

# CRS Report for Congress

## Soviet Union: A Chronology of Events Surrounding the Coup Attempt August 1 - September 15, 1991

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**SOVIET UNION: A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS  
SURROUNDING THE COUP ATTEMPT  
AUGUST 1 - SEPTEMBER 15, 1991**

**SUMMARY**

This chronology covers one of the most important periods in Soviet history, possibly the most significant since the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Most of the results of the 1917 revolution were repudiated: the existence and the unlimited power of the Communist Party, the Soviet system, the shadow of the KGB, the "socialist system of property," and the total rejection of the free enterprise economic model.

The key period was from August 18 to August 21, the days of the attempted reactionary coup. Events included Gorbachev's arrest and isolation, the institution of a new power representing the coalition of the top military, KGB government and Communist Party leaders, the suspension of the media, the attempt to use the diplomatic network to recognize the new regime, and the military rule in Moscow and Leningrad.

Equally important were the rapid failure of the coup, as well as the international support for the restoration of the legal power in the U.S.S.R. The changes in Soviet society were not limited to these few days of August. On the contrary, the following period witnessed the most crucial transformation of what is frequently called today the former Soviet Union. Events included the suspension of the Communist Party's activities, the secession of the Soviet republics from central control, and the independence of the Baltic states, Moldavia, and other former Soviet republics. The drastic reduction of the KGB's power and the ouster of many high-ranking anti-democratic Soviet military officers signalled the eclipse of these two long-time instruments of Soviet internal and external power.

**GENERAL SOURCE NOTE**

Sources for this chronology include: *Facts on File*, *Keesing's*, *Radio Free Europe Daily Report*, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Report on the U.S.S.R.*, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report for the Soviet Union*, *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, *the Financial Times*, *the Economist*, and *Izvestiya*.

This chronology is the continuation of previous similar publications: CRS Report 87-551F, Soviet "Restructuring" Under Gorbachev: A Chronology, January 1985-June 1987; CRS Report 89-138F, Glasnost and Perestroika Under Gorbachev: A Chronology, July 1987-December 1988; and CRS Report 89-616F, Soviet Glasnost and Perestroika: A Chronology, January-October 1989.

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- 08/01/91 --- Referring to the U.S.S.R.-U.S. summit, President Gorbachev outlined the most important gains--"the beginning of the reduction of nuclear arms," a "new qualitative level of the European process," the contribution to "the solution of some regional conflicts," and a major step toward a new type of international economic relations.
- Russian President Boris Yeltsin declared that the R.S.F.S.R. and Kazakhstan would sign the Union treaty on August 20.
- The Committee for Public Education reported U.S.S.R. Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov had submitted an official memorandum to President Gorbachev suggesting that daytime students be drafted into the Army this fall.
- 08/02/91 --- Aleksandr Yakovlev explained the reason for his resignation as adviser to President Gorbachev. "I am increasingly convinced that our tragedy results from Marxist dogmas".
- 08/03/91 --- In an article published in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Yegor Ligachev attacked the results of perestroika, especially the U.S.S.R.'s policy in Eastern Europe under Gorbachev. He attributed the "loss" of Eastern Europe almost entirely to Aleksandr Yakovlev and Eduard Shevardnadze.
- The Democratic Party of Communists of Russia decided to form a party within the Soviet Communist Party.
- Seven Lithuanian officials killed on July 31 were buried in Vilnius. The Russian Television quoted "Shchit," an organization of reformist Soviet military officers, as saying it believed the KGB was responsible for the killings. On August 7, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the KGB issued a joint statement denying responsibility for the murders.
- 08/04/91 --- It was officially announced in Moscow that President Gorbachev had left for the Crimea for vacation.
- Moscow radio network reported increasingly divergent opinions between President Gorbachev and Prime Minister Pavlov and the

view that it had been no accident that Pavlov did not accompany Gorbachev to the G-7 meeting in London.

