

A. On Russian Peacekeeping Forces (PKF)

1. When were the PKF fired at for the first time in Verkhny Gorodok, Lower and Upper Cantonment, Joint Headquarters, posts outside Tskhinvali and by which weapons?

As already reported in the answers to question 1-3 of the military set of questions, on August 8, at around 06:00, the Special Forces unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia with “Cobra” Light Armored Vehicles and reinforced by several tanks from the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, moved from village Zemo Nikozi towards the outskirts of Tskhinvali in order to suppress the fire at that village coming from the proxy regime militants located in the southwestern part of the town, the so called “Shanghai” suburb. The MIA Special Forces encountered sniper and massive armored vehicle cannon fire from the Russian peacekeeping headquarters “Verkhniy Gorodok” located on the southwestern edge of the town. In addition to that, the roof of the main building of “Verkhniy Gorodok” was used by enemy for correcting artillery fire against Georgian armed forces (*see again annex 90 of the answer to the question 1 of the military set of questions*). Under these circumstances, the MIA Special Forces were compelled to return fire towards “Verkhniy Gorodok” from automatic rifles and 12.7 mm heavy machine guns (“Utyos”) attached to “Cobra” vehicles and later had to ask for tank support as well.

A video taken at around 06:00 a.m. on August 8 2008, by a serviceman of the Russian Peacekeeping Battalion on the territory of “Verkhniy Gorodok”, which was uploaded close to the anniversary of the August War on various video-sharing websites, including YouTube, and was also included in a Russian propaganda movie shown on Russian TV Channel NTV on August 8 2009, clearly shows that:

1. By 06:00 a.m. on August 8, the main building and other premises of the Russian Peacekeeping Battalion base in “Verkhniy Gorodok” were untouched and there were no casualties on the spot contrary to claims by the Russian authorities. As already reported in the answer to question 1 of the military set of questions, on August 8 at 02:37, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia **Grigory Karasin** telephoned Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs **Grigol Vashadze** and informed him that Russian armed forces were starting military operation in Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia citing casualties among Russian peacekeepers as a reason for this decision. Although, the first encounter between Georgian forces and Russian peacekeepers took place at least three hours later than **Karasin’s** phone call;
2. Georgian police and army units were targeted and shot from “Verkhniy Gorodok” and this is confirmed by the voice heard over the video ordering to stop shooting from time to time, while the shooting continues;
3. Reciprocal fire was deliberately provoked from “Verkhniy Gorodok:” when Georgian government forces responded to the continuous fire from that area – the first bullets fired by Georgian Special Forces are seen hitting the top floor of the main building of “Verkhniy Gorodok” from where the fire was conducted and artillery fire corrected – the voice is heard over the video welcoming such a development.

See annex A for the video and annex B for the initial source of the video (blog screenshot), where it is written that the video was taken at around 06:00 a.m. on August 8.

A Russian military doctor named Aleksandr (last name unknown), who was sent to the Russian peacekeeping battalion in Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia at the beginning of July 2008 and stayed on the territory of “Verkhniy Gorodok” during the escalation and the hostilities, also confirms in his recent interview to a Russian journalist that Georgian forces opened fire at the Russian PKF base “Verkhniy Gorodok” only after 06:00 a.m. on August 8, while the Commander of the Russian PKF had received an order to open fire against Georgian forces at 04:00 a.m. and that a South Ossetian militia fighter was present on the observation post on the roof of the main building of the base, correcting artillery fire against Georgian forces (see annex C for the interview).

As reported in the answer to question 3 of the military set of questions, despite the evidence that South Ossetian de facto regime irregular forces were using the Russian PKF base “Nizhniy Gorodok” for combat purposes, which was apparent on the ground during the military operation, Georgian armed forces never opened fire towards “Nizhniy Gorodok.” The latter area, as well the town of Tskhinvali in general, came under heavy Russian artillery fire upon the entry of the Georgian forces into the town. The analysis of the footage broadcasted by the Russian TV Channel NTV¹ shows that the GRAD missile that exploded next to the peacekeepers’ headquarters came from the north. In another open source interview, a Russian soldier admits firing GRADs at the town of Tskhinvali.²

It is important to note that none of the checkpoints of the Russian peacekeeping battalion located outside the town of Tskhinvali were targeted by Georgian armed forces. The situation on all joint checkpoints of the JPKF in the conflict zone, such as Tstveriakho Mountain, villages Megvrekisi, Artsevi and others, remained calm despite the ongoing hostilities. Georgian and Russian peacekeepers were standing side by side on all joint peacekeeping checkpoints until late in the evening of August 9. Georgian peacekeepers abandoned their checkpoints only after Georgian forces retreated from the town of Tskhinvali and Russian regular troops started to occupy Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia.

