

## Two Georgia regions press for independence

*by UPI*

TBILISI, Georgia -- The breakaway Georgian republic of South Ossetia has sent a formal appeal for recognition to the United Nations and other international organizations. The appeal, reported Wednesday by Russia's RIA Novosti news service, is aimed at bolstering the chances that South Ossetia and its population of fewer than 100,000 will be allowed to stand on its own. "Seventeen years of South Ossetia's de facto independence proves the republic's liability, and its sovereignty needs to be legitimized by the U.N. Charter," the Ossetian government said on its Web site. The appeal was sent to neighboring Russia as well as the European Union and Commonwealth of Independent States. RIA Novosti said Abkhazia, another tiny region of Georgia, was also preparing to reiterate its previous announcement of independence some time next week. Both states contend the recent independence of Kosovo gives credence to their demands.

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