- R.S.F.S.R.'s decree on depoliticization came into force. According to the decree, the activity of Communist Party organizations was banned in state institutions and enterprises. Some reports said the Army was resisting the implementation of the decree.
- Soviet newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported that the popularity of military academies has substantially increased this year. There were also reports on the increasing inflow of young people to the MVD internal and airborne troops.
- 08/05/91 --- Viktor Alksnis said that the "Soyuz" parliamentary group, of which he is a leader, still wanted to see President Gorbachev replaced by a collegial body.
- The chief of the Chinese general staff, Colonel General Chi Haotian, started an official visit at the invitation of General Mikhail Moiseev.
- 08/06/91 --- Soviet presidential spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko stressed that Mikhail Gorbachev was very healthy.
- In Moscow it was announced that the signing of the Union treaty would occur on August 20 at 11.00 a.m. in the presence of President Gorbachev, Prime Minister Pavlov, and other Soviet officials.
- Vladimir Shcherbakov, U.S.S.R. First Deputy Prime Minister, made public data showing significant increases in unemployment in 1991 due to the conversion of Soviet defense industries. The expectation for 1991 was similar.
- 08/07/91 --- The memoirs of Valerii Legostaev, a former speechwriter of the late Soviet communist leader Konstantin Chernenko, published by the journal *Den*, discussed Gorbachev's election as General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. Legostaev said that frictions between the military and Gorbachev occurred immediately after the latter's accession to power.
- *Izvestiya* published an article warning against a possible conservative counterattack. The author said that the democrats must think seriously how to protect their positions in the light of a possible upsurge of attacks.
- According to the publication *Vzglyad*, a top official from Pensa Oblast told R.S.F.S.R. People's Deputy Yurii Didenko that

Gorbachev would be overthrown and that the KGB and Army were on the side of the plotters.

08/08/91 --- The revised version of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) draft program was published by *Pravda*. The new version included a critical reference to Bolshevism, and called for united armed forces under a central leadership.

--- Soviet air traffic controllers rejected a government proposal as insufficient and planned a strike for the next day.

--- A delegation of deputies from the hardline "Soyuz" faction in the Supreme Soviet returned from Iraq and called for the restoration of close Soviet-Iraqi ties.

--- A student strike committee was set up in Moscow to draw public attention to the new draft law, "On General Military Service," which the student believed contained many anti-reform conditions.

08/09/91 --- The Movement for Democratic Reform condemned the expulsion of two leaders of the Democratic Party of Communists of Russia, Aleksandr Rutskoï and Vasiliï Lipitsky, from the Soviet Communist Party, which it said "behaves in the old Stalinist way."

--- The Ukrainian Prime Minister complained that under the conditions of the Draft Union Treaty, about 45 percent of the Ukraine's industrial potential would remain under centralized management, and that the center wanted to retain control of road, sea, and air transport. He also objected to the proposed retention of a single financial, credit, and insurance policy.

--- Moldavian President Mircea Snegur accused Moscow and the Moldavian Communist Party of putting pressure on Moldavia in connection with the Union treaty, and reaffirmed a pro-independence stand.

08/10/91 --- Moscow radio announced that a joint Soviet-Polish Commission had officially confirmed that several thousand Polish army officers were shot by the NKVD (predecessor of the KGB) in Kharkov in April-May 1940 and buried in a nearby forest.

08/11/91 --- Moscow radio cited Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev as saying that Balorussia and Tajikistan would join the R.S.F.S.R., Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan in signing the Union Treaty on August 20.

--- Yeltsin stated at a meeting with the trade unions that the signing of the Union Treaty would mark the end of the institutional

power of the U.S.S.R. The task of the center would be restricted to defense, border security and railway transportation.

