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President of Georgia and Defence Minister at the Opening Ceremony of Gori Military Base

## New Military Base in Gori

A new military base was opened in Gori. The base is located near the central highway. The construction of the base began in the summer of 2006. During this period, barracks, staff building, canteen for 5000 personnel and sport grounds, pool, medical facility and storehouse were built. Constructing works of swimming-pool and facilities for the officers are in the final stage. The military base compliant with Euro standards is the most modern base within the post-Soviet countries. The base is built for about 4000 military servicemen and it occupies more than 70 hectares of land.

Officially the base was solemnly opened in Gori on January 18. The ceremony was attended by President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, Minister of Defence of Georgia David Kezerashvili and Chief of the Joint Staff of Armed

Forces Colonel Zaza Gogava.

After the Georgian National Anthem and flag raising ceremony, the President of Georgia addressed the military servicemen. Mikheil Saakashvili spoke about reforms implemented in the Georgian Armed Forces, development of infrastructure and new armament. The Commander-in-Chief personally handed new M-4 type assault rifle to the military servicemen and mentioned that in the nearest future military equipment and aircrafts will be completely modernized in the Georgian Armed Forces.

As it is known, M-4 is an American weapon that is to replace Russian-made Kalashnikov assault rifles in the Georgian Army. At first, the Special Operations Group of Georgian Armed Forces was equipped with this weapon.

As the Chief of Joint Staff of

Georgian Armed Forces Colonel Zaza Gogava mentioned, "Modernization process of technical equipment of Georgian Armed Forces has started. The Soviet weapons will be replaced by the NATO standard equipment stage by stage. The final example is M-4 type rifle. This weapon is one of the most modern all over the world and is used by many leading countries."

The part of those military servicemen of the I Infantry Brigade will be stationed in Gori military base who are now staying in Georgia. The 2000 military servicemen of the Infantry Brigade left for Iraq on a peacekeeping mission. Up to this point, the I Infantry Brigade was stationed in Vaziani Military Base.

Gori Military Base was built by Georgian construction company "DTS".

*Rusudan Tsimakuridze*



President Saakashvili Hands Over New M-4 Rifles to Georgian Soldiers

## Strategic Defence Review (SDR) Presentation

Presentation of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) document was held at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel on January 24. Public disclosure of the adapted version of the final report of SDR was attended by the representatives of the diplomatic corps, governmental and non-governmental organizations, leadership of the Defence Ministry and Joint Staff, experts and journalists.

In his speech delivered at the event, the First Deputy Defence Minister Batu Kutelia emphasized the importance of the SDR document and expressed his gratitude to the representatives of NATO International Staff and NGOs who participated in elaboration process of the document.

The public version of the

enable with NATO requirements and short, medium and long term perspectives of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. According to Batu Kutelia, "This is an unprecedented example of transparency."

Georgia Defense Reform Program Manager Ronald S. Mangum commented on the importance of the event as well: "The Strategic Defence Review is an extremely important for Georgia. Not because of NATO, because this is the foundation of the growth of modern and transformed military force for Georgia. The Georgian people need to understand that, Georgians know the military and they are very patriotic, but they need to understand the basis for how the military is developed and how it

the necessary parameters of the capabilities, and identifies the capability deficiencies and the possibilities for their elimination. Finally, this document clarifies one thing, that we have the Armed Forces today with certain deficiencies but in the future we want to have the Armed Forces that will have the following characteristics: combat capable, absolutely flexible, NATO interoperable and capable of addressing future security needs Georgia faces today. What we are doing today is not only the internal affair of NATO and MoD. Society must be adequately informed of what we are doing and what we are going to do in the future. This document is very important for our politicians and Members of Parliament to show them what



Presentation of Strategic Defence Review (SDR) Document

SDR has been elaborated in order to raise public awareness on the existing capabilities of the Georgian Armed forces, structural changes which took place in order to become more interop-

will progress over the next eight years. This is a great occasion."

"The "SDR Final Report" is the first document which reviews the existing capabilities of the Georgian Armed Forces, defines

this will cost approximately. We tell them, if you want this kind of Armed Forces with these capabilities, it will cost this certain amount of money.

