

Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism Meetings are... Opportunities for in-person dialogue



IPRM meetings were established in 2009, following an agreement reached during the Geneva International Discussions

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings allow participants from both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines to talk to one another about security issues and other matters that affect people living along the Lines.

The IPRMs for South Ossetia and Abkhazia were agreed in February 2009, at the sixth meeting of the Geneva International Discussions. Over the years, the IPRM format has proved to be a very efficient tool in managing the situation on the ground and in promoting stability in Georgia. Initially, the venue was Dvani village, but later it moved to the village of Ergneti – the meetings are held on a spot at the very Administrative Boundary Line.



IPRM in Gali

The first IPRM meeting for Abkhazia took place in July 2009, in Gali, a town located in Abkhazia within ten kilometres from the Administrative Boundary Line. The IPRM is chaired by the UN, with the participation of EUMM. Participants from the Georgian, Russian and *de facto* Abkhaz authorities attend the meeting. The IPRM is organised on a monthly basis, but can be convened at short notice at the request of any of the participants. More than 50 IPRM meetings have been held to date in Gali.

IPRM in Ergneti

IPRM meetings dedicated to the conflict in South Ossetia started in May 2009, in Dvani. The meetings are facilitated by the EUMM and the OSCE, who moderate the discussions. Participants from the Georgian, Russian and *de facto* South Ossetian authorities attend the meeting. The IPRM is organised on a monthly basis, but can be convened at short notice at the request of any of the participants. Technical meetings to discuss incidents or issues in situ have been organised between the IPRM meetings. More than 80 IPRM meetings have been held to date in Ergneti.



Three Tools for...

Incident Prevention, Incident Response and Conflict Resolution

The EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) has developed a practical and effective approach towards conflict prevention with the 'Hotline'. This allows communication across the Administrative Boundary Lines to avoid a build-up of tensions that could lead to conflict. EUMM organises the IPRM in Ergneti, participates in the IPRM in Gali and contributes to the Geneva International Discussions.

The EUMM-managed Hotline ensures timely communication on many different issues. These, for example, include detentions, access to emergency medical care, access to agricultural land and the effect on local residents of the installation of fences, barbed wire and information signs along the Administrative Boundary Lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Mission has two Hotline holders. They communicate with their counterparts via mobile phone, Skype, at technical meetings or in face-to-face discussions at the monthly meetings of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism in Gali and Ergneti. The Hotline is used on a daily basis.

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) aims to ensure a timely and effective response to security challenges and issues important to people living along the Administrative Boundary Lines that have emerged because of the conflict. The agenda can include security incidents, the impact on local residents of the installation of 'border' infrastructure, information sharing on criminal

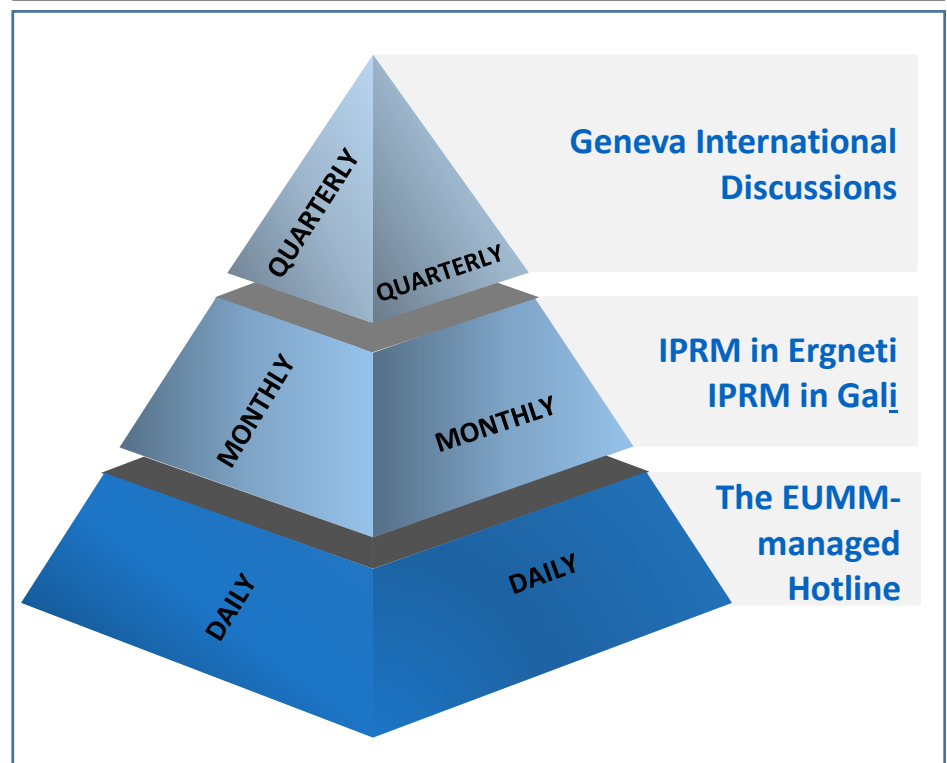
activities, effective delivery of humanitarian aid, and any other issues, which could affect the situation on the ground. It is also a platform to verify information in the aftermath of incidents. The IPRM meets on a monthly basis, and could additionally be organised at short notice at the request of any of the participants.