- 08/12/91 --- Colonel General Gennadiy Stefanovskiy, Deputy Chief of the Main Political Administration of the U.S.S.R. Armed Forces, denied in an interview with *Neues Deutschland* the threat of a military coup. He stated, however, that "not all military members accept the speedy steps of rapprochement with the West, the unilateral concessions in disarmament, and the hasty return of the troops to our country." He considered the Army to be the sole guarantor of stability in the Soviet Union.
- The R.S.F.S.R. Communist Party Central Committee and the Communist Party Committee of Leningrad Oblast founded a new newspaper called *Narodnaya Pravda*. The new publication contained materials critical of Gorbachev, Aleksandr Yakovlev, and Eduard Shevardnadze.
- 08/13/91 --- U.S.S.R.'s Premier Valentin Pavlov warned of the risk of a power vacuum after the Union Treaty was signed unless the center retained some control over the economy.
- Units from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Baltic Fleet, the Leningrad regional department of the KGB, and several border guard units held four days of training exercises near the Leningrad power station.
- Armenian Prime Minister Vazgen Manukyan stated that Armenia could become an "associate member" of the Soviet Union.
- 08/14/91 --- Radio Rossii Network reported sharp differences had arisen between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the U.S.S.R. Government on interpreting the Union Treaty. Prime Minister Pavlov believed that the Kremlin should continue to control the key sectors of the economy, in particular the extraction of coal, oil, and gas, while Yeltsin stated that after the signing of the Union treaty most of the Union ministries would lose all power on the territory of the Russian Federation.
- U.S.S.R. Gosbank Chairman Viktor Gerschchenko strongly criticized the monetary provision of the new Union Treaty. He called for amendments to the effect that republics be required to follow a central monetary policy.
- Soviet paratroopers armed with machine guns were posted outside the KGB headquarters in Vilnius.
- 08/15/91 --- The CPSU Control Commission recommended that former Politburo member and Party Secretary Aleksandr Yakovlev be

expelled from the Communist Party. Yakovlev was accused of making statements intended "to remove the Communist Party from the political scene."

- The Georgian parliament ordered the nationalization of all local branches of all-Union banks on Georgian territory.
- 08/16/91 --- Announcing his resignation from the CPSU, Aleksandr Yakovlev, wrote in the newspaper *Izvestiya* that "an influential Stalinist group has formed within the Party's leadership core" and that reactionaries were planning a vindictive coup d'etat. He added that commanders of the military and law-enforcement bodies were also part of this "revanchist Stalinist" movement.
- *Krasnaya Zvezda* published the Appeal of the Combined Plenum of the All-Army Party Committee and the Control Commission of the U.S.S.R. Armed Forces Communist Party Organization addressed to "Army and Navy Communists." The appeal mentioned the worsening of the sociopolitical situation and the offensive waged by anticommunist forces against the Communist Party, as well as the project to "departify" the armed forces.
- 08/18/91 --- At 10 A.M. the KGB went on alert. The decision was supported by the KGB Collegium. The military went on alert shortly after midnight.
- Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and Anatoly Lukyanov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, met in secret with all but two of the Emergency Committee the night before the coup was launched. According to *Financial Times* of London which reported this on August 28, Kryuchkov, who chaired the meeting, requested and received approval of the participants for the imposition of a state of emergency.
- President Mikhail Gorbachev, on vacation in the Crimea, phoned Georgiy Shakhnazarov, one of his advisers, around 6 p.m. to discuss details concerning the projected meeting of the Supreme Soviet for the signature of the Union Treaty.
- Shortly before 7 p.m., Gorbachev was informed that an unidentified delegation had arrived and demanded a meeting with him. Trying to identify who had sent them, Gorbachev became aware that all his communication lines, including the governmental ones, were cut off. He decided to meet the delegation, which was headed by Valerii Boldin, the head of the President's staff. He was given an ultimatum--to hand over his powers to Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev and to resign. Gorbachev rejected the ultimatum.

