

**Report to the International & European Affairs Committee of Cork County Council on
the visit to the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, Georgia by a delegation from Cork
County Council.**

At its meeting on the 25th of April 2016 Cork County Council approved that the Council would complete a Memorandum of Understanding with the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, Georgia. A delegation from Ajara were to travel to Ireland in late May 2016. However, this event was postponed by the Government of the Autonomous Republic and is to take place at a future date.

Mayor John Paul O'Shea led a delegation from Cork County Council to the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, Georgia from the 20th to the 23rd of June at the invitation of the Chairman of Government of Ajara Autonomous Republic Mr. Archil Khabadze. The other members of the delegation were Mr. Tim Lucey, Chief Executive and Mr. Seán O Callaghan, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services.

The following sets out the programme of events that took place during this visit.

21st June 2016

10:00-10:30 Meeting with the Chairman of Government of Ajara Autonomous Republic
Mr. Archil Khabadze

This meeting was covered by local and national media incl TV.



10:40-11:30 Presentations about Ajara Region and Batumi Sea Port.

- “Invest in Batumi” –Investment potential of Ajara by Ministry of Finance and Economy of Ajara.
- “Tourism potential of Ajara” by Department of Tourism and Resorts of Ajara.
- Batumi Sea Port LTD.

- Presentation on Cork County and Cork County Council by Mr. Tim Lucey, Chief Executive.

Attendees: Ministries of Ajara,
Deputy Ministries of Ajara A/R,
Mayor of Batumi and Vice Mayor,
Chairman of Batumi City Council,
Batumi sea Port representatives,
Chairman of Ajara Tourism and Resorts Department.



11:30-11:40 Signing the Friendship Agreement between Ajara Autonomous Republic, Georgia and the County of Cork, Ireland by Archil Khabadze, Chairman of Government of Ajara Autonomous Republic and Mr. John Paul O’ Shea - Mayor of the County of Cork [see attached]



11:50-12:10
12:30 - 13:00

13:30 – 15:20 Lunch at restaurant “Ajarian wine house” on behalf of Ministry of Health and Social care of Ajara.

16:00-16:40 Attending the Show of Dolphins.

16:50-17:50 Meeting with the rector of Batumi Maritime Academy Mr. Irakli Sharabidze.

20:00-22:00 Official opening of observatory of Alphabet Tower by Mayor John Paul O’ Shea.

22nd June

09:30-10:15 Ajarian Khachapuri at restaurant “Porto Franko”.

10:45-11:30 Meeting with the Chairman of Supreme Council of Ajara A/R Mr. Avtandil Beridze.



11:45-12:30 Excursion at Batumi Botanical Garden.

12:45-13:20 Excursion at Brother Nobels Museum.

13:30-15:00 Lunch at restaurant “Golden Fish” on behalf of Government of Ajara.

15:20 – 16:00 Meeting with the acting rector of Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University Mr. Merab Khalvashi.

The University has links with Universities in most European Countries but does not have any link with a University in Ireland. At the request of the

Rector, the possibility of establishing a link with either CIT or UCC is presently being explored.

16:20 – 17:00 Visiting Gonio Fortress.

20.00 – 21.30 Attend as guests of honour at conferring at Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University.

21.30-23.00 Attend Dinner with the Chairman of Supreme Council of Ajara, Mr. Avtandil Beridze.

Conclusion

Cork County Council has, over the years, developed very fruitful international relationships. The Embassy of Georgia in Dublin approached the Council as the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, Georgia wished to expand the scope of international co-operation at European level. This visit by the Mayor of County Cork to Ajara and the signing of the Friendship Agreement was the first step in this process which will be mutually beneficial to both regions.