

# Georgian Tie Offer Rebuffed

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**The**  **Moscow Times**

Russia made a surprise offer to restore ties with Georgia, but Tbilisi replied that Moscow must first close "illegal embassies" from South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Russia's Foreign Ministry offered Friday to restore diplomatic relations with Georgia and may consider introducing a visa-free regime for Georgian citizens in response to Tbilisi eliminating visas for Russians, Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergi Kapanadze said.

But he said the embassies must be removed from the two occupied regions before Georgia would agree to restoring diplomatic relations severed after a 2008 war.

*(Bloomberg)*

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