

Timeline : Georgia A chronology of key even.

1801-04 - Most of present-day Georgia becomes part of the Russian Empire.
1918 - Independent Georgian state declared.
1921 - Red Army invades. Georgia declared a Soviet Socialist Republic.

1922 - Georgia, as part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Republic, becomes a founder member of the Soviet Union.

1936 - Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Republic dissolved and Georgia becomes a full republic of the Soviet Union.

1972 - Eduard Shevardnadze appointed head of the Georgian Communist Party.

1989 April - Soviet troops kill 19 pro-independence demonstrators in Tbilisi.

1989 - Demands for more autonomy in the South Ossetia region lead to violent clashes between Georgians and Ossetians; a ceasefire agreement is signed in 1992 and Russian peacekeepers are deployed.

1990 - Nationalist coalition wins multi-party parliamentary elections; former dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia becomes chairman of parliament.

Independence

1991 - Parliament declares secession from the Soviet Union after independence is overwhelmingly supported in a referendum.

1991 - Gamsakhurdia is elected president by more than 85% of the votes cast.

1992 January - Gamsakhurdia is deposed after fighting in central Tbilisi between government troops and opposition militias.

1992 March - Shevardnadze is appointed head of the newly formed State Council.

Abkhazia crisis

1992 August - Fighting breaks out in Abkhazia between Georgian government troops and separatist forces.

1992 October - Shevardnadze is directly elected chairman of parliament.

1993 September - Georgian troops driven out of Abkhazia by separatist forces.

1993 October - Insurrection by Gamsakhurdia supporters in western Georgia is suppressed after Georgia agrees to join the CIS and receives help from Russian troops.

1994 - Georgian government and Abkhaz separatists sign a ceasefire agreement, paving the way for the deployment of a Russian peacekeeping force in the region.

New constitution adopted which provides for a strong executive presidency. New currency, the lari, introduced.

1995 November - Shevardnadze wins elections to the restored post of president.

1997 Death penalty abolished.

2000 April - Shevardnadze re-elected president.

2001 March - Georgia and the separatist region of Abkhazia sign an accord pledging not to use force against each other.

2001 June/July - Russia hands over Vaziani military base to Georgia.

Tension with Russia

2001 October - Clashes in Abkhazia between Abkhaz troops and Georgian paramilitaries backed by fighters from the North Caucasus. The tension is heightened as Russia accuses Georgia of harbouring Chechen rebels, a charge which Georgia refutes.

2001 November - Demonstrations following raid by security forces on privately-owned Rustavi-2 TV station, known for its criticism of

Shevardnadze and of government's failure to tackle corruption. Shevardnadze responds by sacking government.

2002 April/May - US special forces arrive to train and equip Georgian forces for counterterrorist operations.

2002 September - Row over Russian accusations that Georgia is harbouring Chechen militants in Pankisi Gorge. Russian President Putin warns of military action if Georgia fails to deal with them.

2002 October - Row with Russia defused after Georgian leader promises to work with Moscow to fight Chechen rebels. Antiterrorist operation ends with several suspected guerrillas killed, dozens of Chechens detained and several extradited to Russia.

2003 May - Work begins on laying Georgian section of oil pipeline to run from Baku in Azerbaijan through Georgia to Ceyhan in Turkey.

Shevardnadze ousted

2003 November - International observers allege numerous voting irregularities in parliamentary elections. Thousands take to the streets to support the opposition. Official results confirm President Shevardnadze's party as the winner.

Opposition supporters seize parliament building. President Shevardnadze declares state of emergency.

President Shevardnadze announces his resignation on state television. The outgoing speaker of parliament, Nino Burjanadze, assumes the presidency until fresh elections can be held.

Supreme Court annuls results of parliamentary elections. Presidential elections called for 4 January. Main opposition parties name single presidential candidate, Mikhail Saakashvili.

2004 January - Mikhail Saakashvili wins presidential election.

Ajaria tensions

2004 March - Amid rising tension with the leadership of the autonomous region of Ajaria which does not fully recognise the authority of Mr Saakashvili, Tbilisi briefly imposes sanctions and closes the border. Mr Saakashvili's National Movement-Democratic Front wins overwhelming majority of seats in parliament in re-run of parliamentary elections.

2004 May - Ajarian leader Aslan Abashidze claims Georgian forces about to invade and blows up bridges connecting the region with the rest of Georgia. President Saakashvili orders Mr Abashidze to comply with Georgian constitution and disarm his forces or face removal.

Aslan Abashidze resigns and leaves Georgia.

Focus shifts to South Ossetia, Abkhazia

2004 May - South Ossetia holds parliamentary elections, unrecognised by Tbilisi.

2004 June - Tensions rise as Georgian decision to beef up its antismuggling operation in South Ossetia prompts sharp response from local leadership and attracts criticism from Moscow.

2004 August - Tension erupts into violence in South Ossetia. Several deaths are reported in series of clashes between Georgian and South Ossetian forces.

After saying it has captured key positions which it promises to hand over to joint peacekeepers, Georgia pulls back its forces.

2004 October - Abkhaz presidential elections, not recognised by Tbilisi, end in chaos. Abkhaz court upholds declaration of Sergei Bagapsh as winner but, after protests, orders election rerun. Tensions run high between supporters of Mr Bagapsh and those of his main rival, the candidate said to be favoured by Moscow, Raul Khadzhimba.

2005 January - Sergei Bagapsh wins rerun of Abkhaz presidential elections after doing deal with his former rival Raul Khadzhimba who becomes his vice president.

President Saakashvili unveils proposals on autonomy within Georgia for South Ossetia whose leadership rejects them, repeating demand for full independence. Georgian leader says similar proposals can only be

considered for Abkhazia if Georgian refugees who fled fighting in 1993 are allowed to return.

2005 February - Three police officers killed by car bomb in Gori, west of Tbilisi and close to South Ossetia.

Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania is found dead in a Tbilisi flat, apparently from gas poisoning.

Zurab Noghaideli, hitherto finance minister, becomes premier.

2005 May - Large crowds in Tbilisi greet President George W Bush, the first US leader to visit Georgia, who proclaims the country a "beacon of liberty". Georgian policeman and four Ossetians killed in shooting incident in South Ossetia.

2005 June - Finance Minister Chechelashvili sacked after several senior tax officials detained on suspicion of taking bribes.

2005 July - Russia starts to withdraw its troops from two Soviet-era bases under the terms of a deal reached in May. The pull-out is due to be completed by late 2008.

2005 October - Foreign Minister Salome Zurabishvili sacked following row with parliament over her management style.

2006 January - Explosions on Russian side of border blow up section of gas pipeline, cutting off supplies during period of freezing weather. A virtually

simultaneous explosion also disrupts the supply of electricity from Russia. Russian officials say they suspect North Caucasus insurgents but President Saakashvili accuses Moscow of sabotage.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1102575.stm
