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[Abkhazia Province Requests Recognition of Independence from Russia](#)

Some Russian officials support such a political alternative

In a move that startled both Russian officials, as well as the international community, the Parliament of Georgian breakaway and pro-Russian Abkhazia province issued an official petition on Wednesday, in which it was requesting the Russian authorities to recognize its independence: "The People's Assembly of the Republic of Abkhazia has decided to ask the Russian president and Parliament to recognize Abkhazia's independence and establish relations of association between Russia and Abkhazia". In addition to this, the Abkhaz President Sergei Bagapsh highlighted that "Russia is the very country that can provide Abkhazia's security and safeguard its future" during an interview with Russian RIA news agency. Given such a potentially controversial request, which Russia has not yet officially granted, even though the majority of the population in the province possesses a Russian passport, the on going diplomatic row between Georgia and Russia, which was sparked by the arrest of four Russian intelligence officials over espionage charges a while ago and the subsequent sanctions imposed by the Russian authorities to their Georgian counterparts, has a fair chance to deepen. Nevertheless, several important Russian politicians highlighted their support for Abkhazia's request on Wednesday, with one of them, Sergei Baburin, being quoted by Interfax news agency as saying "We shouldn't wait for Kosovo and start developing diplomatic relations with Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transdniestria", referring to other provinces that have requested the same official acknowledgment from Russia. He was also making a reference to previous statements of other Russian officials, according to which if the Serbian province of Kosovo would be awarded independence, then all the other pro-Russian ones, either in Moldova or Georgia, would have to gain more legitimacy. Georgian officials have not yet commented upon this matter.