- In the evening the delegation returned to Moscow. The Gorbachev residence was fully isolated from sea and land by special military and KGB units. The President's personal guard, numbering 32 people, decided to remain in place and defend the President.
- 08/19/91 --- In Moscow a newly created State Committee for the State Emergency announced that for health reasons, Gorbachev was temporary replaced as the U.S.S.R.'s President by Vice-President Gennadiy Yanayev. The other members of the Committee were: Oleg Baklanov, first deputy chairman of the Defense Council; Vladimir Kryuchkov, head of the KGB; Valentin Pavlov, Prime Minister; Boris Pugo, Minister of Internal Affairs; Dmitrii Yazov, Defense Minister; Vasili Starodubtsev, chairman of the collective farmers' Union, and Aleksandr Tizyakov, representing the military-industrial complex. They announced a state of emergency throughout the country for a period of six months.
- Tanks and armored vehicles took up positions around strategic points in Moscow, including the Defense Ministry, the central television station, the Russian parliament building, and Red Square.
- In the first decrees issued by the Emergency Committee, all independent radio, TV and media were banned. Similarly suspended was the activity of political parties, public organizations, and mass movements "hindering the normalization of the situation".
- Demonstrations in opposition to the takeover, as well as attempts to stop the advance of the military vehicles were reported.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed all the U.S.S.R.'s foreign representatives to convey the message of the State Committee for the State of Emergency to the leaders of the foreign policy departments and states where they were stationed. According to reports published in Moscow on August 27, 1991, the Ministry's instruction was executed with promptness by the majority of Soviet heads of foreign missions. Among the "most zealous," the reports mentioned Leonid Zamyatin (London), Vladimir Terekhov (Bonn), Yuriy Kashlev (Warsaw), Nikolay Uspenskiy (Stockholm), and Yuriy Dubinin (Paris).
- During the evening the U.S.S.R.'s Cabinet of Ministers convened a three-hour extraordinary session and the majority of ministers supported the coup, according to a transcript of the Cabinet meeting published by the Soviet newspaper *Rossiskaya Gazeta* on August 24, 1991.



- The CPSU Central Committee Secretariat sent to all republic, regional and local communist party Committees an encoded telegram to fully support and help the Emergency Committee actions.
  - President of the Russian Republic Boris Yeltsin declared the takeover in Moscow an illegal action, demanded reinstatement of Gorbachev, and appealed to the Moscow population to stage a protest demonstration in defense of democracy, and called for a nationwide general strike. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev also opposed the coup.
  - In response to the coup, two former close advisors to Gorbachev, Aleksander Yakovlev and Eduard Shevardnadze, called on Western countries to form committees to support democratic reform in the U.S.S.R.
  - The Navy headquarters in Moscow disobeyed orders to jam democratic broadcasts.
- 08/20/91 --- Moscow and Leningrad were put under military rule by the Committee for the State of Emergency.
- Tanks were reported smashing through the barricades erected by thousands of Yeltsin supporters and moving closer to the Russian parliament building.
  - In successive telephone conversations Russian President Boris Yeltsin informed both President Bush and British Prime Minister John Major on the situation in the U.S.S.R. following the coup.
  - General Shaposhnikov, commander-in-Chief of the Air Force, met with General Pavel Grachev Commander of Airborne Troops, to discuss possible common actions against the coup. Shaposhnikov later said in an interview to *Komsomolskaya Pravda* they formulated several options, one of which was seizing the junta. Shaposhnikov informed the Russian parliament that the Airborne Troops and the Air Force would take no action against them. Another option, according to Shaposhnikov, was to bomb the Kremlin if the coup leaders decided to storm the Russian parliament.
  - Some airborne and armored military units joined the Russian Republic government. General Konstantin Kobets, the chief of the R.S.F.S.R. Defense Committee, joined Yeltsin.
  - Miners throughout the entire Russian Federation went on strike following Boris Yeltsin's appeal.

