

NATO Disturbed by S. Ossetia Border Fences

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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TBILISI — NATO is concerned by the situation on the Georgia-South Ossetia border, where Russian forces put up wire fences along the border last week, NATO's envoy for the South Caucasus and Central Asia said Monday.

Georgia protested last Monday over the setting up of a barbed wire fence by Russian border forces along its border with the disputed region of South Ossetia.

The building of illegal dividing structures is a violation of existing agreements and impedes the free movement of people, NATO envoy James Appathurai said.

Russia's Foreign Ministry released a letter Monday condemning what it said were attempts "to stoke up the situation" on the border between South Ossetia and Georgia with an eye to the election campaign in Georgia and "shifting the blame" to Russia.

Last Wednesday, EU observers condemned construction of barbed wire fences on the administrative border between Georgia and South Ossetia as unacceptable, and said it may destabilize the situation in the region.

Under an interstate agreement with Russia signed in 2009, South Ossetia delegated its state border protection functions to Russia until the republic establishes its own border guard service. South Ossetia's border with Georgia is about 350 kilometers long.

Georgia lost control over one-fifth of its territory after South Ossetia and Abkhazia, another former republic within Georgia, broke away and were recognized by Moscow in the wake of a brief war with Russia in August 2008.

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