*Continued on p.4*

### INSIDE

▶ "Georgia is a Very Musical Country and Georgians are Surprisingly Melodious People"

▶ Georgian Army Bids Farewell to Soviet Guns

▶ Georgian Military Participate in President's Inauguration Ceremony

▶ Rotation of Georgian Peacekeepers in Iraq and in Kosovo

▶ NATO Assessment Team Visits Georgia

▶ Visit of Ms. Debra L. Cagan to the Ministry of Defence of Georgia

▶ Visit of the U.S. European Command Delegation

# “Georgia is a Very Musical Country and Georgians are Surprisingly Melodious People”

Colonel Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili is one of the most popular military service members of the Georgian Armed Forces. He is well-known, very sociable and has a very characteristic speech manner. He is present at all solemn and official ceremonies. Unique maestro of the Georgian Armed Forces bears the title of an Honored Art Worker along with the high military rank. Distinguished for his musical talent and military discipline, Col. Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili has been the distinctive director and band-master of military brass band since 1993.

He is very reticent when talking about himself. Colonel Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili says he wears the military uniform since 1962 and he is very proud of this. He tries to live honestly and do his favorite job. The only subject he is very open and willing to discuss with us is his military band and his future plans.

The beginning of the nineties was a very hard and difficult period for Georgia. Civil unrest was followed by the loss of Georgian territories. This fact had a serious impact on our musical collective. Suffering the hardship after the civil war some were even skeptical and hopeless about functioning of the musical orchestra. This was not surprising at all. During these years many art collectives and musical ones among them ceased functioning.

Looking back at these years, all this seems to be a nightmare today. If our orchestra suffered the deficit of musical instruments and mostly used the instruments inherited from the Soviet army, today out military are playing on the new ones. I want to express my gratitude to the Minister of Defence of Georgia, David Kezerashvili for this. Our collective always feels his special attention towards us. With his support military musicians were granted the highest categories.

I want to use this chance and thank Chief of Joint Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces, Col. Zaza Gogava and



Colonel Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili

Chief of Educational Department Brig.-Gen. Soso Kutateladze. Without their support, the future development of our military orchestra would be vague.

**Every musician undergoes special preparations before the concert. How is it in your case?**

To conduct an orchestra is not just to use your hands and mimics. First of all this is a great responsibility. Conductor must know all instruments, their indi-

vidual sounds and characteristics. To maintain a happy mood in the orchestra is also very important. Synthesis of all these elements is a prerequisite for achievement of the best results. There is another important factor – discipline. If a person is not disciplined he will become neither a good musician nor a good soldier.

**In order to become a professional musician, one of the important factors**

**is practical experience. Conducting rehearsals was connected with problems during the previous years; you did not have premises for that. Has anything changed?**

We have mentioned the nineties in our conversation and the consequences of this period. Our unique archive has been lost not to say anything about the human loss. Practically, we have started to create the musical library all over again. Step by step but we are moving forward. We are searching for interesting materials on the internet. Then we meet for rehearsals and so on and so forth.

As to the rehearsals, we hold them in the club. We are dreaming about a musical studio and I hope that this problem will be solved soon. Attention and support we feel from our leadership gives me the basis for being very optimistic.

**A few words about the future plans... As far as we are informed, military orchestra of the Georgian Armed Forces is invited to the Ukraine...**

Our orchestra has never been on tour yet. So preparations and expectations for the concert are very high. This is a matter of prestige for Georgia as well.

Besides Georgian musicians, participants from America, Germany, Austria, Russia and other countries will take part in the concert.

As to the repertoire, we are going to present Georgian and foreign musical compositions as well. The genres will include jazz, classic and modern music.

**Georgian military have marched to your music in Rustaveli Avenue many times. Can you recall any funny stories?**

Not to go too far I'll recall the recent event at the Military Parade dedicated to the President's Inauguration.

That day, our orchestra had information that after the infantry and military technique, a certain number of aircrafts

were also expected to fly over. First the helicopters appeared in the sky and we were hopelessly waiting for the rest of aircrafts, but this lasted only for half a minute.

