



Chronicle: The Caucasus in the year 2011

January	
3 January 2011	The Georgian police breaks up a hunger strike by over a dozen war veterans in the center of Tbilisi
7 January 2011	The European Investment Bank (EIB) announces a loan of 20 million Euros to Georgia to rehabilitate the Enguri hydro power plant and the Vardnili hydro power cascade
12 January 2011	Representatives from Azerbaijan's State Oil Company (SOCAR) and Iran's National Gas Export Company (NIGEC) sign a five-year agreement on the supply of natural gas from Azerbaijan to Iran
13 January 2011	Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso sign a joint declaration on the establishment of a Southern Gas Corridor
13 January 2011	The European Commission proposes to allocate Georgia 46 million Euros in financial assistance as part of the 500 million Euro aid package pledged by the EU after the 2008 Russian–Georgian war.
13 January 2011	The International Monetary Fund (IMF) allocates 153 million US dollars to Georgia after completing the seventh and eighth review of Georgia's economic performance
14 January 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili meets with US President Barack Obama in Washington during a memorial service for veteran US diplomat Richard Holbrooke
18 January 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze meets with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in Baku to discuss economic cooperation and regional security
18 January 2011	Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri meets with Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirate (UEA) Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum to discuss strengthening bilateral relations, including investments from UEA in Georgia, direct flights and a potential simplification of visa rules for Georgian citizens

20 January 2011	The head of the unregistered Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (AIP) Movsum Samadov is sentenced to three months in pretrial detention in Azerbaijan for illegal possession of arms, inciting terror and seeking to change the constitutional system
22 January 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili visits Armenia
24 January 2011	The Georgian Foreign Ministry condemns the reported deployment by Russia of Tochka-U short-range ballistic missiles in the breakaway region of South Ossetia
25 January 2011	The Georgian Public Broadcaster's Russian language satellite news channel is relaunched
26 January 2011	The Georgian Foreign Ministry protests the deployment of a team of specialists from Russia's state-owned railway to repair track in the breakaway region of Abkhazia
26 January 2011	Georgia establishes diplomatic and consular relations with Somalia
28 January 2011	Adviser of Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri Giorgi Pertaia is appointed the new tax ombudsman
Februar	
2 February 2011	Coal miners strike in Tkibuli in Georgia's region of Imereti to demand an improvement in their working conditions after three explosions left nine miners dead and ten injured over the past year
3 February 2011	Four US senators ask US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to consider Georgia as an alternative site, instead of Turkey, to deploy NATO missile defense system radar aimed at Iran
3 February 2011	The UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) says that there have not been major violations of international law or standards despite some shortcomings in the series of evictions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) from temporary shelters in Georgia's capital of Tbilisi
4 February 2011	A delegation of businessmen from Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia meet with the leadership of the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh to discuss investment opportunities
4 February 2011	Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri says on a visit to the United States that between 150 and 250 million US dollars is expected in aid from the new program under the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)
5 February 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili meets with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on the sideline of the 47th Munich Security Conference

5 February 2011	Head of Armenia's earthquake-monitoring agency Alvaro Antonian resigns ahead of his trial on corruption charges
6 February 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili declares at the Munich Security Conference that Georgia is ready to send more troops to Afghanistan
7 February 2011	The pro-opposition daily newspaper "Haykakan Zhamanak" is found guilty of libel by a court in Armenia and ordered to pay a fine and retract allegations that three Armenian businessmen have engaged in criminal activity in Russia.
8 February 2011	The Georgian Parliament ratifies an air services agreement with the European Union which will remove restrictions on prices and weekly flights between Georgia and the EU
8 February 2011	The heads of the railway departments of Azerbaijan, Iran and Russia sign an agreement on establishing a joint venture for the creation of a North-South railway corridor
9 February 2011	Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev calls for more vigilance in the fight against corruption and asks citizens to contribute to the campaign during a visit to Azerbaijan's western regions of Qazakh and Tovuz
10 February 2011	A rally takes place in front of the Iranian embassy in Azerbaijan's capital Baku to protest what are perceived as anti-Azerbaijani statements made by officials and clerics in the Iranian media as well as closer ties between Iran and Armenia
11 February 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili says in an annual state of the nation address to the Georgian Parliament that Georgia is planning to have a free trade agreement with the EU by 2015
12 February 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili speaks of the idea of creating a "United Caucasus" during a meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu in Tbilisi, noting the importance of open borders in the region and discussing a simplification of border crossing between Turkey and Georgia
13 February 2011	The Armenian Defense Ministry says that four military personnel have been arrested in connection with the death of a soldier
15 February 2011	Georgia and Qatar sign an air transport agreement allowing for an unrestricted number of flights between the two countries
16 February 2011	U.S. Director of National Intelligence James Clapper says that Georgia's efforts to reach out to the North Caucasus republics in the Russian Federation contribute to tensions in the region along with Russia's military presence in the breakaway region of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

