



Resolution of the People's Assembly Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia

15 October 1997

On denunciation of genocide and other repressive measures taken by the authorities of the Georgian Democratic Republic and the Soviet Georgia against the Abkhazian people and other peoples living in Abkhazia and on the ways of overcoming of their consequences

At the end of the XIX century, after the deportation of the overwhelming majority of the Abkhazo-Adyghean, Vainakh and other peoples, during the process of incorporation of Caucasian lands which were cleansed from their indigenous population, an idea was born among the nationalist circles of Georgian intelligentsia, nobility and bourgeoisie of creating a small Georgian empire. However, the military, political, ethno-demographic and other circumstances of that time in the region did not allow them to realize this idea throughout the whole Caucasus. In the years that followed the Georgian nationalists directed their efforts on theoretical substantiation of colonial claims of Georgia and of its special rights on Abkhazia, which, in practice, meant the incorporation of Abkhazian lands into the newly created Georgian state.

Despite the fact that the authorities, social and political formations, and the whole generations of Georgian politicians were changing, the intentions of the latter of incorporation of Abkhazia were never put aside, but, on the contrary, became even stronger. Two ways were chosen for complete absorption of Abkhazia into Georgia: the first, a peaceful way: the mechanical growth of the Georgian population in Abkhazia and artificial assimilation of Abkhazians, and the second, military way, produced by aggressive nationalism: the occupation of the country, the extermination of the indigenous people.

The main obstacle for the Georgian colonizers towards achieving their aims were those Abkhazians who remained on their Homeland after the deportation, so all the efforts were directed against them.

Measures on assimilation of the Abkhazians, manifested in mass resettlement of ethnic Georgians into Abkhazia, distortion of the history of the nation, etc. were undertaken already under Tsarism. With the collapse of the Russian Empire and the creation of the Georgian Democratic Republic (1918-1921) a new wave of calamities befell the Abkhazian nation. The military-political leadership of Georgia

committed an act of aggression against Abkhazia and, having occupied its territory, under the pretense of fighting against Bolshevism, began premeditated extermination of the Abkhazian population, expelling from Abkhazia of the Armenians, Greeks, representatives of other nationalities, and resettling their houses with new colonists from Western Georgia; only Georgian schools were opened, and Georgian was made the language of practically all administration.

The revival in March 1921 of the Abkhazian statehood in the form of the SSR of Abkhazia created conditions for physical preservation and social, economic and cultural development of the Abkhazian people and of all the multi-ethnic population of the Republic. However, later the same year, Stalin forced Abkhazia to sign a "special union treaty" with Georgia, and ten years later, on 19 February 1931, Abkhazia was transformed into an Autonomous Republic and incorporated into the Georgian SSR. The reduction of the status of Abkhazia to that of an Autonomy caused an all-nation meeting of the Abkhazian people (on 18-26 February 1931) which lasted for several days and which expressed its distrust in the Soviet power.

Starting from mid-1930-s, the Georgian authorities, with active support of Moscow, subjected to repressions the political leadership of Abkhazia, national intelligentsia, progressive peasantry and the Abkhazian nation as a whole. This was followed by the conversion of the Abkhazian alphabet into the Georgian script, the artificial inclusion of Georgian words into the Abkhazian vocabulary, the closure of Abkhazian schools, the halting of the radio broadcasting in the Abkhazian language, the changing of geographical names, impudent distortion of the history of the Abkhazian nation, etc. Soon afterwards practically all administration was made to be conducted in the Georgian language. The Abkhazians were forced to change their names and ethnicity. Parallel to this a large-scale campaign on resettlement of ethnic Georgians from Georgia into Abkhazia was carried out. To this aim a powerful construction firm "Abkhazpereselenstroï" was formed, as well as a special administrative staff within both Georgian and Abkhazian Governments. The resettlement was not voluntary, and sometimes even forceful. In violation to the existing laws, pieces of land were taken away from Abkhazian villages in order to resettle them with the Georgian peasants who, against their own will, had been brought here from different parts of Georgia.

The geography and structuring of special Georgian kolkhoz settlements in the areas with predominantly Abkhazian population (Ochamchira, Gudauta and Gagra districts), in particular, their high density and mono-ethnic character, as well as their location in relation to each other and within the Abkhazian villages or along the highways, etc., had, during peaceful time, an ethno-erosive function, and in the case of the Abkhazian resistance to Georgian assimilatory policy, could acquire a military-strategic function. All this, according to contemporary international law, can be qualified as genocide.

In order to increase the relative share of Georgians in the population total of Abkhazia, the leadership of Georgia gave the houses and apartments of the evicted Greeks, Turks, Laz, and others over to the Georgians brought here from Georgia. The unbearable conditions created by the Georgian aggressive nationalism in Abkhazia forced representatives of other nationalities, alongside with the Abkhazians, to leave the Republic. For instance, in 1949-1953 over 1500 Armenian

families alone left Abkhazia.