Finally, everything ended well. Our orchestra started to play again and military marches were heard. So such things happen sometimes.

**What is important to achieve success besides musical education in your profession?**

As in any other business the sense of responsibility is also very important in our profession. I think that professionals must not be satisfied with the achieved results. When I realize that everything is well in our team, nobody receives rebukes. My professionalism and responsibility towards my profession will end here.

**I think that besides the Defence Minister and Chief of the Joint Staff your professionalism is appreciated by the President. Do you agree with me?**

Insofar as I don't receive any reprimands, I think we are doing well. Last year I handed over the collection of our musical compositions. President Saakashvili told me that our art would be very precious for him. When you feel such attitude from the Commander-in-Chief, believe me it is a great incentive.

**I know that you have another stimulus... You are rearing the future generation ...**

Georgia is a very musical country and Georgian are very melodious people. I have been working in Orkhevi musical school for ten years where I work with the children.

Many of them have entered the Conservatoire and are getting higher musical education. The time will pass and my place will be occupied by future generation. When I think about this I'm extremely happy!

Shalva Londaridze



Military Orchestra at the Parade dedicated to the President's Inauguration

# Georgian Army Bids Farewell to Soviet Guns

A new era begins for the Georgian Army – we say goodbye to “Kalashnikov,” one of the well known Soviet symbols, and take up US M4 “Colt”.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, together with many others, Georgia was handed down a Kalashnikov legacy. For more than 15 years, Kalashnikov rifle was the main weapon of the Georgian Armed Forces. To-

try fire, not long range engagements. The notched rear tangent iron sight is adjustable, and is calibrated in hundreds of meters. The battle setting places the round within a few centimeters above or below the point of aim out to about 250 meters. The standard AK-47 or AKM fires a 7.62x39mm round with a muzzle velocity of 710 metres per second. During firing from “AK” you

ness and firepower. These features are also very useful in urban warfare. Although the M4 does not have as great of an effective range as the longer M16, many military analysts consider engagement with a non-specialized small arm above a range of 300 meters to be unnecessary. It is effective at ranges of 150 meters or less. It has a maximum effective range of about 460 meters.



AK-47



M4

day, when Georgia actively participates in peacekeeping operations and aspires to NATO membership we have to comply with the western requirements. “Everything in the Georgian army will meet western standards – armament, preparation. Western standard means the success of the country,” said President Mikheil Saakashvili at the opening ceremony of a new military base in Gori. “Farewell to arms – welcome to good arms,” Saakashvili said in his speech addressing the Georgian soldiers. The Chief of Joint Staff of Georgian Armed Forces Col. Zaza Gogava declared, “The US M4 rifle is made by “Colt”. It is a modernized and upgraded version of M-16A2. The M4 allows equipment for night vision, different kinds of aiming and optical equipments to be attached to it. The US Special forces are armed with such kind of rifle.”

Today there are many questions about new USA made M-4 type rifle, which is to substitute Russian made Kalashnikov rifle in the Georgian army. During the years most people think that “Kalashnikov” is one of the best, simple and “unbreakable” weapons in the world. It’s very difficult to say whether it is bad or good, but we can look at the specifications for “Kalashnikov” and “M4” and compare these two rifles.

The “Kalashnikov” is simple, inexpensive to manufacture and easy to clean and maintain. The large gas piston, generous clearances between moving parts, and tapered cartridge case design allow the gun to endure large amounts of foreign matter and fouling without failing to cycle. This reliability comes at the cost of accuracy, as the looser tolerances do not allow the precision and consistency that are required of more accurate firearms. Reflecting Soviet infantry doctrine of its time, the rifle is meant to be part of mass infan-

lose approximately 2 -3 second while removing the safety lock. It’s impossible to attach any kind of equipment for night vision and laser aiming to “Kalashnikov”, “Kalashnikov” is also heavier (4.3 kg (9.5 lb) loaded) than M4.