- The R.S.F.S.R. government sent its foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, to Washington to put its case to the Bush Administration and to head a government-in-exile, if necessary.
- President Bush issued a written statement that the United States was profoundly concerned about the events in the Soviet Union and condemned the unconstitutional removal of President Gorbachev.
- Moscow citizens surrounded the R.S.F.S.R. parliament building throughout the night of August 20-21 to defend Yeltsin and his government inside. In minor clashes between demonstrators and army and KGB during the night, three people were killed.
- Yeltsin declared that he was taking immediate control of all units of the armed forces on the territory of the R.S.F.S.R.. Reports mentioned that two senior Airborne Forces commanders had gone over to Yeltsin.
- The Estonian Supreme Council declared full independence for the republic. The declaration called for the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly to write a new constitution. The R.S.F.S.R. was the first republic to recognize Estonian independence.
- 08/21/91 --- Vladimir Ivashko, Deputy General Secretary of the CPSU, asked Yanayev to arrange a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev immediately.
- Boris Pankin, the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, confirmed his loyalty to President Gorbachev and denounced the coup.
- During an extraordinary session of the Russian parliament, Yeltsin announced that members of the emergency committee had attempted to flee Moscow.
- The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet Presidium held an emergency meeting and pronounced the removal of U.S.S.R. President Gorbachev illegal. A special delegation left for the Crimea to meet Gorbachev.
- At approximately 8 p.m. Moscow time, TASS and the Soviet central television reported that the attempted coup had failed and that President Gorbachev was in full control of the situation in the country.
- President Gorbachev spoke by telephone with President Bush, as well as with Boris Yeltsin and leaders of other Soviet republics.

- The Latvian Supreme Council affirmed Latvia's independence.
- 08/22/91 --- President Gorbachev returned to Moscow.
- The coup leaders were arrested and military units were withdrawn from the capital.
- Gorbachev held a long press conference broadcast live on Central Television. He described the circumstances of his detention.
- Gorbachev named acting heads for the U.S.S.R. Defense Ministry, Interior Ministry, and KGB.
- The Lithuanian parliament demanded that the U.S.S.R. government remove all its military forces as soon as possible.
- 08/23/91 --- Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh resigned.
- President Gorbachev began talks with the leaders of the nine Soviet republics who supported the idea of a new Union treaty.
- Both Gorbachev and Yeltsin addressed the R.S.F.S.R. Supreme Soviet session in Moscow.
- President Gorbachev dismissed the acting defense and security officials appointed on August 22 and named General Evgenii Shaposhnikov and Vadim Bakatin as new heads of the Defense Ministry and the KGB.
- 08/24/91 --- Gorbachev resigned as Communist Party General Secretary. He ordered the seizure of the Communist Party property and banned political groups in the Armed Forces. A group of party members proposed the dissolution of the Communist Party.
- 08/25/91 --- Marshal Akhromeyev, an adviser to Gorbachev and former Chief of General Staff, committed suicide.
- New U.S.S.R. Defense Minister Evgenii Shaposhnikov ordered shake-up of Soviet High Command.
- The Belorussia Supreme Soviet adopted a law proclaiming state independence.
- 08/26/91 --- The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet began a special session to examine the role of the parliament and state bodies in the coup attempt.
- In a speech at the Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev said that many right-wing persons including some of the recent appointees and

some in the Supreme Soviet, had long expressed their opposition to reform, foreshadowing the recent coup.

--- Demonstrations in Baku called for the declaration of Azerbaijan's independence.

--- Sergey Alekseyev, chairman of the U.S.S.R. Committee for Compliance With the Constitution, called the Soviet Communist Party leadership "the plot's main figure."

--- In a statement issued by Boris Yeltsin, the R.S.F.S.R. reserved the right to "reexamine borders" with neighboring republics that were declaring themselves independent, except the Baltic states.

--- Gorbachev announced that KGB border troops would be transferred to the command of the Soviet Army.

08/27/91 --- The new Soviet Defense Minister in an interview for *Krasnaya Zvezda* stated that 80% of the members of the Defense Ministry Collegium would be replaced.

