

Q1 Legal/Reference 18 - <http://halldor2.wordpress.com/2006/09/30/koikoity-and-bagapsh-in-discussions-with-putin/>
and <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3933933.stm>

[Kokoity and Bagapsh in Discussions with Putin](#)

September 30, 2006

Via Civil Georgia:

Leaders of breakaway Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Sergey Bagapsh and Eduard Kokoity, participated in a roundtable discussion on “Economic Development of Southern Russia” hosted by Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi on September 29.

The [list of participants](#), which was posted on the Russian President’s official web-site, included “Eduard Kokoity, the President of South Ossetia” and “Sergey Bagapsh, the President of Abkhazia.” These two names were listed under the section “foreign guests.”

“I would like to specially salute our foreign guests. These are: Sergey Vasilevich Bagapsh – the President of Abkhazia... Eduard Jabievich Kokoity – the President of the South Ossetian Republic,” President Putin said in his [opening remarks](#) at the conference.

In addition, the Civil Georgia report notes that in his public remarks Putin made use of terms such as “joint economic complex”, that were last used during the Soviet era.

Georgia accused of shelling homes

By Natalia Antelava
BBC, Tbilisi

Authorities in Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia claim Georgian troops have shelled its villages.

The Georgian government denies the allegation, which was made in Moscow by South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoity.



Eduard Kokoity says he was offered bribes to buy his loyalty

Mr Kokoity was in Russia to gather support for the self-proclaimed republic and to criticise the Tbilisi government for trying to bribe him.

He says he was offered \$20m (£11m) and a post as vice president of the country in exchange for his loyalty.

Instead, Mr Kokoity flew to Moscow to lobby for Russia's support in the growing conflict.

Many analysts allege that Moscow is already helping.

Real conflict

Members of the Russian parliament are openly critical of Georgia's claim to South Ossetia and some Russian peacekeepers who operate in the region have told the BBC that they are ready to rip off their peacekeeping badges and fight the Georgians should the tense standoff turn violent.

South Ossetia broke away from Georgia after a bloody war at the beginning of the 1990s.

The province wants to unite with Russia, but Georgia's President Mikhail Saakashvili has vowed to bring it back into the fold.

The real conflict, according to Mr Saakashvili, is between Russia and Georgia.

Both have been building up their military presence in the region. Locals say that every night villages across South Ossetia come under fire, each side blaming the other for the shelling.

The conflict, analysts believe, could be resolved peacefully but only if Russia stays away from it.

Tbilisi is watching Mr Kokoity's visit to Moscow closely. Many here feel that it is now up to Russia to decide what turn the standoff could take.