Now let’s see the specifications for Colt M4 rifle. The M4 Carbine is a family of firearms tracing its lineage back to earlier carbine versions of the M16, all based on the original AR-15 made by ArmaLite. It is a shorter and lighter version of the M16A2 assault rifle, achieving 80% parts commonality with the M16A2. Colt M4 Carbine is a versatile weapon system with proven combat utility and performance providing the operator with the confidence required to accomplish any mission. Featuring a 14.5 in. (37 cm) barrel it is designed for use wherever lightness, speed of action, mobility and fire power are required. It can be comfortably carried, yet be instantly available to provide the power, accuracy and range of a 5.56mm rifle. Proven in military operations, it stands alone as a first-line weapon system. Colt M4 Carbine is today’s weapon of choice; the weapon of the 21st century soldier.

The M4A1 carbine is a variant of the basic M4 carbine intended for special operations use. The M4A1 can be found in use by many U.S. military units, including the Delta Force, U.S. Navy SEALs, U.S. Air Force Pararescue and Combat Controller Special Tactics Teams, U.S. Army Rangers, and the U.S. Marine Corps’ Radio Reconnaissance Platoons and Force Reconnaissance companies, and most Joint Special Operations Command multi-service combat teams.

The M4A1 Carbine is specially favored by counter-terrorist and special operations units for close quarters combat because of the carbine’s compact-

In the last few years, M4A1 carbines have been refit or received straight from factory with barrels with a thicker profile under the handguard. This is for a variety of reasons such as heat dissipation during full-auto and accuracy as a byproduct of barrel weight. These heavier barrel weapons are also fitted with a heavier buffer known as the H2. Out of three sliding weights inside the buffer, the H2 possesses two tungsten weights and one steel weight, versus the standard H buffer, which uses one tungsten weight and two steel weights. These weapons, known by Colt as the Model 921HB (for *Heavy Barrel*), have also been designated M4A1, and as far as the government is concerned the M4A1 represents both the 921 and 921H

The M4 Carbine is an extremely accurate and effective weapon under all practical field applications. It is a favorite with both first line infantry operations as well as Special Forces, unit commanders and vehicle crews. Available with a Safe/Semi/Full Auto 3-position selector (model R0977) the M4 Carbine is today’s weapon of choice. The M4 Carbine features a redesigned 4-position sliding buttstock allowing it to adapt to soldiers of different sizes and physical characteristics as well as various firing positions or clothing variations. Almost all mechanical components are interchangeable with those of the M16 rifle, ensuring quality, commonality of parts and reduced maintenance costs.

The M4 Carbine barrel is designed to accept the M203 Grenade Launcher which can easily be assembled to the carbine offering the user both point and area firing capabilities. Also, all US and NATO rifle grenades can be fired without any supplementary equipment.

Sources:

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), [www.colt.com](http://www.colt.com)



At the Inauguration Ceremony of President of Georgia

## Georgian Military Participate in President’s Inauguration Ceremony

The inauguration ceremony for Mikheil Saakashvili’s second term in office as Georgian president was held on January 20 in Tbilisi. After the inaugural speech delivered by the President re-elected, military servants of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigades of the Georgian Armed Forces marched in front of the Parliament Building on Rustaveli Avenue. The event was very spectacular. 2 500 servicemen were armed with the US M4 Carbine assault rifles. US assault rifles were used for the first time instead of “Kalashnikov” rifles at the military parade.

Various types of military technique were also represented on the military Parade: ten BTR-80, seven DANA ar-

tillery pieces and four GRAD-type multiple rocket launchers. 10 light armored vehicles “KOBRA” of the Interior Ministry were on display as well. Along with the infantry technique four “Iroquois” and four Mi-24 helicopters flew over.

Military march of the ceremony was accompanied by the military orchestra of the Defence Ministry conducted by Col. Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili.

The Military Parade was reviewed by the Chief of the Joint Staff Col. Zaza Gogava and attended by the Minister of Defence of Georgia David Kezerashvili and high level representatives of the Joint Staff.