--- Eduard Sagalaev, the chief editor of *Moscow New*, a leading pro-democracy newspaper, was appointed the new head of Soviet television.

--- Defense Minister Shaposhnikov told German TV that the Soviet troop withdrawal from Eastern Germany would be completed ahead of schedule.

--- The Moldavian parliament unanimously adopted a resolution of independence. The declaration requested international recognition of the republic's independence and membership in the United Nations and CSCE process.

08/28/91 --- During the Supreme Soviet session, Gorbachev said that he could no longer trust his Cabinet of Ministers and asked for its collective resignation. The U.S.S.R. Soviet Supreme voted no confidence in the Cabinet of Ministers for its failure to oppose the coup.

--- According to the Russian news agency RIA, thirty Soviet ambassadors who supported the failed coup were recalled for "consultations."

--- Boris Pankin, formerly Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, was appointed as new Soviet Foreign Minister.

--- Moscow Television reported that one-third of broadcast journalists were KGB officers. Vadim Bakatin, the new Chairman

of the KGB, promised immediately to recall all of them from television and radio.

- In a statement for *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the armed forces newspaper, Gorbachev mentioned that "one of the major reasons for the coup failure is that those who usurped power failed to turn the Army against the people. The Army lived up to expectations. Charges will be brought only against those who directly prepared the coup and participated in it."
- Estonia's Foreign Minister called for negotiations on Soviet troop withdrawals from the Baltic states.
- A special state commission was instituted to investigate the KGB's involvement in the coup and to evaluate proposals for the KGB's re-organization.
- 08/29/91 --- The Supreme Soviet agreed to begin criminal proceedings against Anatoliy Lukianov, its former chairman, for his involvement in the coup. He was arrested the next day.
- The Supreme Soviet endorsed Gorbachev's proposal that a new Security Council be constituted from the leaders of the republics. In addition Vadim Bakatin, Evgheniy Primakov, Aleksandr Yakovlev, Gavril Popov, Anatoliy Sobchak, Yuriy Ryzhov, and Grigoriy Revenko were appointed as members of the Security Council.
- The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet voted to suspend the activity of the CPSU throughout the Soviet Union on the basis of information about the participation of its leading bodies in the preparation of the coup.
- Colonel-General Nikolay Shlyaga, the head of the Main Political Committee of the Soviet Army and Navy, was dismissed.
- In an address broadcast on *Radio Rossia*, President Yeltsin praised the role of the Soviet Army in defending democracy during the attempted coup. Yeltsin said that he would defend the Army from unjustified criticism.
- The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet revoked the special powers invested in the U.S.S.R. presidency last year.
- President Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan signed a decree shutting down the Semipalatinsk nuclear weapons testing facility.
- U.S.S.R. Prosecutor-General Trubin resigned.

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- A Ukrainian-Russian agreement, pledging cooperation to prevent the "uncontrolled disintegration" of the Union state, was signed in Kiev.
- 08/30/91 --- The Supreme Soviet dissolved its own Committee on Defense and State Security because of its inactivity during the coup.
- 08/31/91 --- The Supreme Soviets of both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan voted to declare the republics independent of the U.S.S.R..
  - Four former Soviet Cabinet ministers who had not supported the coup were reinstated.
- 09/01/91 --- British Prime Minister John Major arrived in Moscow and met with President Gorbachev.
  - The U.S.S.R. Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) opened in Moscow. Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev read the declarations addressed to the Congress by Gorbachev and the heads of ten republics.
- 09/02/91 --- President Bush announced that the United States recognized the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
  - The Chief of the General Staff, General Vladimir Lobov, stated in an interview with *Izvestia* that the armed forces would no longer conscript students. He favored the building of a professional army.
  - A demonstration organized in Tbilisi by the opposition National Democratic Party demanded the resignation of the Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and was attacked by Georgian police. Six people were wounded.
  - The Nagorno-Karabakh Oblast Soviet, as well as the neighboring area predominantly inhabited by Armenians, declared independence from the U.S.S.R.
  - The parliament of the self-proclaimed Dniestr SSR declared its independence from the rest of Moldavia and decided to set up a national guard.
  - Foreign Minister Pankin dismissed rumors about the eviction of 30 Soviet ambassadors. He said that the activities of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry and all its foreign missions would be analyzed and any decisions would be made on the basis of the analysis.
- 09/03/91 --- CPD appointed the members of a special commission to investigate the coup.