16 February 2011	The Georgian Finance Ministry says that seven employees of the Labor and Social Protection Ministry have been charged with negligence and nine employees of several insurance companies charged with fraud for the misappropriation of government insurance payments to Georgian families
16 February 2011	Hundreds of demonstrators in the Nardaran village in Azerbaijan near the capital Baku protest against a lack of gas and electricity
17 February 2011	Newly appointed US ambassador in Azerbaijan Matthew Bryza says that there can be no military solution to the conflict over the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
17 February 2011	Armenia and Georgia agree to jointly control their three border crossings
17 February 2011	US secretary of state Hillary Clinton meets with Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze in Washington
18 February 2011	Armenian opposition leader Levon Ter-Petrossian warns the Armenian leadership to hold new elections or face the same kind of unrest as in the Arab states during a rally in Yerevan
19 February 2011	Georgia signs a memorandum with the daughter company of the Turkish Agaoglu Group on the construction of three hydropower plants on the river of Paravani in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia
21 February 2011	The breakaway region of Abkhazia launches a population census
21 February 2011	Georgia and the breakaway region of South Ossetia exchange seven detainees from each side
22 February 2011	The Georgian Defense Ministry says that one Georgian serviceman was killed and two others wounded as a result of a mine explosion in Afghanistan
22 February 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes a resolution asking the chief prosecutor's office to "react appropriately" to the report of an ad hoc commission charged with studying the circumstances of the death of Georgia's ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in 1993 that noted inconsistencies in the official investigation
24 February 2011	US Deputy Secretary of State James B. Steinberg visits Georgia and meets with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, Secretary of National Security Council Giga Bokeria and Deputy Foreign Minister Sergi Kapanadze
24 February 2011	Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev dismisses a military commander after the death of seven servicemen in a shooting incident in Azerbaijan
25 February 2011	Georgian Interior Ministry Vano Merabishvili meets with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on a visit to Baku
25 February 2011	Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says on a visit to Athens that Azerbaijan intends to increase natural gas supplies to Greece

25 February 2011	Hundreds of drivers of minibuses or “marshrutkas” protest against increased daily fees to be paid by the drivers on transportation routes in Georgia’s capital city of Tbilisi
25 February 2011	Several traffic policemen are fired in Azerbaijan on corruption charges
26 February 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian meets with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in St. Petersburg for talks including among other issues the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
28 February 2011	Parliamentary deputies of the Armenian opposition Zharangutyun (Heritage) party walk out of Parliament after accusing Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian of trying illegally to prolong its term
March	
1 March 2011	An opposition rally is held in Armenia’s capital of Yerevan with opposition leader Levon Ter-Petrossian calling for early presidential and parliamentary elections
1 March 2011	Leaders of the opposition Georgian Party says that a revolution in Georgia is inevitable if Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili does not implement changes in the justice system, media, police as well as the business and electoral environments.
1 March 2011	Head of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II calls on Russia and Georgia to start dialogues at various levels
2 March 2011	The Azerbaijani Prosecutor General’s office launches a hotline for citizens to report on instances of corruption
4 March 2011	The fifteenth round of the Geneva talks is held
4 March 2011	Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that Russia has deployed Tochka-U rockets in the breakaway region of South Ossetia “temporarily” for training purposes
4 March 2011	Azerbaijani youth activist Bakhtiyar Hajiyev, an initiator of a Facebook campaign for one day of protest against the Azerbaijani government, is detained for one month in prison
5 March 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev held talks on the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh in Russia’s Black Sea resort of Sochi
7 March 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili says at a meeting with pensioners in the Georgian town of Rustavi that the minimum pension will be increased from September of 2011