Shalva Londaridze



## Rotation of Georgian Peacekeepers in Iraq and in Kosovo

Rotation of Georgian peacekeepers has started in Iraq. This time the peacekeeping mission will be carried out by the personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade. Departure process of military personnel to the Republic of Iraq started in the middle of January. Military units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade were leaving Georgia during two weeks. Family members and close relatives sent military servicemen off from Alekseevka military airdrome. Representatives of media attended the departure process as well. Commander of 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion John Tatumashvili commented on the details of peacekeeping mission: “In total, 2000 servicemen will take part in peacekeeping mission with-in coalition forces. Exact arrival date is not certain yet. This will probably happen in summer. It is early to speak about this. Now our goal is to perform our mission successfully. First we’ll arrive in Kuwait, where we’ll undergo special training for two weeks.”

On completion of the special training, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade will arrive in Iraq. Military servants will replace the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade personnel at the Forward Operating Base Delta located in the city of Al Kut. 150 servicemen of the 1st Brigade have been performing peacekeep-

ing mission since November 2007 in Baghdad. The 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade will stay in the red zone up to summer. As to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade, it will return to Georgia at the beginning of February.

Parallel to the rotation, one platoon of the 1st infantry Brigade of the Georgian Armed Forces has departed for Kosovo on a peacekeeping mission. 34 Georgian military servants have already arrived in the Republic of Turkey, where they will undergo special training. After two weeks Georgian servants will fulfill a peacekeeping mission under the Turkish contingent. Platoon will provide patrolling on check-points and other peacekeeping duties during 7 months. They will replace one platoon of the 4th Infantry Brigade now serving in Kosovo. Peacekeeping platoon will return to Georgia in August 2008. George Eristavi, Platoon Commander: “Platoon is prepared and well trained. 34 of military servants are ready to leave for Kosovo. We are rotating the Georgian platoon within the Turkish company. Georgian servicemen are committed to implement any mission not only in Kosovo, but in any place where our country needs us to go.”

Rusudan Tsimakuridze

## NATO Assessment Team Visits Georgia



NATO Assessment Team experts are paying a four-day visit to Georgia. The purpose of the visit is to evaluate the fulfillment of Georgia's commitments under Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and Planning and Review Process (PARP).

Members of NATO Assessment Team are Country Officer of International Defence Policy and Planning Division Mr. Bruce Bach, Country Officer of International Political Affairs and Security Policy Division Mr. James Mackey, Country Officer of International Military Staff LTC Jerome Mallard, Representative of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) LTC Hans Huggers, Representative of Partnership Coordination Cell Maj. Omer Ozkose and Country Officer from Partnership Coordination Cell of ACT Maj. Gabriel Rilla. The Force Planning Division Director of International Defence Policy and Planning Division Mr. Frank Boland joined the Assessment Team on January 30.

Within the framework of the visit, meetings are scheduled with representatives of Ministries of Defence, Finance, Foreign and Internal Affairs and with Office of State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and leadership of the National Security Council.

NATO experts visited Ministry of Defence of Georgia and discussed assessment of IPAP and PARP Commitments with the leadership of the Defence Ministry. The First Deputy Defence Minister Batu Kutelia, Deputy Defence Minister Giorgi Muchaidze, Deputy Chief of Joint Staff LTC Grigol Tatishvili, Special Representative of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia in NATO Nikoloz Revazishvili, heads of various departments and divisions of the Defence Ministry and the Joint Staff participate in the working meetings in the framework of NATO Assessment Team visit.

The Georgian side has informed the experts about the implemented and ongoing reforms in the defence sphere. NATO Team holds meetings in the Defence Ministry during several days and participates in discussions concerning the IPAP and PARP implementation.

NATO Assessment Team pays similar visits to Georgia every year.

## Visit of Ms. Debra L. Cagan to the Ministry of Defence of Georgia



Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Coalition, Peacekeeping and Multinational Operations for the U.S. Secretary of Defence Debra L. Cagan and Chief of Staff Multi-National Corps - Iraq, BG Joseph Anderson paid an official visit to the Ministry of Defence of Georgia on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence and Chief of Staff of Multi-National Corps-Iraq held a meeting with the Georgian Defence Minister David Kezerashvili.