2. When did the Russian PKF suffer their first casualties and materiel losses? (Please specify)

In the light of the facts described above, the Russian Peacekeeping Forces could not have suffered casualties and materiel losses before 06:00 a.m. on August 8. Moreover, Commander of the JPKF General **Marat Kulakhmetov** could not confirm any information on casualties even at around 17:00 on August 8. See annexes D and E for transcripts and audio files of the intercepted telephone conversations.

¹ See annex 24 of the answer to question 3 of the military set of questions.

² See annexes 95 and 96 of the answer to the question 1 of the military set of questions.

3. When did the Commander of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF), General Marat Kulakhmetov, inform the OSCE about these firings and casualties?

N/A

4. Did Russian PKF post on the roof of main building in Verkhny Gorodok provide coordinates to the South Ossetian militia or the North (South) Ossetian PKF Battalion?
 - a. If yes, from which time onwards?
 - b. Was there a telephone conversation between General Marat Kulakhmetov and the Georgian Commander of the Georgian PKF, General Mamuka Kurashvili, on this issue?
 - c. If yes, did Kurashvili warn Kulakhmetov to discontinue coordinating with South Ossetia militias before Georgian forces opened targeted fire against Russian and Ossetian PKF?

As already reported in the answers to the military set of questions, on August 7 a member of South Ossetian de facto regime irregular forces **Oleg Galavanov** was correcting artillery fire against Georgian government forces from the observation post located on the roof of the main building in “Verkhniy Gorodok” (*see again media article in annex 90 of the answer to question 1 of the military set of questions confirming this story*). The above-mentioned Russian military doctor named Aleksandr (last name unknown), also confirms in his interview that a South Ossetian militia fighter was present on the observation post located on the roof of the main building in “Verkhniy Gorodok,” correcting artillery fire against Georgian forces and that the first shot fired by Georgians hit this South Ossetian artillery fire spotter, who was the first to be brought down to the doctors, but they could not save his life as he had received critical injuries (see again annex C).

It is not known exactly from which time onwards was **Oleg Galavanov** correcting artillery fire from the roof of the main building in “Verkhniy Gorodok,” but as soon as Georgian peacekeepers figured out that this observation post was providing coordinates for artillery shelling to proxy militants, the Commander of Georgian Peacekeepers General **Mamuka Kurashvili** called the Commander of the JPKF General **Marat Kulakhmetov** at 00:23 on August 8 and warned him about that (*see annexes 87 A and B of the answer to question 1 of military set of questions for the telephone intercept and its transcript*).

5. Which other coordination between Russian PFK and North (South) Ossetian PFK and South Ossetian militia took place during the defense of Tskhinvali?

Please see answers to question B, as well as answers to question 3 of the military set of questions.

6. JPKF reserve units:

- a. When was the JPKF reserve force (300 personnel to which every PKF battalion was entitled) called towards Tskhinvali?
- b. From when onwards had General Kulakhmetov tactical control over these units? Which units/equipment?
- c. When did these units arrive in Tskhinvali at the Russian PKF position?
- d. Did these units send reconnaissance parties or liaison teams ahead to Tskhinvali or to Java? If yes, when?

According to the Joint Control Commission regulations, each battalion of the JPKF was entitled to a reserve of 300 soldiers in case of escalation of situation. However, according to article 5 of the JCC *“Regulation Concerning the Basic principles of Operation of the Military Contingents and of the Groups of Military Observers Designated for the Normalization of the Situation in the Zone of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict”* of 6 December 1994, only JCC was entitled to endorse any changes in the organizational-personnel structure of the military contingents and military observers. Whereas according to paragraph 4 of the JCC *“Decision on the progress of implementation of the previous JCC decisions on ceasefire, withdrawal of illegal armed units and measures for further stabilization of the situation in the conflict zone”* of September 30–October 2 2004, any rotation of military personnel of the JPKF was to be conducted in daylight time from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. with the notification of the JCC Co-Chairmen no later than one month before the appointed day (see annex F for the relevant JCC documents).

As the last rotation of the Russian PKF battalion was carried out in May 2008, no rotation was expected for the following 6 months. The JCC Co-Chairmen have not been notified about any plans or steps to add reserve units to the Russian PKF Battalion during the escalation of situation in the first days of August 2008. Moreover, the Commander of the JPKF, General **Marat Kulakhmetov** in a telephone conversation with a journalist from Russian news agency “Interfax” stated that he was not aware about movements of any Russian military columns towards Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia (see again annex E).

Therefore, Russian regular troops that entered the Roki Tunnel on 03:25 on August 7 2008 and after can in no way be portrayed as reserve forces of the Russian PKF or their replacement.

7. Did the Russian air force give close air support to the Russian PKF Battalion deployed in Tskhinvali on 8/9 August 2008? If yes, when and how many sorties?

As already reported in the answers to the military set of questions, from the morning of August 8, Russian military aircraft started to massively bomb the whole territory of Georgia, including places located as far as 250 kilometers away from Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia.

