

# Press Release

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## Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis on relations between the Russian Federation and Georgia

Strasbourg, 23.04.2008 - I am very concerned to have been informed that the Russian authorities intend to deal directly with the authorities of the Georgian breakaway region of Abkhazia in order to obtain the transfer of Russian citizens from prisons in Abkhazia.

Both Georgia and the Russian Federation have ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the transfer of sentenced persons, but this Convention does not provide for such arrangements to be made with any other level of authority without the agreement of the Government concerned. To my knowledge, the agreement of the Georgian Government has not been sought. In these circumstances, the intention of the Russian Government contradicts their previous statements upholding the territorial integrity of Georgia.

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