

Georgia Prepares for War with Russia

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Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili has called on military top brass to build “total defense” and accused Russia of planning to “overthrow Georgian democracy.”

Not only has Russia not given up its “plan to control Georgia, but they are working intensively on that,” Saakashvili said, speaking at a meeting with army top commanders and senior Defense Ministry’s officials. The president said his assessment was based on Russia’s “rhetoric and information war carried out on daily, minute-by-minute basis against Georgia.”

The Georgian leader expects an attack of “the enemy force... from the ethnically-cleansed territories,” referring to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, recognized by Russia as independent states in 2008.

Saakashvili set the task for his military to “burn each and every square meter of the Georgian land” beneath an enemy if it decides to invade the country. For this, the country should develop not only armed forces, but also a civil defense system, he said. Defense of the country is “a matter for each and every citizen” and “each village should be able to defend itself,” he stressed.

Although Tbilisi had to cut military budget for 2010 because of the economic crisis, “money will be invested in education, training and the increase of professionalism,” Saakashvili said.

Meanwhile, the Georgian army is gaining experience in Afghanistan. The participation in the military operation in that country is important from a geopolitical point of view and it is “a good military school,” Saakashvili said. “We need experience, as we need total defense,” he added.

“Fear sees danger everywhere,” an anonymous source in the Russian Defense Ministry told Nezavisimaya Gazeta daily. “No one is planning to do anything against Georgia, unless its government repeats the cruel behavior it resorted to two years ago. The fruits of that mistake proved to be bitter for the Georgian leadership, and it should have learned its lesson.”

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