

Putin Meets with Abkhaz President

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin with his Abkhazian counterpart Alexander Ankvab.

President Vladimir Putin has met with his Abkhazian counterpart Alexander Ankvab, the Kremlin said in a statement.

The meeting took place on Sunday when Putin visited the town of Pitsunda in the breakaway Georgian republic of Abkhazia.

"During the conversation, the leaders discussed bilateral cooperation," the statement said.

Russia and Georgia severed diplomatic ties in 2008 after Moscow recognized the de-facto independent Georgian republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states following a brief military conflict over South Ossetia in August that year.

Moscow provides the breakaway republics with economic and military support. Their independence has been recognized by a handful of other countries as well. Most countries do not recognize South Ossetia or Abkhazia as independent states, but view them as part

of Georgia.

Georgia's new government, elected in the October 2012 polls, said normalizing ties with Russia was among its top priorities. However, Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili said in July Moscow and Tbilisi would hardly restore their ties by the time Russia holds the 2014 Winter Olympics in the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

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