

Georgia to Reinvestigate 2008 War Loss to Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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TBILISI — Georgia will reinvestigate its disastrous five-day 2008 war with Russia to see whether President Mikheil Saakashvili was partly to blame, Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili has said.

Ivanishvili, a billionaire who became prime minister after his opposition coalition defeated Saakashvili's former ruling party last October, has been trying to assert his supremacy over the president, creating an awkward power struggle.

In his strongest criticism yet of his rival, Ivanishvili accused the president of mishandling the run-up to the war.

"I also think that our government led by the president acted in an inadequate way in that situation," Ivanishvili told a news conference Wednesday.

"I consider it absolutely unjustified that military units were put on alert and military actions started before Russia crossed our borders."

An independent report commissioned by the European Union in 2009 blamed Georgia for starting war with Russia but said Moscow's military response went beyond reasonable limits and violated international law.

The report said both sides had broken international humanitarian laws and found evidence of ethnic cleansing against ethnic Georgians during Russia's intervention in the rebel province of South Ossetia.

Saakashvili has said Georgia was responding to an invasion by Russian forces when it attacked breakaway South Ossetia.

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