

OCHA
Georgia

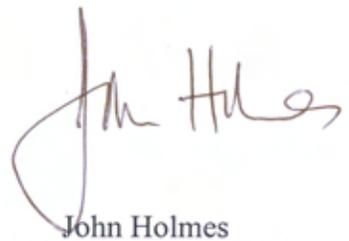
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Note to the Secretary-General DSG

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SEP 17 2008
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EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

INTER-AGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENT MISSION TO SOUTH OSSETIA ✓

1. The planned inter-agency "Humanitarian Assessment Mission" left for the Russian Federation on Tuesday, 16 September, and will be traveling from Moscow to Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia, and then to South Ossetia on 17 September. The mission will conclude its assessment on Friday 19 of September. It will then visit Tbilisi separately, after returning via Moscow. The Georgian authorities were consulted about the mission and were content with its aims.
2. The mission is led by the Director of OCHA Geneva and includes representatives of each of the clusters' lead agencies mentioned in the Flash Appeal of 18 August 2008, namely UNDP, UNHCR, WHO, WFP and UNICEF, plus OHCHR to whose presence the Russians agreed at the very last minute. OHCHR, together with UNHCR and UNICEF, as the lead agencies in the Protection cluster in Georgia, will be able to cover human rights concerns, particularly in the context of displacement and protection of civilians.
3. The purpose of the mission is to gain an overview of the current humanitarian situation in the areas most affected by the recent conflict in Georgia, in particular South Ossetia. It will be technical and non-political, and will aim to facilitate the revision of the Flash Appeal which needs to be based on a more comprehensive assessment of the humanitarian situation. The mission will have discussions with all relevant parties, ascertaining the humanitarian situation and identifying priority assistance needs, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups in the conflict-affected areas, as well as reviewing the capacity for delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection.
4. An announcement was made about the mission in New York on the morning of 16 September. As agreed, I also briefed the P3 on the mission and on our plans for a second broader mission in due course. They seemed to accept the logic of this.



John Holmes
16 September 2008

cc: Ms. Migiro
Mr. Pascoe
Mr. Le Roy

SEP 17 2008

Humanitarian Assessment Mission to South Ossetia

Terms of Reference

Proposed dates: 16-20 September, 2008

Background

In mid-August 2008, 9 UN agencies, 15 NGOs, and IOM issued the Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal to assist and protect 128,700 persons affected by the recent violence in South Ossetia and more widely in Georgia. Since then, there have been significant numbers of people returning from North Ossetia back into South Ossetia, and from Tbilisi to Gori. On the other hand, many who fled south from South Ossetia have not been able to return, and there are reports of new displacement, including in the 'security zone'. Humanitarian access to South Ossetia has been very limited. The Humanitarian Coordinator in Tbilisi has sought to negotiate regular access from the south but has so far been unsuccessful. The UN Secretary-General has therefore authorized this mission from the north.

Scope of the mission

The purpose of the mission is to gain an overview of the current humanitarian situation in the areas most affected by the recent conflict in Georgia, in particular South Ossetia. It will be technical and non-political in nature, consistent with humanitarian principles, and agreed to in principle with all concerned parties. It is timed to facilitate the revision of the Flash Appeal which needs to be based on a more complete assessment of the humanitarian situation and needs. OCHA will lead the mission. Each of the lead agencies for the clusters in the Flash Appeal will participate on behalf of their clusters.

The mission will:

- Dialogue with all relevant parties, ascertaining the humanitarian situation and identifying priority assistance needs, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups in the conflict-affected areas;
- Review the capacity for delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection, and recommend processes for sustainable implementation of the humanitarian program;
- Document the scope of bilateral humanitarian assistance in South Ossetia, and seek ways for it to be better coordinated with the multilateral humanitarian operation; and
- Explore issues related to the protection of civilians and future arrangements for those who have fled or otherwise been displaced;
- Ascertain the recovery assistance plans of bilateral actors in South Ossetia and explore how the United Nations and its partners can best support these efforts, particularly in terms of responding to early recovery needs.

Areas to be visited:

- South Ossetia, including affected villages outside of Tskhinvali; and
- Travel through Moscow and Vladikavkaz.

Rec'd
5 pm
(54)



Note to Mr. Nambiar

Inter-Agency Humanitarian Assessment Mission to South Ossetia

Please find attached a note to the Secretary-General on the humanitarian assessment mission to South Ossetia.

I would be grateful if you could kindly submit the attached note to the Secretary-General.

John Holmes
16 September 2008