

Enhanced Militarization. Senator Lugar's "NATO Enlargement Bill": Bosnia, Georgia, Macedonia, Montenegro

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Georgia in Senator Lugar's NATO Enlargement Bill

Tbilisi: U.S. Republican Senator Richard Lugar has introduced the NATO Enlargement Bill, calling on President Obama to provide "a clear roadmap" for the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia, and Montenegro to NATO at the Chicago summit in late May.

"I am hopeful that the Senate will pass this measure before the NATO Summit in Chicago this May," said Lugar, who is the top Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations committee.

The bill, which he says aims at encouraging further enlargement of NATO, declares "for the first time in U.S. legislation", that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia, and Montenegro, which currently aspire to join the Alliance, are to be considered NATO "aspirants."

Georgia has been referred to as "aspirant" country in a final statement of NATO foreign ministerial meeting in Brussels on December 7, 2011, which triggered Russia's protest with its Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov saying that he had "openly warned" his counterparts from the Alliance that such statements might serve as an encouragement for President Saakashvili to undertake "an adventure similar to the one of August, 2008."

Senator Lugar's bill, if approved, will require reports to the Congress on U.S. efforts towards further NATO enlargement and on the readiness of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia and Montenegro to join the Alliance, as well as a report on "U.S. policies to uphold Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

If approved the bill will make Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro eligible to receive U.S. assistance for NATO accession under the 1994 NATO Participation Act and will reauthorize assistance under the same act for Georgia and Macedonia.

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