

UNCLASSIFIED

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1143
 INFO AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY
 USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
 MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
 AMEMBASSY BAKU
 AMEMBASSY YEREVAN
 USMISSION USOSCE
 SECDEF WASHDC
 JOINT STAFF WASHDC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 013169

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/29/21
 TAGS: PREL, MARR, KCFE, UN, OSCE, GG, RS
 SUBJECT: UFOS OVER GEORGIA: STRANGE ENCOUNTERS OF AN MFA
 KIND

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SELEZNEV AGREED THAT BOTH COUNTRIES NEEDED TO DISCUSS THEIR DIFFERENCES CALMLY AND WORK ON A GENERAL TREATY.

7. ~~(S)~~ TEREOKEN DISMISSED PRESS REPORTS THAT DEFENSE MINISTER SERGEY IVANOV HAD AGREED TO VISIT TBILISI VERY SOON BUT NOTED HE COULD NOT ENTIRELY RULE OUT A VISIT IN THE COMING WEEKS. HE CLAIMED THERE ARE PLANS FOR A POSSIBLE MEETING BETWEEN SHEVARDNADZE AND PUTIN ON THE MARGINS OF THE NOVEMBER 30-DECEMBER 1 CIS SUMMIT IN MOSCOW, BUT NOTED NOTHING IS YET CONFIRMED.

8. ~~(S)~~ COMMENT: IT IS HARD TO ACCEPT OFFICIAL RUSSIAN DENIALS THAT RUSSIAN PLANES WERE NOT INVOLVED. TO POSIT THAT THEY COULD BE UFOS WOULD BE HUMOROUS IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE VIOLATIONS. MOST LIKELY THE RUSSIANS WANT TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON THE GEORGIANS AND THE CHECHENS IN THE GORGE IN AN UNSUBTLE EFFORT TO PREVENT THESE GROUPS' MOVEMENT TO ABKHAZIA OR TO RUSSIA. THEIR OFFICIAL DENIALS REFLECT A TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN PENCHANT TO AVOID AN AWKWARD ADMISSION WITH A BOLD LIE. AS FOR GUDAUTA, THE GOR LIKELY IS USING THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF ITS 600 TROOPS THERE AS A BARGAINING CHIP TO TRY TO GET CONCESSIONS FROM TBILISI ON BOTH THE BODEN PAPER ON ABKHAZIA AND ON CLAMPING DOWN ON CHECHENS INSIDE GEORGIA.

VERSHBOW

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Info: TBILISI, AMEMBASSY *ROUTINE*

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