

NATO encouraged Georgia - Russian envoy

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Russia's envoy to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, has sent an official note to representatives of all member countries in Brussels in connection with Georgia's military actions against South Ossetia. He's calling on them not to support Mikhail Saakashvili.

"Russia has already begun consultations with the ambassadors of the NATO countries and consultations with NATO military representatives will be held tomorrow," Rogozin said. "We will caution them against continuing to further support of Saakashvili."

Rogozin says Georgian aggression against South Ossetia is obvious.

"It is an undisguised aggression accompanied by a mass propaganda war," he said.

Rogozin has linked Friday's onslaught to the support given to Saakashvili at the recent NATO summit in Bucharest. At the meeting, Rogozin says, it "was hinted Georgia has prospects in NATO."

South Ossetia close to humanitarian disaster - Russian FM

[Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov](#) says he hopes Georgia's Western partners take note of what has happened in South Ossetia and draw conclusions.

"It all confirms our numerous warnings addressed to the international community that it is necessary to pay attention to massive arms purchasing by Georgia during several years. Now we see how these arms and Georgian special troops who had been trained by foreign specialists are used," he said.

The FM also accused the Georgian authorities of ignoring the UN Security Council's call to observe a ceasefire during the Olympic Games in Beijing.

Russia is attacking Georgia - Saakashvili

Meanwhile, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili told CNN on Friday that Russia "is waging war against Georgia".

He said it was in the interests of the USA to help Georgia.

"It concerns not only Georgia -it concerns the U.S. and its values. We are a freedom-loving country which is being attacked," Saakashvili said.

Georgia has called on the U.S. and other countries to put pressure upon Russia "to put an end to a military aggression" in South Ossetia, Georgian ambassador to the U.S. Vasil

Sikharulidze told the American media on Friday.

“We ask our friends, including the U.S., to be mediators and try persuading Russia to stop this military aggression and incursion into Georgia,” Sikharulidze said.

Earlier U.S. president George W. Bush said the U.S. supports the territorial integrity of Georgia.

‘Saakashvili is a murderer’

The President of the breakaway republic of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity claimis about 1,400 people have been killed by Georgian shelling.

“It is the third genocide of the Ossetian people from the side of Georgia, and Saakashvili is the main murderer,” Kokoity said.

Abkhasia reacts

In connection with the escalating tensions in South Ossetia, Abkhazia’s armed forces are moving to the border with Georgia, the breakaway republic’s president Sergey Bagapsh said on Friday.

“Irrespective of the development of situation in South Ossetia, we won’t stop moving to the border with Georgia. Today they launch a military aggression against South Ossetia and tomorrow it could be Abkhazia. It cannot go on like that,” Bagapsh said.

Diplomatic efforts gather pace

The EU has called for an immediate cessation of violence. It says it’s ‘deeply concerned’ about the dramatic escalation in the conflict between Tbilisi and its separatist republic.

A spokesman for the EU Council said The Union’s high representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, had spoken to Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili on Thursday. He said Solana urged Saakashvili to show restraint and to return to the negotiating table.

Javier Solana’s spokesperson, Cristina Gallach, told RT on Friday that urgent action is needed to stop a further loss of lives.

“We are extremely concerned with the latest developments and we think that it is very regrettable that there has been loss of lives. The most urgent thing at the moment is to calm the situation down,” she said.

The NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer has called on the authorities of Georgia and South Ossetia to stop the violence and to restore peaceful negotiations.

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