georgia withdraw its forces from the upper Kodori Valley, and assume a legally binding obligation not to use force against separatist regions as a precondition for any political talks to resolve the issue (Fedorov, 2008, p.6-7).

The interest of the Russian Federation in the southern regions of the Caucasus Stemmed from its desire to defend its lands, and in its political calculations it saw in the former Soviet republics a stronghold to keep opponents - the West - away from them, and Moscow. I feared that the successful integration of Georgia into the Euro-Atlantic structures would lead to Moscow losing its influence and credibility, not only in the Caucasus but throughout the post-Soviet space (Kakachia, 2010, p.89), What Moscow thought about the war was a preemptive strike against NATO, and that Moscow wanted to teach Georgia a lesson. For its explicit and defiant desire to become part of the West, and at the same time Moscow wanted to send messages to the United States of America and Europe, so that it would not tolerate further encroachment on its sphere of influence, it is clear to other neighboring countries with Ukraine in the foreground that it is the backyard of the Russian Federation, it must scale back its actions accordingly (Karadağ, 2019, p.210).

The President of the Russian Federation and the President of Georgia met in February 2008; To discuss the restoration of commercial and air traffic links that were cut in 2006, and despite the importance of that meeting, Georgia withdrew on 4 March 2008 from the Joint Monitoring Committee in South Ossetia, which caused a setback in the dialogue between Moscow and Tbilisi, and this decision was a quick response that Moscow considered, On 6 March 2008, the Russian Federation lifted trade restrictions in the Republic of Abkhazia, and called on other CIS countries to take the same action. This was followed by the issuance of a presidential decree signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, in April of the same year, and according to the decision, instructions were issued. Russian state institutions may establish official relations with the

de facto administrations in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Popjanevski, 2009, p.144-145).

The adjustment of the Russian Federation's policy is necessary in light of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence. The Russian State Duma called on the executive branch to enhance assistance and protection for Russian citizens residing in Abkhazia, stressed the need to maintain existing forms of peacekeeping until an agreement to settle the conflict was reached, and to consider the possibility of increasing the peacekeeping force, and also suggested that the executive branch consider accelerating recognition on the independence of Abkhazia (S/2008/219, 2008, p.5-6), and on 24 March 2008, the Russian State Duma asked the Kremlin to consider recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Kratzer, 2016, p.50). That day, the Georgian Foreign Ministry called the Duma's statement an attempt to overtly interfere in Georgia's internal affairs, expressed particular concern over the Duma's call for rapid recognition of Abkhazia, and believed the statement showed that the Russian Federation had denied itself any right to claim it was playing a mediating role. Impartial in the dispute settlement process, and also warned that any amendment to the deployment of the CIS peacekeeping force without the consent of the Georgian authorities in Abkhazia would constitute an act of aggression against the state of Georgia (S/2008/219, 2008, p.7).

The process of contacts remained suspended, and the Abkhaz side remained insistent on the withdrawal of Georgian forces from the upper Kodori Valley region, and the signing of a document not to resume hostilities as a precondition for resuming negotiations with the Georgian side. The Georgian side focused on the peace initiative announced by President Saakashvili on 28 March 2008, formulated its various elements, especially the economic aspect, and sought to acquaint the Abkhaz side with it and inform the international community about it in general, and at the same time, the Georgian government continued to stress the need changing the negotiation formulas, in several ways, including assigning a prominent role to the European Union, as a condition for achieving tangible progress, and the Abkhaz side continued to oppose any such changes (S/2008/480, 2008, p.2).

At the meeting of the Security Council (5866) held on 15 April 2008 to settle the conflict between Abkhazia and Georgia, Resolution 1808 (2008) was passed, which affirmed the commitment of all member states to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia. Within its internationally recognized borders, as well as the strong support of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, he urged the parties to cooperate with the mission, welcomed the recent improvement in the overall security situation, and assured the parties to resume consultations within the framework. Quartet meetings on security issues without delay, as well as calling on both sides to refrain

from violence; by documenting it, The resolution welcomed the conduct of a political dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations, and the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia for a new period that ends on 15 October 2008, and the Secretary-General should: work to encourage and support the two parties in implementing confidence-building measures and establishing a constructive and meaningful dialogue; in order to achieve a permanent and comprehensive settlement (S/RES/1808 (2008), p.2-4).