As a result of genocide and various repressive measures undertaken in the middle of the XX century the Abkhazian ethnographic group of Samurzakanians was almost completely "georgianized", which made up over 40 000, while the total number of Abkhazians from 1886 (59,0 thousand) to 1959 (61,2 thousand), i.e. during more than 70 years, practically did not increase. At the same time, during the same period, due to migration and assimilation of the Abkhazians, the Georgian population increased from 4 thousand up to 158 thousand.

A complete ethnic and cultural disappearance of the Abkhazians from the ethnographic map of the world became a real danger. Only the change of the Stalinist totalitarian regime saved the Abkhazian nation. But Abkhazia still remained within Georgia, and the Georgian leadership still continued, in a more covert manner, by opening of new industrial enterprises, various educational institutions and many other establishments, the policy of mechanical increase of the Georgian population in Abkhazia and the pressure on the national culture of the indigenous people. That is why the whole following period of continued incorporation of Abkhazia into Georgia was marked by the struggle of the Abkhazian people for its liberation from the Tbilisi regime, which was expressed in anti-Georgian demonstrations in 1956, 1964, 1967, 1978 and 1989. With the collapse of the USSR the Georgian-Abkhazian opposition resulted in the military aggression of Georgia against Abkhazia, in the Georgian-Abkhazian war of 1992-1993.

Giving the political and legal assessment of the aforementioned facts and events in Abkhazia which occurred under the regime of the Georgian Democratic Republic and Soviet Georgia, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Abkhazia resolves:

1. To acknowledge:
 - a. the invasion in 1918-1921 of the troops of the Georgian Democratic Republic on the territory of Abkhazia as acts of aggression and occupation;
 - b. the physical extermination of Abkhazians, the artificial change of the demographic situation in Abkhazia, the forceful imposition of the Georgian language in Abkhazia, carried out in 1918-1921 by the military-political regime of the Georgian Democratic Republic as acts of genocide;
2. To acknowledge the incorporation of SSR Abkhazia into SSR Georgia as an Autonomy as a premeditated and illegal political act directed against the Abkhazian nation and its statehood.
3. To acknowledge as acts of genocide of the Abkhazian people the most grave crimes against humanity as committed in the 30-s and 40-s by the authorities of the Georgian SSR in Abkhazia, such as the extermination of the political leadership of Abkhazia, of the national intelligentsia, of the progressive peasantry, the changing of the Abkhazian alphabet into the Georgian script, the closure of the Abkhazian schools, the halting of the radio broadcasting in the Abkhazian language, the renaming of geographical places, the falsification of the history, the artificial change of the demographic situation in Abkhazia.
4. To acknowledge the Abkhazian people as a previously repressed nation and

- the Greeks, Turks, Laz and representatives of other nationalities deported in the 40-s, as previously repressed ethnic groups of Abkhazia.
5. To acknowledge the popular mass rallies in Abkhazia in 1931, 1956, 1964, 1967, 1978 and 1989 as manifestations of national-liberation movement of the Abkhazian people directed against the colonial regime of the Soviet Georgia.
 6. Taking into account the historical experience, to consider that the sovereign, democratic, lawful state of Abkhazia is the main guarantor of physical and ethnic preservation, of further social, economic and cultural revival of the Abkhazian people, of the protection of rights and freedoms of all the nationalities living in Abkhazia.
 7. Considering the current complex demographic situation in Abkhazia, which is the heritage of the historical past, to recommend to the President and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Abkhazia to determine a long term demographic policy of the state, to adopt a state programme for the demographic development of Abkhazia.
 8. To entrust the Committee on Legislation, Committee on Science, Education and Culture and the Commission on the Problems of the Traditional Culture "Apsuara" of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Abkhazia with the elaboration of the draft laws and resolutions, which would facilitate the improvement in the demographic situation in Abkhazia, the preservation and development of the Abkhaz language, culture and traditions.
 9. To recommend to the Committee on Science, Education and Culture of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Abkhazia to accelerate the elaboration of the draft laws concerning the full-scale restoration of historical names of settlements and other places of the Republic of Abkhazia.
 10. To recommend to the Institute for Humanitarian Studies after the name of D. Gulia of the Academy of Sciences of Abkhazia and to the Abkhazian State University to accelerate the scientific research concerning the important issues of history, language and culture of the Abkhazian nation, their publication and popularization. To recommend to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Abkhazia to allot for this aim additional financing.
 11. To entrust the Committee on Legislation and the Commission on Human Rights of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Abkhazia with the elaboration of the draft laws on rehabilitation of the previously repressed ethnic groups in Abkhazia (Greeks, Laz, Turks, etc.)

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Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia
City of Sukhum
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