

Eduard Shevardnadze



Passion or Profession: Foreign Minister, President

Period: 1928–

Shevardnadze was born in Mamati, Georgia, six years after Georgia had become part of the Soviet Union. He became Georgia's leading political figure by the 1970s and was chosen as foreign minister to the reform-minded Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985. Under Gorbachev, Shevardnadze oversaw an easing of tensions with the United States, including a series of key arms-reduction agreements. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Shevardnadze became the leader of newly-independent Georgia in 1992, a position he retained until popular pressure forced him from office in 2003.