And because the negotiations between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides reached a Dead end, a set of developments occurred that added risk factors to the situation in Abkhazia and Georgia. A month after the Russian Federation announced its decision to dissolve itself from the restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1996 on Abkhazia, the President of the Russian Federation on 16 April 2008 issued a presidential decree and instructions to establish direct relations with the de facto authorities in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, in a number of areas, The Russian Federation stated that the aim of the decision is to support Russian citizens, protect the local population, and address what it called the aggressive intentions of Georgia, especially with the Georgian government increasing its military budget allocated to those regions. To the extent that it legitimized the de facto annexation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and demanded the immediate repeal of the decision of March 2008, declaring the termination of the CIS sanctions of 1996, and the decree of April of the same year, Georgia received, in connection with its objection to the April decree, Unequivocal support from NATO and the European Union (S/2008/480, p.2-3).

Regarding the issue of shooting down a Georgian drone on 20 April 2008, which was considered by the UN Security Council, on 23 April of the same year, the members of the Council exchanged views with the Georgian Foreign Minister on this subject (S/PV.5874, 2008), and on 29 April of the same year, recalled the Russian Federation on the emerging signs of an imminent deterioration in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, which requires the strengthening of the CIS peacekeeping force, The international mission conducted regular patrols in the areas where the detachment was deployed, and at the end of May 2008, the Government of the Russian Federation, in accordance with the presidential decree on the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Abkhaz side, brought a military unit to repair the railway south of Sukhumi, outside the area of responsibility of the detachment The United Nations, the United Nations for the Kosovo Interim Administration and the CIS peacekeeping force, and the Georgian side promised that these two actions are of an aggressive nature; particularly with regard to the upper Kodori Valley region, and demanded the immediate withdrawal of all additional Russian forces, including railway personnel, The Georgian side argued that those military steps confirmed

that the Russian Federation is a party to the conflict and should not play a mediating or peacekeeping role, and intensified its calls for changing the peacekeeping formula, proposing in particular to replace it with the existing peacekeeping process. At that time a joint police force of Georgia and Abkhazia under the supervision of the Federation. The European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe receive training from them without the Russian Federation playing a role in it, and declare that unless there is a fundamental change in the peacekeeping formula, it is ready to formally request withdrawal. Peacekeeping Force of the Commonwealth of Independent States, On the Abkhaz side, he extolled the necessity of a CIS peacekeeping force; Its military plans in the third phase from April to May 2008, affirming its opposition to any change in the peacekeeping formula, and warned that the withdrawal of the CIS peacekeeping personnel would lead to hostilities, and the Abkhazian side also mentioned that the Georgian government decided to withdraw its consent to the presence of the peacekeeping force of the of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and 12 August the Russian Federation gathered to maintain its permanent military presence in Abkhazia (S/2008/480, p.3-4), An informal meeting between representatives of Georgia and Abkhazia, on 12 and 13 May 2008, took place in Sukhumi, but both sides stuck to their firm positions (S/2008/480, p.2).

As stated in the statement provided by the Russian Ministry of the Interior, on 27 May 2008, at the Security Cooperation Forum held by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which stated: "It is important for the mission to continue to examine the underlying causes of the problems, which can be found in the gross breaches by Georgia of its obligations, and although Tbilisi is doing its best today to divert attention from this circumstance, by artificially focusing on one of the episodes, it remains The truth is that if the provocative flights in violation of the Moscow Agreement and UN Security Council Resolution 1808 did not happen, and they will not happen. The various incidents with the use of drones, including those that occurred on 20 April were not an additional factor for increasing tension in the conflict zone...when They gave up flying drones over Abkhazia" (FSC-PC.JOUR/20/Corr. 1, 2008, p.2), As stated in the Russian statement itself: "We would like to point out that the report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia dated 26 May 2008 stated unequivocally that the reconnaissance missions by unmanned aircraft constituted a military action inconsistent with the Moscow Agreement. Also, we urge our Georgian partners to be consistent and, in order to defuse the tension, normalize the situation and create more favorable conditions for the search for a political settlement, take the positive step of reaffirming – this time without any reservations – their abandonment of drone flights over Abkhazia" (FSC-PC.JOUR/20/Corr. 1, 2008, p.3), and on 30 May of

the same year, a statement was issued about the session of the UN Security Council, on that matter, after an exchange of views between the members and the representative of Georgia (S/PV.5900, 2008).

The Russian delegation to the OSCE demanded a joint meeting on 11 June 2008, in light of the fact, after emphasizing that Georgia's response to the note verbale of 30 May 2008 did not completely remove existing concerns, and the Russian delegation stated: "I recall that we raised this The note verbale raises serious questions in accordance with the procedures stipulated in Chapter III of the Vienna Document regarding the numerous flights of Georgian drones over Abkhazia, which can undoubtedly be considered as exceptional military activities. In violation of the 1994 Moscow Agreement on Ceasefire and Separation of Forces, as well as the appeal made by the UN Security Council in paragraph 6 of Resolution 1808" (FSC-PC.JOUR/20/Corr. 1, 2008, p.1).