- Foreign Minister Pankin mentioned that four ambassadors have been recalled to investigate their reactions to the coup: the ambassadors to Great Britain, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland and Yugoslavia. According to other official sources the ambassadors to France and Sweden may be facing similar action.
  - Demonstrations calling for Gamsakhurdia's resignation continued in Tbilisi.
  - Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania requested admission to the United Nations. The requests were transmitted through the French and British Ambassadors.
- 09/04/91 --- President Gorbachev agreed to issue a decree recognizing the independence of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.
- A plenum of the Komsomol Central Committee decided to disband the Komsomol, the communist youth organization.
  - According to Japanese newspapers, several thousand Soviet Communist Party members and KGB staffers have fled to China since the failure of the attempted coup. The information was not confirmed by Chinese sources.
  - Foreign Minister Pankin said that the U.S.S.R. supports the creation of a CSCE institution which could send monitors into a country at the suggestion of other states.
- 09/05/91 --- Defense Minister Shaposhnikov stated at a news conference for Soviet and foreign correspondents that "the nuclear weapons are under reliable control."
- The Congress of People's Deputies approved an immediate and sweeping transfer of power to the republics from the central regime. In essence, the plan created an interim political structure to run the country while the Kremlin and republics redefined their relationship.
  - The Supreme Soviet was completely restructured. The shift of power to the republics was reflected in both chambers of the bicameral legislature. Executive power was vested in a Council of State to consist of the president of the U.S.S.R. and the top executives of each republic. Its prerogatives refer to domestic and foreign policy issues. The post of the vice president was abolished.
- 09/06/91 --- The Soviet Union officially recognized the independence of the Baltic states. The decision was taken by the newly instituted State Council.

- Gorbachev received Pierre Bergovoy, the French Minister of State for the economy, finance, and budget. The French dignitary spoke at a press-conference in favor of immediate deliveries of food and medications to the U.S.S.R..
- In Moscow the Soviet Foreign Ministry expressed its readiness to take part in an international conference on Yugoslavia, providing the Yugoslav side agreed to that and the appropriate invitation was received.
- Georgia formally broke all ties with the U.S.S.R. to protest the failure of the Soviet State Council to debate the question of recognizing Georgia's independence.
- 09/07/91 --- Soviet media reported an organizing committee for the restoration of the Party of Communists met illegally in Moscow. The committee did not include any of the former leaders of the Communist Party.
  - In an interview with CNN, Defense Minister Shaposhnikov said there should be no separate armies in the republics, but "formation of national guards subunits" to tackle internal tasks.
  - The Soviet ambassador to London was fired for his actions during the coup.
  - The Presidium of the Russian Republic voted to return the original name of St. Petersburg to the city of Leningrad.
  - Moldavia decided to leave the political structure of the U.S.S.R. and take part only in the Inter-Republic Economic Committee.
- 09/08/91 --- Poland and Ukraine decided to establish diplomatic relations.
  - During a special congress, the Communist Party of Kazakhstan voted to change its name to Socialist Party of Kazakhstan.
- 09/09/91 --- Soviet Foreign Ministry sources reported that its Ministry Collegium was disbanded in order to enable Foreign Minister Pankin to reconstitute its membership.
  - Soviet Defense Minister Shaposhnikov canceled this year's traditional military parade in Moscow on November 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. No civic parade was expected either.
- 09/10/91 --- The third CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension opened in Moscow. The Conference included delegations from European



states, the United States, and Canada. During the inaugural session, President Gorbachev greeted the conference.