10 March 2011	The Georgian government distributes “food vouchers” of 30 Georgian laris (about 17.5 US dollars) to up to one million families
11 March 2011	The US real estate tycoon Donald Trump signs a deal during a ceremony in New York with the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili to develop two towers in Tbilisi and Georgia’s sea resort of Batumi with an estimated worth of up to 300 million US dollars.
11 March 2011	Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in Georgia have declined 16% to 553.1 million US dollars in 2010 according to preliminary figures released by Geostat, the State Statistics Office.
15 March 2011	The leader of the Armenian opposition Zharangutyun (Heritage) party Raffi Hovannisian begins a hunger strike at Yerevan’s Liberty Square to demand fresh presidential and parliamentary elections in Armenia.
15 March 2011	OSCE Chairman-in-Office Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis visits Georgia and meets with Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashade.
15 March 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili meets with General David Petraeus, the commander of the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, in Washington.
16 March 2011	Azerbaijan threatens to shoot down civilian planes flying to the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh if the civilian airport in the region reopens as planned.
16 March 2011	Daniel W. Yohannes, the chief executive of the US government foreign aid agency Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), reports that the MCC is considering allocating a new aid package of 100–150 million US dollars to Georgia during a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing.
26 March 2011	Georgia donates 1 million US dollars via the Red Cross to relief efforts for earthquake-hit Japan
28 March 2011	The OSCE condemns an attack on journalist Seymour Haziyevev in Azerbaijan
28 March 2011	The breakaway region of Abkhazia releases the preliminary results of a population census
31 March 2011	Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt visits Georgia
31 March 2011	Armenian opposition leader Raffi Hovannisian ends his hunger strike
April	
1 April 2011	The International Court of Justice refuses to hear complaints of alleged human rights abuses committed by Russia in Georgia’s breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia
1 April 2011	Two Israeli businessmen are found guilty of offering a bribe to the Georgian Deputy Finance Minister and sentenced to jail in Georgia

1 April 2011	RAKIA, a state-owned investment fund from the UAE emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, is in talks to sell 80% of its stake in Georgia's Black Sea Port of Poti to the Hague-based APM Terminals
3 April 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze visits Spain
4 April 2011	Protestors are arrested in front of the Georgian Supreme Court during a campaign for prison inmate's rights
5 April 2011	A new synagogue opens in Azerbaijan's capital of Baku during a ceremony attended by US ambassador Matthew Bryza and envoys from Israel and Turkey, among others.
6 April 2011	Head of the opposition Musavat party youth wing Tural Abbasli is expelled from Baku State University in Azerbaijan
8 April 2011	Armenian opposition leader Levon Ter-Petrosian gives a deadline of three weeks to Armenia's political leadership to start a dialogue with the Armenian National Congress (HAK) and free jailed opposition members during a rally at Yerevan's Liberty Square.
8 April 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes in its final reading amendments to a law on broadcasting containing measures to render media ownership in Georgia more transparent.
8 April 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian announces during a meeting with business associations in Yerevan that the government is ready to offer tax breaks for companies and entrepreneurs launching innovative manufacturing operations.
8 April 2011	The Israeli defense company Elbit System Ltd. says that it is filing a suit in the High Court of Justice in the United Kingdom against Georgia over its failure to pay approximately 100 million US dollars
11 April 2011	The Russian Foreign Ministry accuses Georgia of "conniving" with criminal groups to destabilize the situation on the border between Georgia and the breakaway region of Abkhazia
11 April 2011	A Yerevan court reversed its decision to freeze the bank accounts of the independent newspaper "Hraparak" charged with libel by former Armenian President Robert Kocharian.
11 April 2011	Deputy Communications and Information Technology Minister Iltimas Mammadov says that Azerbaijan will launch a communications satellite in 2012
12 April 2011	The Armenian Parliament ratifies an agreement to prolong Russia's military presence in Armenia and deepen Armenian-Russian defense ties
14 April 2011	The founder of the Israeli security firm Global CST Israel Ziv meets with officials in the breakaway region of Abkhazia