The Geneva International Discussions (GID) were launched in Geneva, Switzerland, in October 2008. It is the only forum where resolution of the conflict in

Georgia is discussed. The GID is also a platform to discuss issues that have a wider impact on communities living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines, such as agricultural pest control and education for ethnic minorities. The GID are held four times a year. Whereas the IPRM and the Hotline are in place to manage the conflict, the GID focuses at the political level and conflict resolution.

The Hotline, IPRM and GID are the three tools in place for incident prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution.

The three levels for conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution



The EUMM-managed Hotline has been activated over 6000 times since the first call in 2009

There have been 88 IPRMs dedicated to the South Ossetian theatre (Ergneti) and 57 for the Abkhaz theatre (Gali)

Participants met 44 times in the frame of the Geneva International Discussions

In Ergneti

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings held to discuss conflict issues in South Ossetia take place right on the Administrative Boundary Line between South Ossetia and the territory administered by Georgian authorities in Tbilisi. The meetings are facilitated jointly by the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia and by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with participation from the Georgian, Russian and *de facto* South Ossetian authorities.

The IPRM is an opportunity for participants from both sides of the Administrative Boundary Line to meet in person to exchange information and discuss security and practical humanitarian issues. These monthly meetings have proven very useful in developing greater confidence and cooperation between participants, even though discussions are

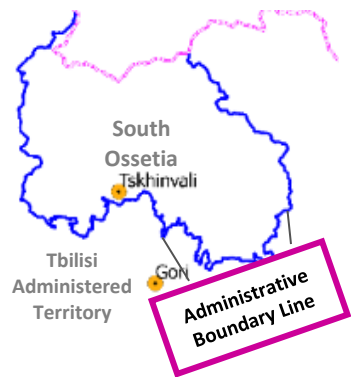
at times challenging. Among the issues discussed during the IPRM meetings in Ergneti are detentions of people who cross the Administrative Boundary Line, access to agricultural land for people living along the Line, installation of barriers to free movement across the Line ('borderisation') and military or training activities.

Information sharing during the IPRM meetings has contributed to the release of people who are detained by Russian or *de facto* security personnel. Discussions have also resulted in agreement on access to farmland. Most important, it has promoted confidence building between the conflict parties.



The Administrative Boundary Line

The IPRM in Ergneti - participants



DE FACTO SOUTH OSSETIA PARTICIPANTS



- *de facto* KGB Border Guard Service
- *de facto* Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- *de facto* Prosecutor's Office
- *de facto* Officials



THE EUROPEAN UNION MONITORING MISSION IN GEORGIA (EUMM)



- Head of Mission
- Head of Operations
- EUMM Hotline Holder
- Political Advisers
- EU Officials

RUSSIAN FEDERATION PARTICIPANTS



- Russian FSB Border Guard Service
- Russian Officials in Tskhinvali



GEORGIA PARTICIPANTS TBILISI-ADMINISTERED TERRITORY



- State Security Service of Georgia
- State Ministry for Reconciliation and Civic Equality
- Tbilisi Central Government Officials



THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)



- Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus
- OSCE officials
- Policy Officers

*Source: <http://www.clipartpanda.com>

Preparing for Action

IPRM meeting in Ergneti...