The meeting was attended by US Ambassador to Georgia, H.E. John Tefft, US Army Attaché to Georgia, Col. Matthew Brand, Chief of the Office of Defence Cooperation (ODC), LtC. Bob Hamilton and other representatives of the US Department of Defence. Georgian side was represented by the First Deputy Defence Minister, Batu Kutelia, Chief of Joint Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces, Col. Zaza Gogava and Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze.

The sides discussed the participation of the Georgian peacekeeping contingent in multinational operation in Iraq.

## Visit of the U.S. European Command Delegation



30- member delegation of the U.S. European Command visited Georgia on January 10. The purpose of the visit was to work out an action plan for the large-scale military exercise IMMEDIATE RESPONSE 2008.

U.S. European Command delegation members visited and observed

the Vaziani Military Base infrastructure. In the framework of the visit delegation members took a tour of the Poti Navy Base as well.

International military exercises IMMEDIATE RESPONSE 2008 will start in July of the current year. Armenian, Azeri, Ukrainian and Turkish servicemen will participate in the exercises together with Georgian and American military servants.

During two months, military service members of various countries will be trained how to engage in combat operations in populated regions. The exercise will be conducted in Krtsanisi, Vaziani and Poti Military Bases.

The American side will take part in humanitarian actions in parallel with exercises as well. At the initiative of the American side repair works of the house for homeless children will be carried out in summer.

The delegation of the U.S. European Command left Georgia on January 13th.

# Strategic Defence Review (SDR) Presentation



Deputy Defence Minister Batu Kutelia and Chief of Joint Staff Col. Zaza Gogava

*Continued from p.1*

If you are not ready to allocate these sums, if society is not ready to pay for this, this means that we'll have deficiencies in certain spheres. It is very important to inform the public about the purpose of this document," noted Shalva Dzebisashvili, Deputy Head of Defence Policy and Planning Department.

The "SDR Final Document" is the first document in Georgian history that thoroughly addresses the current status of the Georgian Armed Forces. Development of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) by the MoD is one of the important achievements in the defence sector. Creating the mentioned document was a crucial commitment taken under the Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO. The Strategic Defence Review includes the analysis of existing projected resources, capabilities and structural changes of the GAF which are presented in short, medium and long-term perspectives.

Georgia began its Strategic Defense Review (SDR) based on IPAP consultations in November, 2004. Subsequently in 2005, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) developed an SDR concept consisting of three phases:

- Phase I – an internal inventory of equipment, facilities and personnel in ascertaining existing force capabilities,
- Phase II – development of key strategic guidance documents and supporting materials, and
- Phase III – development of affordable, 2006 – 2009 force structure options.

An interim SDR report prepared in May, 2006 addressed Phases I and II accomplishments. Based on extensive consultations with NATO, completion of Phase III was deferred until a more conclusive force structure assessment and affordability analysis could be completed.

The report addresses the results associated with the completion of Phase III, but extends the horizon for force planning to 2015. It is recognized that NATO would prefer a 10 – 15 year force planning horizon, however for this initial SDR process, military planning was constrained to an eight year horizon based on the dynamic nature of the security challenges now facing Georgia.

In November 2007, the SDR Final Report was approved by the President of Georgia and at present the implementation of the activities prescribed by this document is one of the top priorities of the Ministry of Defence and Joint Staff.

Within the framework of SDR, structural reorganization took place and the General Staff has been transformed into Joint Staff. The Land Force Staff has been established and staffed with the appropriate personnel. Besides, the reserve training and mobilization systems have been changed in compliance with requirements of "Total and Unconditional Defence."

Currently JS is preparing SDR implementation Plan also known as the "SDR-Roadmap" that contains all necessary details for actions to be started from 2008 throughout 2015.

The Implementation of SDR and the activities carried out within its framework gave important theoretical and practical experience to the Ministry of Defence and Joint Staff. The simultaneous implementation of the activities prescribed by SDR will enhance GAF capabilities and support Georgia as well as enhance its ability to promote global security integration into NATO and stable security of Georgia.

Creation of SDR document was a successful step towards the progress within defence sector and increasing transparency in the frames of democratic control over the Armed Forces.

*Thea Chonishvili*



At the Presentation of SDR Document