A meeting was held between the representatives of Georgia and Abkhazia in Sweden, from 15 to 17 June 2008, and the two sides did not comment on what happened in the discussions between them, but they publicly confirmed their firm positions on the main issues (S/2008/480, p.3).

In view of these negative developments in the Georgian-Abkhazian peace process, senior representatives of the Group of Friends held, on 30 June 2008, a Meeting in Berlin, in which the representative of the Secretary-General of the Mission, Jean Arnoy, participated; To discuss ways and means to prevent further deterioration of the situation, including revitalizing the peace process (S/2008/480, p.4).

As part of Russia's political maneuvering, four Russian warplanes flew over South Ossetia on 8 July 2008; Georgia withdrew its ambassador from Moscow, and on 21 July of the same year, discussions took place in the UN Security Council; Due to the intensification of the conflicts in South Ossetia, and that was the first meeting on the South Ossetia crisis held during the term of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon (Jang, 2007, p.161-162), The Security Council decided to convene, and the expectations were that there would be no endorsement or result of the talks in the Security Council. However, Georgian diplomats announced that the negotiations were successful despite the lack of a resolution, and they had high expectations from the United Nations, especially from the Security Council, and according to some interpretations, the Russian Federation forced Georgia to intervene militarily in the south Ossetia and its position in the Security Council (Erkan, 2016, p.44).

Moscow's policy towards Georgia for several years before the war had been Based on an economic embargo, and Russia's planned invasion of Georgia with large forces required a symbiosis between the Kremlin, the security services, the Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs. On how military action in Georgian territory coincided with Vladimir Putin's economic development plans (McDermott, 2009, p.67), And that following the Russian political decision-making process before the invasion of Georgia gave a picture to Moscow through which it could explain its political position towards Georgia, taking into account some explanations and justifications. The grand strategic concept, and thus the argument that the Russian invasion was planned, carried weight, and the Russian government may have latched on militarily and strategically and focused primarily on maintaining an undefined sphere of influence in the post-Soviet space, And it was possible for Georgia to occupy a prominent place in it, and this interpretation assumes that the Russian army was in close contact with the Kremlin staff and Vladimir Putin, regarding how to implement policy in Georgia, and there is another explanation that regardless of the views of the Kremlin and the military orientation of decision-making, the goal The main one has drawn the attention of the global community, and there is a third hypothesis centered around that Moscow may not have integrated a major strategic concept between its security services and the army, which will appear in the details in the decision-making process, specifically between civilian and military planners, and there is another explanation that the decision-making was completely practical and was done It is performed on the reaction (Ellison, 2011, p.347).

Moscow's eventual abandonment of support for Georgia's territorial integrity greatly aided its strengthening of formal relations with South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as its launch of a public and all-out diplomatic offensive against Georgia, in April 2008, when Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian government to interact with the de facto bodies of power (International Court of Justice, 2009, p.155-156), in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, including the organization of cooperation in trade, economic, social, technological and scientific spheres and in the fields of information, culture and education (Kirove, 2012, p.15), and Vladimir Putin placed special emphasis on socio-economic goals (Europe Report, N. 193, 2008, p.20).

Tensions continued to rise between the two sides. On 11 July 2008, the Georgian Foreign Ministry announced the cancellation of the scheduled meeting between Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. The next day, when the Georgian president called on the international community to support his country's protest against the Russian Federation, the European Union officially adopted to raise the issue of airspace violations with Moscow, and on 12 July 2008, the Russian Federation opened a new one. Checkpoints near the Kodori Valley, and on 14 July of the same year, efforts began, mediated by Germany, to reach a peace agreement, and the Abkhaz leaders rejected that initiative (Ellison, 2011, p.352).

The outbreak of the August 2008 war marked the failure of international mediators to find a different and peaceful solution to conflicts in the Caucasus, and the French ambassador to Georgia, Breck Fournier, declared that "the structures responsible for the peaceful resolution of conflicts have not done everything necessary to avoid war" (Cheterian, 2009, p.65). The United Nations Mission in Georgia was authorized to mediate between the Abkhazian and Georgian leaderships, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe mission in Georgia was responsible for the conflict between South Ossetia and Georgia, and international organizations tried to find a solution within the state. Framework of the country's territorial integrity, Which Inevitably prompted them to support the position. The Georgian Perspective from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, for all their efforts, the diplomats in charge of these missions did not enjoy sufficient international strength and support to broker a peace agreement and the military and economic interests of the great powers did not always work hand in hand with the diplomatic solutions of the United Nations and the security organization. and cooperation in Europe, And that Western oil interests and Washington's desire to limit Russian influence, military cooperation with Georgia regarding the war on terrorism, and enable Tbilisi to abandon diplomacy and seek a solution by other means, and two American observers declared during the Saakashvili era: "The United States supported the reunification of Georgia's lands, rather than From acting honestly as a mediator to resolve frozen conflicts with South Ossetia and Abkhazia...The reluctance of the United States to encourage Georgia to consider alternative formulas for sovereignty, to resolve frozen conflicts, emboldened Georgian hardliners" (Cheterian, 2009, p.65).