The IPRM meetings require an important amount of staff to get involved

An IPRM meeting involves joint effort from both Mission Headquarters and Field Offices. During the month and prior to each meeting, Headquarters receives information gathered by patrols from Field Offices. Mission experts sort and analyse the information, compare it with previous material and prepare background papers for the Head of Mission. After each IPRM, a [Press Release](#) is prepared by the Press and Public Information Section and published on Mission external platforms. A report on the process is also sent to EU Member States.

1

Agreeing on an IPRM meeting. At the end of each IPRM meeting, participants make a decision on the time for the following meeting. It may happen that extraordinary IPRMs are organised with short notice in order to address a significant event or urgent issue.

2

Preparations at the EUMM Headquarters. EUMM experts prepare all relevant documentation for the meeting. Contributions come from Field Offices, external data and statistics, the Hotline Holders and Mission advisers, merged and analysed by a team of reporting officers and political advisers. The final product is provided to the Head of Mission and fellow facilitator – the Special Representative of the OSCE.

3

Field Office Gori staff is in charge of setting-up the IPRM tent. On the day of the meeting, staff from the Field Office in Gori arrive at the location early morning for logistical arrangements – they erect the tent where the meeting is to take place and install all necessary appliances. When participants arrive everything is ready – the IPRM tent, the administrative tent, tables, chairs and refreshments.

4

Discussions inside the IPRM tent. The meeting starts at a time agreed in advance with opening remarks by the EUMM and the OSCE. Afterwards, issues on the IPRM Agenda are discussed in turn. Depending on the number and complexity of items on the Agenda, a meeting can take up to ten hours, with short technical breaks, to allow for consultations among the participants.

5

Wrapping-up the meeting. Once the discussions on the Agenda are completed, participants may bring up additional issues under “any other business”. Potential dates for future IPRM meetings are discussed, as is the value-added of organising additional ‘technical meetings’ on certain issues – for example access to farmland or irrigation across the Administrative Boundary Line. Once the meeting is finished and participants depart, monitors from the Field Office in Gori take over and pack up the items installed in the morning.

Media Presence at the IPRM meetings.

Media representatives are always welcome at the IPRM meetings in Ergneti. In order to ensure media access and to respect the privacy and confidentiality of discussions inside and outside the IPRM tent for participants, there are some guidelines and regulations for media presence at the IPRM. However, before and after the meeting, the media has the opportunity to take photographs, record audio and video, and to interview the participants. **At the IPRM in Gali the media is not present.**



Geneva International Discussions...

The Road to Peace

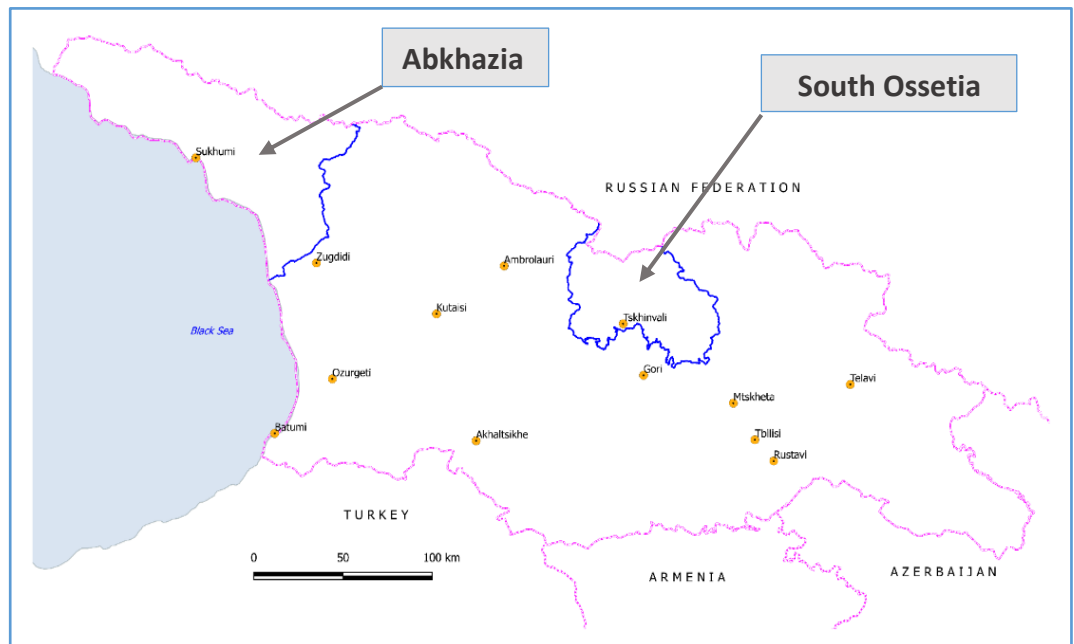
“Opening of international talks on the security and stability arrangements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia” – point six of the The 2008 war ended with the Six-Point Agreement, reached with EU assistance and signed on 12 August 2008 by the presidents of France, Russia and Georgia. Point six of the agreement calls for international discussions on security and stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The negotiations on the format of the Geneva International