15 April 2011	The NATO–Georgia Commission is held on the sideline of the NATO foreign ministers’ summit in Berlin
18 April 2011	The Hague-based company APM Terminals announces its acquisition of 80% of the shares in Georgia’s Black Sea port of Poti from the investment fund RAKIA in the UAE’s emirate of Ras Al Khaimah
19 April 2011	The Georgian Parliament annuls a five-year agreement with Russia on procedures for the transit of Russian military personnel and equipment to Armenia via Georgian territory
23 April 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili pardons 266 prison inmates
26 April 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze meets with Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian in Yerevan to discuss regional security issues
26 April 2011	Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with the leader of the breakaway region of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity in Tskhinvali
26 April 2011	The Yerevan’s Mayor’s Office allows the opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK) to hold a rally on Liberty Square in Armenia’s capital
26 April 2011	The Baku offices of the Azerbaijan opposition Musavat party are raided by police and investigators
26 April 2011	The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg says that the official investigation into the murder of Georgian banker Sandro Girgvliani in 2006, which is alleged to have covered up the role of Ministry of Interior officials in the murder, “lacked the requisite independence, impartiality, objectivity and thoroughness.”
28 April 2011	At least 4,000 opposition protesters rally in Armenia’s capital of Yerevan on Liberty Square to demand new presidential and parliamentary elections
May	
3 May 2011	Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė visits Georgia
3 May 2011	Iranian Deputy Defense Minister Reza Mozafari Nia discusses military ties between Armenia and Iran with Armenian Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian in Yerevan
4 May 2011	Jabbar Savalanli, a member of the youth wing of the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party, is jailed for alleged drug possession
5 May 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes legislative amendments allowing the government to issue permits to create “free tourist zones” in the country, where foreign investors willing to invest at least 1 million Georgian lari in the construction of hotels will be exempt from property and profit taxes.

5 May 2011	The French senate rejects a bill that would make it a crime to publicly say that the World War I mass killings of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey is not a genocide
6 May 2011	The International Trade Union Confederation (ICTU) highlights the lack of labor rights in Georgia during a conference in Brussels
7 May 2011	The Georgian police arrests a group of opposition activists in the town of Rustavi
6 May 2011	Police in Azerbaijan's capital of Baku break up a protest against the hijab ban in schools
12 May 2011	Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg visits Georgia
14 May 2011	Azerbaijan wins the Eurovision song contest
16 May 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze meets with Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt on an official visit to Sweden
17 May 2011	The Georgian Parliament launches legal procedures for a constitutional amendment to relocate the next Parliament from the capital Tbilisi to Georgia's second largest town of Kutaisi
17 May 2011	Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri visits Singapore
19 May 2011	The President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek calls for "renewed momentum" in Georgia's reforms during a visit to Tbilisi as part of a trip to the three South Caucasus countries
20 May 2011	The Georgian Parliament endorses a resolution recognizing the massacre and deportations of Circassians in nineteenth century Tsarist Russia as "genocide"
20 May 2011	The Georgian Parliament adopts legislative amendments on easing visa rules for citizens of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Montenegro and Serbia that allow them to stay in Georgia for a year without a visa
20 May 2011	Armenian Justice Minister Hrayr Tovmasian dismisses opposition parties' demands for holding early elections saying that the next parliamentary and presidential elections will be held in 2012 and 2013 respectively
22 May 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili visits Hungary which currently holds the EU presidency
24 May 2011	Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri says that according to preliminary figures Georgia's economy has registered growth of 6% in the first quarter of 2011
25 May 2011	Azerbaijan joins the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

26 May 2011	The Georgian police use tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets to disperse protesters rallying outside the Georgian Parliament
26 May 2011	The Armenian Parliament approves a general amnesty that should lead to the release of virtually all opposition members currently detained in prison
26 May 2011	One Georgian policeman and a protester die after being crushed by a car believed to be carrying opposition leaders leaving protest rallies outside the Georgian Parliament in Tbilisi
26 May 2011	Azerbaijani journalist and newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev is released after four years in prison
27 May 2011	The United States calls for a probe to investigate the incidents during the break up of a protest rally by the Georgian police in Tbilisi
29 May 2011	Leader of the breakaway region of Abkhazia Sergey Bagapsh dies in a Moscow hospital
30 May 2011	The husband of Georgian opposition leader Nino Burdjanadze, Badri Bitsadze, is charged with creating a group to organize attacks against policemen
31 May 2011	Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili inaugurate a modernized border crossing point in Sarpi at the border between Turkey and Georgia
June	
1 June 2011	Armenian Economy Minister Tigran Davtian says that the Armenian government stands by its earlier predictions that the country's economic growth will nearly double in 2011 compared to 2010
1 June 2011	US Vice President Joe Biden and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili meet in Rome on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification to discuss security and democracy in Georgia as well as Russia's WTO membership
1 June 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze visits Cuba
1 June 2011	Residents in a village in Azerbaijan's Naxcivan Autonomous Republic protest against unemployment and other social issues including electricity, gas and water shortages
2 June 2011	Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets with the Prime Minister of the breakaway region of Abkhazia Sergey Shamba and its Acting President Alexander Ankvab in Sukhumi on the sidelines of the funeral of Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh

2 June 2011	The charges brought against the Azerbaijani Facebook activist and blogger Elnur Majidli of seeking to overthrow the Azerbaijani government are suspended
3 June 2011	Tigran Postanjian, the brother of Armenian opposition parliamentary deputy Zaruhi Postanjian, is released after three months in detention on corruption charges
3 June 2011	Outgoing U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Marie Yovanovitch praises the Armenian government for freeing opposition members and says that Washington welcomes the dialogue between the government and opposition forces hoping that it will lead to free and fair elections
6 June 2011	A visit to Armenia by Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad scheduled for 6 June 2011 is postponed
7 June 2011	Authorities in Azerbaijan remove the statue of ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak from the “Azerbaijan-Egyptian friendship park” near the capital Baku
9 June 2011	A US warship arrives in Georgia’s port of Batumi
9 June 2011	The Chinese airline company China Southern Airlines launches direct flights between China and Georgia
10 June 2011	The leader of the Armenian Apostolic Church Catholicos Karekin II visits Georgia and meets with the Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II
10 June 2011	The Georgian Energy Ministry signs a contract with the Oslo-based firm Clean Energy Invest AS to develop a hydro power plant project in Adjara
13 June 2011	Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov visits Georgia and says that the relations between the two countries are more cooperative in all spheres
15 June 2011	Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt visits Georgia as part of a trip to the three South Caucasus states focusing on the three states’ relations with the European Union and democratic reforms
17 June 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes a package of legislative amendments envisaging the issuance of neutral travel documents for residents of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia
21 June 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes a constitutional amendment on its relocation to Georgia’s second largest city of Kutaisi
21 June 2011	A Georgian soldier is killed in Afghanistan bringing the total number of Georgian servicemen killed in the NATO-led operation since 2009 to nine

21 June 2011	The airline company Georgian Airways launches direct flights between Moscow and Georgia's Black Sea resort of Batumi
24 June 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev fail to reach a breakthrough in negotiations on the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh during a two-day summit hosted by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Kazan
30 June 2011	Armenian opposition supporters hold a rally in Yerevan to demand early elections
July	
2 July 2011	Georgia removes a restriction to allow Russian citizens obtain an entry visa at the Zemo Larsi-Kazbegi border crossing point
5 July 2011	The Georgian Parliament passes in its final reading amendments to the civil code allowing religious minority groups in Georgia to be registered as legal entities under public law
7 July 2011	Four photojournalists are arrested over espionage-related charges in Georgia
9 July 2011	Thousands of protesters led by priests from the Georgian Orthodox Church march in Tbilisi against amendments to the law on the status of religious minorities in Georgia
12 July 2011	Azerbaijan receives copies of 60 rare medieval manuscripts including works by scientists and poets from the Vatican's secret archives
13 July 2011	The European Commission adopts the Annual Action Programme 2011 for Georgia which provides 50.73 million Euros to support the country's criminal justice system, conflict resolution efforts and internally displaced persons
14 July 2011	Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov visits the breakaway region of Abkhazia
14 July 2011	Three Azerbaijani army officers post a video online addressed to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to complain of financial extortion by their commanding officer
19 July 2011	The Azerbaijani police breaks up an unsanctioned anti-corruption rally in Baku to support the anti-corruption campaign launched by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in early 2011
26 July 2011	Russian officials discuss in Baku the renewal of Russia's lease of the Qabala radar station in Azerbaijan that can monitor missile launches in the Middle East and Southeast Asia

29 July 2011	The US Senate passes a resolution supporting Georgia's territorial integrity and recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia as regions "occupied by the Russian Federation"
August	
1 August 2011	The Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian is optimistic about the potential for economic growth in the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
4 August 2011	Islamic Party of Azerbaijan leader Movsum Samedov and six party activists go on trial in Baku's Court for Serious Crimes on charges of illegal weapon possession and attempting to seize power illegally
8 August 2011	Kiosk owners in Armenia's capital Yerevan protest against Mayor Karen Karapetian's decision to close their businesses
11 August 2011	The deputy chairman of the banned Azerbaijani Islamic Party Arif Ganiev and the editor of the Islamic news website islam-azeri.az Ramin Bayramov are arrested in Azerbaijan
11 August 2011	The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry formally protest anti-Azerbaijani statements allegedly made by an Iranian official
16 August 2011	German parliament deputy Christoph Straesser, a special rapporteur on political prisoners in Azerbaijan for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is denied a visa to visit Azerbaijan
23 August 2011	Azerbaijan lodges a formal protest with the French Foreign Ministry over the visit of French parliamentary deputies to the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
24 August 2011	30 ethnic Azeris are detained by Iran's Intelligence Ministry over environmental protests
25 August 2011	Russian President Dmitry Medvedev meets with incumbent South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoity in Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi
26 August 2011	Former French ambassador to Georgia Philippe Lefort is appointed as the EU's special representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia
27 August 2011	The Central Election Commission of the breakaway region of Abkhazia declares Alexander Ankvab as the winner of the elections held on 26 August
29 August 2011	An airport technician from the Naxcivan Autonomous Republic is found dead at the Ministry for National Security after being accused of "working for Iran"