The very intense international involvement was aimed at realizing the geopolitical interests of both the Russian Federation and the United States of America; As a result of fueling the conflict in South Ossetia, and the South Ossetia region acting as a proxy for the interests of the main great powers (Sigwart, 2012, p.41), The war between Moscow and Tbilisi over South Ossetia was treated as not a total game changer, but an event with important geopolitical implications in the near abroad. The war was also used as an important development because it played a complementary role to Moscow's pre-war geopolitical goals and policies. The new products were of great value to the Russian side; to accelerate the implementation of its geopolitical objectives in a more challenging manner in the near abroad by any means, and Moscow's pre- and post-war motives and policies toward that region were incorporated (Özkan, 2012, p.37).

Despite the policies of incompetence and indifference from the West in general, a member of the Georgian parliament emphasized how the precursors of the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 demonstrated the vulnerability of Georgia's regional position and the importance of finding

strong allies. This is in order to preserve its territorial integrity and balance the Russian aggression, as he emphasized by saying: "The United States of America will not be able to show the political will to restore our territorial integrity. Georgia needs a political neighborhood. There is no other alternative for Georgia. Otherwise, the other option is war with Russia, which we could not overcome. There is no alternative to the European Union. We need a union strong European, As a strategic partner, we need democracy throughout Georgia, we need a democratic environment to counter Russian aggression, we need a strong European Union, which is why we desperately need the European Union, for security and democratic reasons, we need the European Union as a global actor, not member states Diverse, Russia has a large area and has great influence that fuels the disintegration of the European Union, Russian participation in the region, and Russia uses its soft power" (Karadağ, 2019, p.205).

Until the war in August 2008, the main diplomatic influence of the Russian Federation against Georgia was the unofficial support of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in their efforts to secede from Tbilisi and the adoption of the leaderships of the two regions on the Russian side. In order for them to remain as de facto independent entities, and that Moscow's control over each of the active peacekeeping forces in those areas, which allowed it to maintain a military presence on the ground and forms of negotiation in those conflicts, ensured its continuation. unresolved conflicts, which have given Tbilisi a constant reminder of its lack of territorial integrity and its political and economic fragility, However, the deteriorating situation of those regions also allowed Moscow to obtain a possible reward in the event that Tbilisi decided to change the course of its foreign policy and return to the Moscow fold, and this did not happen, and after the 2008 war, the Russian Federation made a decision towards South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Nilsson, 2018, p.28-29).

Although the Russian and Georgian sides widely adopted political tracks; In order to reach satisfactory solutions for all parties, away from war and fighting in An attempt to preserve their interests in the midst of that conflict, however, the matter developed quickly and the two sides turned to the military field, after the political doors. The dialogue was closed and only the use of force remained; to achieve some of the results claimed by this or that party.

Conclusion:

It became clear from the foregoing that the political tracks in which more than one party participated at several levels, whether that party was local, regional or Global, and which preceded the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, did not reach a suitable solution for all. The parties

to the conflict, despite the continuous efforts of many major powers in the world to avoid armed conflict and rely on peaceful solutions, the lack of trust, stubbornness and incompatibility between officials in Georgia and the separatist regions, as well as the Russian administration, which found the issue of Georgian ethnic conflicts an irreplaceable opportunity; To prove its position globally and to confront the American presence in the Caucasus, And most importantly, confronting the process of NATO's expansion to the east, and stopping the West's attempts to encircle the Russian Federation, and because of the competition between many powers over the Caucasus region, which found the soft side for Georgia; in order to control the entire region, as well as to unite the interests of all parties involved in political endeavors to find effective solutions to the Georgian crisis; Where each party objected to persecuting the other politically, until the matter turned on more than one occasion into a real and complete cessation of political and diplomatic endeavors, despite the intervention of the United Nations and some other European organizations, but not all. They reached solutions to end the Georgian crisis and avoid armed conflict. On the other hand, the behavior of the Georgian president was dominated by vanity. Because of its obtaining Western support at various levels, the political track became unable to avoid the war that occurred in August 2008, and led to the Russian forces invading the lands of Georgia and carving out the separatist regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and ending its sovereignty over it once and for all.

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