Discussions (GID) were held in September 2008. The UN, OSCE and EU act all jointly and chair the negotiations. The EU Special Representative (EUSR) is one of the three senior diplomats who prepare and facilitate the discussions. The EUMM participates in the two working groups. The Head of the EU Monitoring Mission gives an overview on the security situation on the ground in Working Group One, which deals with security issues.

Since 2008, 44 rounds of discussions have been held. A notable success of the sixth round was the establishment of the IPRM mechanism, described in detail earlier in this issue.

The GID is the only conflict resolution format agreed by all parties. The aim of the talks is to advance regional peace and stability, and the return of displaced persons.

“Despite intensive engagement by all participants, it did not prove possible to finalize the draft joint statement on non-use of force. The Co-Chairs will continue their consultations in this regard [...] unfortunately, it was again impossible to complete discussion of all agenda items given long-standing divergent approaches to the issue of IDPs/refugees.”
Press Communiqué of the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions, 43rd round, 28 March 2018



The EUMM is strongly committed to build confidence and promote dialogue. We play a leading role in meetings and communication that reduce tensions on the ground – day in, day out.

**Erik Høeg, Head of Mission
EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia**



**Check out the IPRM photo gallery
on the next page!**



The EUMM Monitor

A bulletin from the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia

Issue #6 • August 2018

IPRM over the years...

Photo gallery



1

1. 2009 - Early years of the IPRM meeting. Head of EUMM, Ambassador Hansjörg Haber, addressing the participants of the IPRM in Dvani.

2. 2011 - Head of Mission, Ambassador Andrzej Tyszkiewicz greets the participants at the IPRM meeting in Dvani.



2

3. 2015 – 60th IPRM meeting in Ergneti. EUMM Head of Mission, Ambassador Kęstutis Jankauskas, opens the meeting.

“EUMM calls for cooperation in getting together for Incident Prevention Mechanism”

EU Monitoring Mission statement, May 2009



3



4

4. 2018 – 87th IPRM meeting in Ergneti. Head of Mission, Mr. Erik Høeg, invited all participants for a group picture.
5. 2018 – 54th IPRM meeting in Gali – ongoing discussions on agreed agenda points.



5



6

6. 2017 – 83rd IPRM meeting in Ergneti - EUMM and OSCE members draft a joint press release on the results of the meeting after its completion.

DID YOU LIKE IT?

CHECK OUR ONLINE GALLERY FOR

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT **EUMM** and its **ACTIVITIES**



Scan
the QR Code with your
smartphone to learn more.



Published by the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia

Contact: press@eumm.eu



- Des Doyle, Spokesperson: Des.Doyle@eumm.eu
- Iuliu Draghici, Press and Public Information Officer: Iuliu.Draghici@eumm.eu
- Visit us on: www.eumm.eu, www.facebook.com/eumm.geo and www.flickr.com/photos/eeas-csdp/albums/72157677976230403

The European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia is the EU's only current Mission that is specifically dedicated to monitoring. On 12 December 2016, the European Council extended the **mandate** of the Mission until 14 December 2018. The European Council is expected to extend again the Mission mandate until December 2020.

Mr. Erik Høeg (Denmark) is Head of Mission. He succeeded Kęstutis Jankauskas (Lithuania), Toivo Klair (Estonia), Andrzej Tyszkiewicz (Poland), and Hansjörg Haber (Germany).



**European Union Monitoring
Mission in Georgia**

www.eumm.eu