

CONFERENCE

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Geopolitical Aspects of the Abkhazian Statehood: some results and perspectives

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After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 alongside with 15 former union republics which have been recognized by the United Nations and other states, at nearly the same time several other states were formed, which separated from the former union republics and which have since been effectively independent. These states at the time of the disintegration of the Soviet Union did not possess the status of union republics and consequently did not receive any diplomatic recognition from Russia or other states around the world. Thus, at the beginning of the 1990s the unrecognized states Taiwan and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus were joined by South Ossetia, Transdnestria, Nagorno Karabakh and Abkhazia. My discussion is devoted to the analysis of the geopolitical situation and some perspectives for the development concerning one of these states, the Republic of Abkhazia.

First of all I would like to touch upon the terminology which has some currency in reference to unrecognized states. They are often called, especially in the media, "self-proclaimed states". It is necessary to emphasize that this term is not simply inexact or incorrect, but is quite absurd, as any state is "self-proclaimed". It would be strange, if states did not proclaim themselves but were proclaimed by someone else. Even less felicitous, to my view, is the sometimes used term "quasi-state". Take, for instance, Abkhazia, which possesses all the attributes of a state (territory, distinct borders, a permanent population, authorities exercising control over the territory of the state, the ability to enter into international relations, the absence of foreign control, etc.), **minus** recognition, which, from the point of view of Declarative Theory is sufficient for its qualification as a state. By both territory and population Abkhazia is approximately equal to Cyprus, and it is bigger than Malta, both of which are recognized states and members of the European Union and the United Nations. Even some recognized states could envy the political