- The Chief of the Soviet General Staff Vladimir Lobov stated that about 5% of General Staff personnel have been implicated in the coup.
- Defense Minister Shaposhnikov met with representatives of the twelve republics and the three Baltic states to discuss fundamental military reforms and related center-periphery relations. Shaposhnikov said after the meeting that the participants agreed that the armed forces should remain unified, and that the nuclear forces should be directed from the center.
- Evgenii Primakov started touring the Middle East to discuss economic cooperation as well as the Middle East settlement.
- Aleksandr Yakovlev, as a Special Presidential Representative, left for Germany to discuss economic cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and Germany.
- Lithuania appointed its Ambassador to Washington.
- Gorbachev issued a decree charging the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Culture to coordinate inter-republican ties. The Ministry was forming a council of republican ministers of culture.
- 09/11/91 --- President Gorbachev announced that Moscow intends to withdraw all of its 11,000 troops from Cuba in the next few months
- The new Soviet Prime Minister Ivan Silaev offered to resign from the function of chairman of the interim Economic Management Committee.
- Boris Yeltsin, who previously said that the return of the Southern Kurile Islands to Japan would take 15-20 years, stated that the process could be accelerated.
- The Democratic Party of Communists of Russia decided to drop the word "Communists" from its name. The party is abandoning the communist course and ideology.
- A Latvian defense official reported Moscow was willing to withdraw troops from the Baltic states by 1994.
- 09/12/91 --- Foreign Minister Pankin said that the U.S.S.R. expected "reciprocal moves" on the part of the United States in exchange for a Soviet withdrawal from Cuba.

- Workers began dismantling the gigantic Lenin monument in Kiev's Independence Square.
- Turkmenistan, one of the two Central Asian republics that has not declared its independence, planned to apply for membership in the U.N.
- Moldavia's Prime Minister met with the U.S.S.R. Defense Minister to initiate talks on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of Moldavia.
- 09/13/91 --- The provisions of the Draft Economic Treaty for the former Soviet republics were published in Moscow.
- More personnel changes among high-level officials were announced in the Ministry of Defense.
- The U.S.S.R. Ministry of Finance estimated that the deficit of the Union budget would be 144 billion rubles this year as against 26 billion rubles initially planned.
- A special commission to reorganize political departments in the Soviet Armed Forces was appointed under the chairmanship of Colonel-General Dmitriy Volkogonov, an adviser to Boris Yeltsin.
- Belorussia's presoviet flag of red and white stripes was raised in front of the Minsk city Soviet council.
- The leadership of the "Dniestr SSR", proclaimed by local Russian leaders on the left bank of the Dniestr, declared null and void Moldavian President Snegur's decree on the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Moldavia.
- 09/14/91 --- President Gorbachev testified before the special committee investigating the failed coup.
- A session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and Union republics took place in Moscow.
- Estonia made territorial claims on Russia in reference to Latvian territories transferred to Russia in 1945 to form parts of Leningrad and Pskov Oblasts.
- Foreign Minister Pankin stated that the new Foreign Ministry Collegium would be made up of "modern thinking people" whose actions were above reproach during the coup.
- The Azerbaijani Communist Party voted at an extraordinary congress to disband itself. Similarly, the Communist Party of

Uzbekistan voted to change the party's name to People's Democratic Party. The Uzbek party already had broken with the Soviet Communist Party.

- A group of Moldavian leaders including the Chairmen of the Parliament and the Popular Front completed a three-day visit to Washington.
- Secretary of State James Baker made stops in Tallin, Riga, and Vilnius where he met with the leaders of the three Baltic States.
- 09/15/91 --- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn said that he may return to the Soviet Union should the charge of "high treason" brought against him in the 1970s be dropped.
- The Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs said that Finland was not intending to raise the question of the return to Finland of the former Finnish area of Karelia.
- Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Alma-Ata to discuss economic issues with Kazakh President Nazarbaev.