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The rank stupidity of Ireland and the EU in recognising Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in February has now been shown for what it is: an ill thought out scheme breaking international law, creating a dangerous precedent and giving hope to every crackpot secessionist group in the world.

It is now the people of Georgia who are paying the price for the stupidity of EU Foreign Ministers such as Dermot Ahern's with the currency of their lives. Russia explicitly warned in the Spring that recognising Kosovo would have consequences in South Ossetia and Russian-dominated enclaves in Georgia. They have now being true to their word. The eruption of armed conflict between Russia and Georgia in South Ossetia is routed in the regions high numbers of Ossetians who want to join with their ethnic brothers in Northern Ossetia within Russia. Russia has supported the breakaway movement in South Ossetia mirroring in many respects Western support for Kosovans in their break from Serbia.

The West broke from the international law principle of respecting the integrity of sovereign states and now lacks the principled foundation from which it can call for Russia to stop abetting the secessionists of South Ossetia.

The genie is out of the bottle and it will take a lot of backtracking on the West to get it back.

The desire of some of the Neo-Con element within the US Administration of humiliating and militarily encircling Russia with more NATO allies is an unnecessary provocation. World War II came about in part because of the resentment of the German people of the humiliation and injustice their received at the Treaty of Versailles. The US and the EU has got to learn not to provoke antagonism from Russia without just cause. In an era when Islamo-terrorism is the greatest threat to Western and Russian security, it would be more prudent to make Russia an ally rather than an enemy. We need Russia's energy supply for a start and NATO's provocation of Russia with more missile bases in Eastern Europe makes the Russian Government first think and then act as if they were the enemy - when there is no need for this situation.

The integrity of Georgian territory must be respected, and Russia must withdraw. The UN needs to call for an immediate ceasefire, and begin talk on troop withdrawal in the context of political talks. This will be profoundly difficult in light of what has already happened by the alternative is all out war between Georgia and Russia - there being only one winner.

If the EU wishes to solve this conflict in Georgia it must also revisit its support of Kosovo

## EU's folly of recognising Kosovo has come back to haunt us

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declaration of independence from Serbia.

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