



UN HUMANITARIAN CONVOY DELIVERS ASSISTANCE IN THE RUSSIAN-CONTROLLED AREAS OF GEORGIA

(Tbilisi, 11 September, 2008): Today in Georgia the first humanitarian convoy of the United Nations was allowed to enter the Russian-controlled area north of Gori and delivered assistance to families affected by the recent hostilities. “This is a first step which we hope will lead to free and unimpeded access to previously inaccessible areas in Georgia,” said Robert Watkins, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Georgia. “Humanitarian assistance must be provided to anyone wherever it is needed,” he added.

The UN convoy crossed the Karaleti check point along the main route north of Gori, where previous attempts to deliver humanitarian assistance had failed. The convoy reached the village of Patara Garadjivari, which just one month ago the majority of the 1,500 villagers had fled. Four tons of assistance was delivered to this rural Georgian farming village. Residents said their key concern continues to be their personal safety, along with access to health care, food and shelter. Residents welcomed the assistance as a first step in providing them an opportunity to rebuild their lives following the hostilities.

“I hope that the access gained today by the United Nations will give rise to unimpeded humanitarian assistance to the areas north of Gori by all humanitarian actors,” said Mr. Watkins. “Life-sustaining aid from the humanitarian community is essential, including such basics as food, shelter, water and sanitation, and access to health care, but we also need to see the conditions created for dignified and safe return,” he added.

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