Chronology of Russian Air Bombings of Georgia in August 2008

Date and time of air bombing	Area
8 Aug – 09:30-09:44	Village Shavshvebi, Gori District
8 Aug – 10:23-10:43	Village Variani, Kareli District
8 Aug – 10:50-11:04	Village Tkviavi, Gori District Town of Gori
8 Aug – 15:07-15:21	City of Tbilisi, Vaziani airdrome and airplane factory
8 Aug – 15:50-16:20	Town of Marneuli Town of Bolnisi
8 Aug – 16:39-17:06	Town of Marneuli
8 Aug – 18:29-18:58	Town of Gori
8-9 Aug – 23:44-00:36	City of Tbilisi, Vaziani airdrome and airplane factory
8 Aug – 23:50	Town of Poti (with “Tochka-U”/SS-21)
8-9 Aug – 23:50-00:23	Town of Poti
9 Aug – 00:41-01:04	
9 Aug – 09:23-09:45	Kopitnari Airport near the city of Kutaisi
9 Aug – 09:52-10:24	Town of Gori
9 Aug – 10:21-10:46	
9 Aug – 10:29-11:04	Village Shavshvebi, Gori District
9 Aug – 13:42-13:50	Large part of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
9 Aug – 14:03-14:11	Village Omarishara, Upper Abkhazia
9 Aug – 14:26-14:39	Village Ajara, Upper Abkhazia
9 Aug – 14:26-14:39	Village Chkhalta, Upper Abkhazia
9 Aug – 16:04-16:14	Village Komandeli, Oni District
9 Aug – 17:39-17:50	Jechora Gorge, Oni District
9 Aug – 17:39-17:50	
9 Aug – 18:24-18:34	
9 Aug – 22:20-22:30	Village Chkhalta, Upper Abkhazia Village Gentsvisi, Upper Abkhazia
9-10 Aug – 23:50-00:23	Town of Senaki
10 Aug – 05:27-05:47	City of Tbilisi, Vaziani airdrome and airplane factory Baku-Supsa Oil Pipeline, 25 km section
10 Aug – 06:02-09:15	Village Ajara, Upper Abkhazia Village Chkhalta, Upper Abkhazia Village Urta, Zugdidi District
10 Aug – 11:25-11:27	Village Tsedisi, Oni District
10 Aug – 12:22-12:26	Village Chkhalta, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 13:51-13:55	
10 Aug – 15:05-15:15	Large part of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 15:09-15:24	Village Knolevi, Kareli District
10 Aug – 15:29-15:39	Town of Gori

10 Aug – 15:40-15:50	Village Anaklia, Zugdidi District
10 Aug – 16:09-16:14	Large part of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 16:20-16:35	Village Anaklia, Zugdidi District
10 Aug – 17:21-17:55	Large part of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 18:42-19:16	City of Tbilisi, Leninisi Radar Station near Tbilisi International Airport
10 Aug – 19:40-20:05	Town of Senaki Parts of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 20:23-20:27	Parts of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 22:03-22:09	Village Gentsvisi, Upper Abkhazia
10 Aug – 23:54-00:00	Village Shavshvebi, Gori District
11 Aug – 00:19-00:39	Parts of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
11 Aug – 02:09-02:40	Village Chkhalta, Upper Abkhazia
11 Aug – 02:44-03:20	Village Sharabidzeebi, Khelvachauri District Village Kapandichi, Khelvachauri District Village Makho, Khelvachauri District
11 Aug – 03:03-03:29	Parts of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
11 Aug – 04:12-04:50	City of Tbilisi, Leninisi Radar Station near Tbilisi International Airport Shiraki Airfield, Dedoplistskaro District
11 Aug – 05:25-06:15	Town of Gori
11 Aug – 07:10-07:20	Village Ganmukhuri, Zugdidi District Village Anaklia, Zugdidi District Town of Senaki
11 Aug – 19:05-19:10	Parts of Kodori Gorge, Upper Abkhazia
12 Aug – 01:30-02:00	Village Ruisi, Kareli District Town of Kaspi, Railway Station Town of Kaspi, Heidelberg Cement Factory
12 Aug – 09:30-10:55	Town of Gori
12 Aug – 11:30	Baku-Supsa Oil Pipeline, 27 km section (with “Iskander-M”/SS-26)
12 Aug – 12:00 (approx.)	Town of Gori (with “Iskander-M”/SS-26)
12 Aug – 14:00-14:15	Village Agara, Khashuri district Village Sakorinto, Kaspi District
13 Aug – morning, exact time unknown	Village Sakasheti, Gori District Village Okami, Kaspi District
Date and time unknown	Village Karbi, Gori District
Date and time unknown	Oni district (with “Tochka-U”/SS-21), found unexploded
Date and time unknown	Village Sinaguri, Java District (with “Tochka-U”/SS-21), found unexploded

Russian armed forces used SU-24, SU-25, SU-27 and MIG-29 type military aircraft, as well as strategic bombers TU-22M to attack Georgia.