September	
1 September 2011	The Eurovision Song Contest management asks the Azerbaijani authorities to simplify visa regulations in the run-up to the 2012 contest in Baku
8 September 2011	Georgia reports 1.79 million visits by foreign citizens in the first eight months of 2011
9 September 2011	The French energy company Total discovers a major natural gas field in Azerbaijan's sector of the Caspian Sea
12 September 2011	12 EU Member States agree to task the European Commission with leading negotiations with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan on the construction of a trans-Caspian natural gas pipeline
12 September 2011	The low-cost carrier flydubai announces that it will launch Dubai-Tbilisi flights on 4 November 2011
15 September 2011	A strike by workers from the metallurgical plant of Georgia's second largest town of Kutaisi ends after police detain 30 strikers
17 September 2011	Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad reiterates Iran's interest to strengthen ties with Armenia and calls for the rapid implementation of energy projects between the two countries during an official visit by Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian in Tehran
18 September 2011	The disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh holds local elections
21 September 2011	More than 300 residents of a Baku district protest against "noise and immoral activity at night" in local cafes
23 September 2011	More than 140 workers at Armenia's nuclear power station at Metsamor threaten to quit their jobs if their wages are not increased
27 September 2011	Leonid Lakerbaia is appointed prime minister in the breakaway region of Abkhazia
29 September 2011	The Eastern Partnership summit is held in Warsaw
29 September 2011	Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg criticizes serious setbacks to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in Azerbaijan
October	
3 October 2011	Three Azerbaijani opposition figures are jailed over their participation in an antigovernment protest in April 2011

4 October 2011	The seventh round of the Geneva talks co-chaired by the EU, the OSCE and the UN with participants from Georgia, Russia, the United States, Abkhazia and South Ossetia took place
5 October 2011	Abkhaz leader Alexander Ankvab makes an official visit to Moscow
5 October 2011	The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry says that two Azeri soldiers are killed in a clash with Armenian troops near the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
5 October 2011	Georgian billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili announces that he will establish a political party to run in Georgia's 2012 parliamentary elections
6 October 2011	French President Nicolas Sarkozy begins a visit of the three South Caucasus countries
7 October 2011	French President Nicolas Sarkozy urges Turkey to recognize the World War I killings of Armenians within the Ottoman Empire as genocide during a joint press conference with Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian in Yerevan
7 October 2011	The head of the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (IPA) Movsum Samadov is jailed for twelve years after being convicted by the Baku Court for trying to overthrow the government
8 October 2011	The Russian Foreign Ministry welcomes the "sovereign decision" of the Pacific island of Tuvalu to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in September 2011
8 October 2011	Armenian opposition leader Levon Ter-Petrossian ends more than one week of demonstrations by the Armenian National Congress (HAK) in the capital Yerevan despite not having achieved concessions by the government
11 October 2011	The Georgian Civil Registry Agency declares that billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, who had just announced that he will set up a political party to participate in the next parliamentary elections in Georgia, has no Georgian citizenship
14 October 2011	A senior official in Azerbaijan's presidential administration deplors Armenia's reported purchase of weaponry from Moldova and other arms acquisitions as "destabilizing factors"
17 October 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian appoints Vigen Sarkisian as new chief of staff (they are not related)
17 October 2011	A US missile cruiser visits Georgia's Black Sea port of Batumi
18 October 2011	Azerbaijan marks the twentieth anniversary of its independence from the Soviet Union
18 October 2011	Georgian police seize large amounts of money from the Cartu Bank owned by billionaire-turned-politician Bidzina Ivanishvili

