

Georgia mobilizes commando units near S.Ossetia - Russian military

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02/09/2008 19:06 MOSCOW, September 2 (RIA Novosti) – Georgia is mobilizing commando units near its border with South Ossetia, a senior Russian military official said on Tuesday.

Russia officially recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states on August 26, saying the move was needed to protect the regions after Georgia's August 8 attack on South Ossetia.

"According to our information, Georgian security forces are trying to restore their [military] presence in Georgian populated villages in South Ossetia. With this aim, Georgia is mobilizing its special forces from the interior and defense ministries near the administrative border with South Ossetia," Col. Gen. Anatoly Nogovitsyn, the deputy chief of Russia's General Staff, said.

He also said that Russia had deployed 19 peacekeeping observation posts in South Ossetia to provide security and stability in the republic, adding that South Ossetian military detachments were also mobilizing near the border to counter any possible Georgian attacks.

Georgia attacked South Ossetia on August 8 in an attempt to regain control over the republic, which split from Tbilisi in the early 1990s. Most people living in South Ossetia have Russian citizenship and Moscow subsequently launched an operation to "force Georgia to accept peace." The operation was concluded on August 12.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said on Sunday that Russian support for South Ossetia and Abkhazia envisaged military as well as economic assistance.

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