19 October 2011	Armenian tax officers raid the offices of Armenia's Russian-owned national power distribution company after it is accused of tax evasion by the State Revenue Committee
24 October 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian holds talks with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev which are expected to focus on efforts to resolve the conflict over the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
25 October 2011	Turkey and Azerbaijan sign an agreement on Caspian natural gas supplies and transit to the European Union
26 October 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze meets with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in Baku
26 October 2011	A delegation from the Council of Europe's Venice Commission visits Georgia to discuss its draft new electoral code
26 October 2011	Deputy director of Russia's state Rosatom nuclear energy agency Nikolay Spassky reaffirms Russia's commitment to help Armenia build a new nuclear plant during a visit in Yerevan
28 October 2011	The French Foreign Ministry hails progress in the Swiss-mediated talks between Georgian and Russia on Russia's entry terms into the WTO and welcomes Georgia's acceptance of the Swiss proposals
28 October 2011	The Armenian Emergency Situations Ministry announces that it will send a transport plane with humanitarian aid to the survivors of an earthquake in the western Turkish city of Izmir
28 October 2011	Yerevan Mayor Karen Karapetian confirms his decision to resign from his post after less than one year in office
November	
1 November 2011	Billionaire-turned-opposition politician Bidzina Ivanishvili holds his first-ever press conference in Tbilisi
2 November 2011	Russian chief negotiator Maxim Medvedkov says that Russia has reached an agreement with Georgia in the Swiss-mediated talks over Russia's entry terms into the WTO
2 November 2011	The commander-in-chief of Russia's ground forces Colonel General Aleksandr Postnikov visits Armenia to inspect Russian troops stationed in the country and meet with top Armenian military officials
2 November 2011	Armenian parliament speaker Hovik Abrahamian resigns from his post to run the ruling Republican Party (HHK)'s campaign in the May 2012 parliamentary elections in Armenia

3 November 2011	Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian rules out a major role for the United Nations in the talks on the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
8 November 2011	Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi says in separate meetings with Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian and Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian that Tehran wants greater trade and visa-free travel between the two countries during a visit to Yerevan
9 November 2011	Russia and Georgia sign a bilateral agreement completing the WTO talks between the two countries
9 November 2011	Ambassadors from member-states in NATO's North Atlantic Council visit Georgia
9 November 2011	NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen tells Georgia to keep up its momentum of reforms, especially ahead of the electoral cycle in the next two years which will be a "litmus test" for the country's democracy, during a press conference following a NATO-Georgia Commission meeting
9 November 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian says that business must be consistently separated from the state during a speech at the annual congress of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs
9 November 2011	The Georgian government unveils a pension package plan that foresees increasing the minimum monthly pension for individuals 67 years old and above from the current 100 Georgian laris (GEL) to 125 GEL starting from September 2012
10 November 2011	The Russian Foreign Ministry says that the WTO deal with Georgia is a success for all the parties and "an important step in the right direction by Tbilisi"
11 November 2011	The Moldovan Defense Ministry says it will annul a deal to sell arms to Armenia that was criticized by Azerbaijan
11 November 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili meets with British Prime Minister David Cameron during a meeting in London of party leaders of the International Democratic Union (IDU) of which Georgia's ruling National Movement party is a member
13 November 2011	Presidential elections are held in the breakaway region of South Ossetia with a second round planned for 27 November
13 November 2011	The Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II says that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili should restore the Georgian citizenship of businessman-turned-opposition politician Bidzina Ivanishvili during a Sunday sermon
14 November 2011	NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen says that the Alliance does not recognise the elections held in the breakaway region of South Ossetia

14 November 2011	Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov visits Azerbaijan
15 November 2011	Taron Markarian is elected as Yerevan's new mayor by the Armenian capital's municipal assembly
15 November 2011	Billionaire-turned-opposition politician Bidzina Ivanishvili meets with Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II at the Patriarchate in Tbilisi
15 November 2011	An Armenian businesswoman says that she was assaulted by Armenian regional governor Surik Khachatryan
16 November 2011	EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton visits Georgia as part of an official trip to the three South Caucasus states
18 November 2011	The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry says in a statement that it does not recognize the presidential elections in the breakaway region of South Ossetia held on 13 November 2011
18 November 2011	Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II visits Moscow to participate in the celebration of Russian Patriarch Kirill's 65th birthday
21 November 2011	The religious leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan call jointly for a withdrawal of snipers from the frontlines in the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh
21 November 2011	The Azerbaijani authorities launch a criminal investigation into the attack against Azerbaijani writer and journalist Rafiq Tagi, a critic of the Azerbaijani government, Iran and political Islam, on 19 November 2011
22 November 2011	The Iranian Embassy in Azerbaijan denies any involvement in the stabbing of Azerbaijani writer and journalist Rafiq Tagi in a statement
24 November 2011	The Russian company RAO Unified Energy Systems (UES) confirms plans to end its management of the Metsamor nuclear power station in Armenia
27 November 2011	The breakaway region of South Ossetia holds a runoff to the presidential elections of 13 November 2011
28 November 2011	Presidential candidate Alla Jioyeva leads in the runoff to the presidential elections in the breakaway region of South Ossetia according to early results released by the Central Election Commission
29 November 2011	Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan starts an official visit to Georgia to help further the friendly relations between the two countries
29 November 2011	The Supreme Court of the breakaway region of South Ossetia annuls the results of the presidential runoff
30 November 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili visits Kyrgyzstan to attend the inauguration of Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambaev

December	
2 December 2011	Exiled former Azerbaijani parliamentary speaker Rasul Quliyev calls on Azerbaijani citizens to join his newly founded “resistance movement” in a video appeal
5 December 2011	The EU Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht announces the launch of negotiations on a deep and comprehensive free trade area with Georgia
5 December 2011	Journalists from Maestro TV, a Georgian television station embroiled in a dispute between its owners and the founder of its managing firm, appeal to the Georgian Public Defender to look into their case and their inability to fully carry out their journalistic duties
6 December 2011	The Supreme Court in the breakaway region of South Ossetia upholds its earlier ruling annulling the results of the presidential runoff in the region
7 December 2011	Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian says Yerevan has no plans to join a customs union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan since Armenia has no common border with these countries
7 December 2011	Prime Minister Nika Gilauri meets with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in Astana to discuss bilateral relations, trade and economic cooperation
8 December 2011	Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov criticizes NATO foreign ministers for naming Georgia as an “aspirant” in a joint communique
8 December 2011	Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze meets with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the NATO headquarters in Brussels to discuss current reforms in Georgia and the NATO integration process
10 December 2011	Eduard Kokoity, leader of the breakaway region of South Ossetia since 2011, leaves his post as part of a deal with the opposition
11 December 2011	The opposition in South Ossetia ends its street protest after a deal is struck between opposition leader Alla Jioyeva and the former leader of the breakaway region of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity. New elections are planned for March.
11 December 2011	Billionaire-turned-politician Bidzina Ivanishvili held an inaugural assembly of his opposition movement Georgian Dream
12 December 2011	The leader of the breakaway region of Abkhazia Alexander Ankvab signs a decree setting 10 March 2012 as the date of parliamentary elections in Abkhazia
13 December 2011	A US businessman of Armenian descent and two of his Armenian employees are released from jail in Armenia three days after their controversial arrest on charges of tax evasion

14 December 2011	The eighteenth round of the Geneva international talks is held with a focus on international security arrangements and the non-use of force
14 December 2011	Chief of Russia's National Security Council Nikolai Patrushev says that individuals are trained on Georgian territory to carry out terrorist acts in Russia
19 December 2011	Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Karasin visits Abkhazia and meets with Abkhaz leader Alexander Ankvab
19 December 2011	Chairman of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Arsen Ghazarian says that unfair economic competition remains a problem in Armenia despite new anti-trust measures
20 December 2011	The Georgian Parliament approves the Georgian President's request to send one additional infantry battalion to Afghanistan to serve as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)
22 December 2011	The French lower house passes a bill that makes it a crime to deny cases of genocide as defined by the French state including the Armenian mass killings during World War I which France recognizes as a genocide
23 December 2011	The Georgian Parliament approves Georgia's new national security concept replacing the one adopted in July 2005
23 December 2011	Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili attends the state funeral of former Czech President Vaclav Havel in Prague
24 December 2011	Head of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II meets with billionaire opposition politician Bidzina Ivanishvili
28 December 2011	The breakaway region of Abkhazia's statistics office releases the final figure of the population census results with the population of the breakaway region standing at 240,705
28 December 2011	The opposition parties Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutiun) and the Heritage party urge the Armenian government to hold upcoming parliamentary elections solely on a party-list basis to avoid elections fraud
31 December 2011	The Georgian defense ministry says that a Georgian soldier was killed in Afghanistan, bringing to 11 the number of Georgian servicemen killed while serving with NATO-led forces

Source: *Caucasus Analytical Digest* 24-36, <http://www.laender-analysen.de/cad/>