

## Politics

Lviv Security Forum experts call on NATO to provide Georgia and Ukraine with MAP



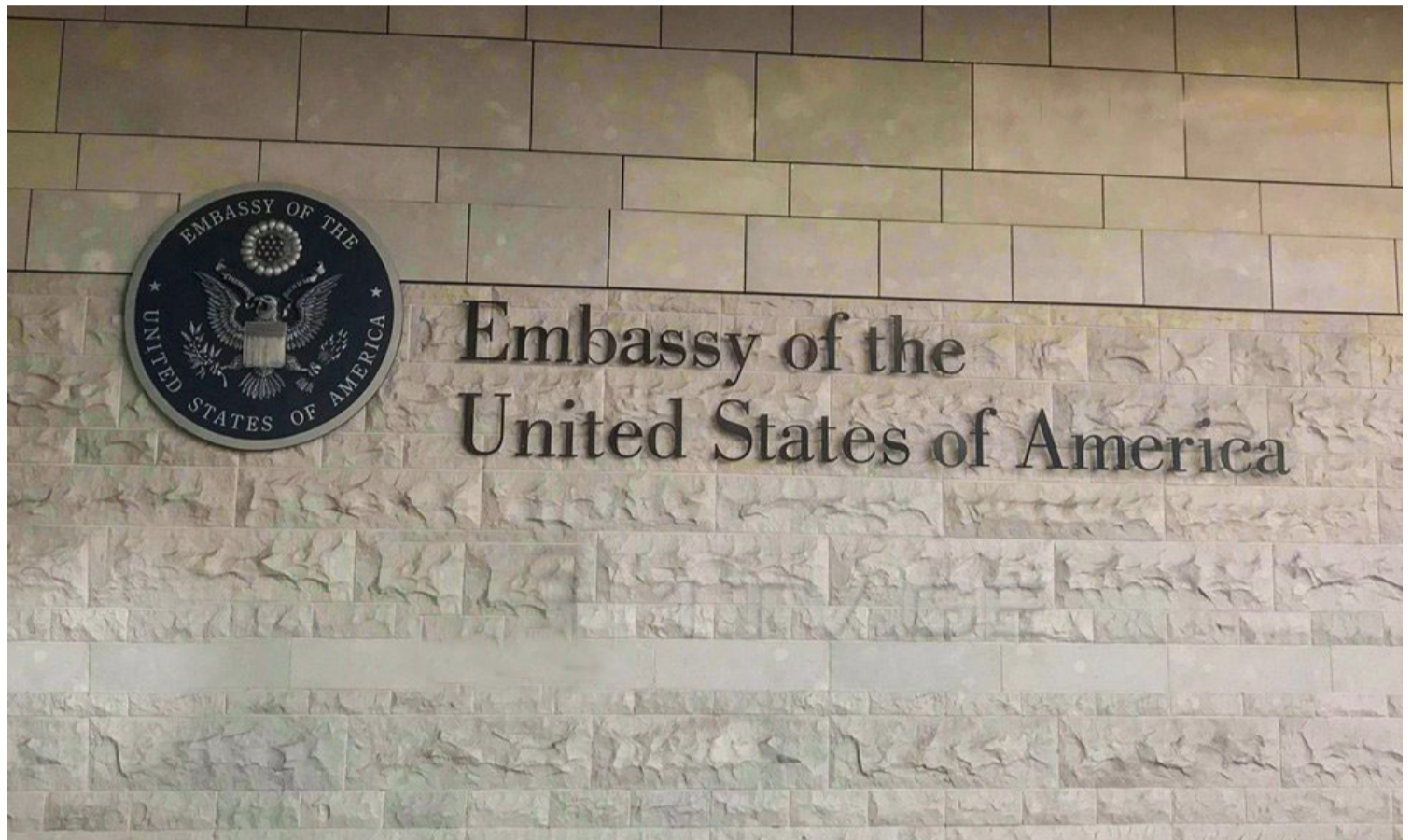
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## Economics

USAID and Enterprise Georgia launch two-year partnership to support Georgia's economy.

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# Round 3 of negotiations - step towards agreement, next meeting scheduled today



The third round of talks between the government and the opposition has started at the residence of the US Ambassador

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The third round of talks between the government and the opposition was held at the residence of the US Ambassador. The opposition's proposals to the government were discussed at the meeting. On December 4, the opposition submitted written proposals to the facilitator ambassadors as a plan to exit the crisis. Ac-

ording to media reports, one of the points of the 4-point proposal is to hold a plebiscite on the extraordinary elections and to hold new elections in 2021. Opposition parties also demand the release of political prisoners and the resignation of the head of the election administration.

Georgian Dream has not responded to the opposition's appeal in writing. Archil Talakvadze, one of the leaders of the rul-

ing team, wrote on Facebook that the extraordinary elections will not be considered.

"Despite the pandemic, up to 2 million of our fellow citizens took part in the elections and we have no right to question their choice. On other issues, within the constitution, we have a dialogue with the opposition and agreement is possible," Talakvadze wrote.

After the closed meeting, politicians made comments for the media. According to Shalva Natelashvili, the leader of the Labor Party, it seems that some signs of improvement have been shown in the line of electoral reform, but opposition doesn't want electoral reform, 'we want elections for a new parliament'.

Natelashvili says the entry of the opposition in the parliament formed as a result of the October 31 elections is excluded. "So far, there is no talk of compromise, concessions, regress, the fourth round is ahead," he argued

"Differences remain, but it was a useful meeting," said Badri Japaridze, the leader of Lelo, calling on society to equip itself with patience.

Davit Bakradze, the leader of European Georgia, did not talk about specific issues either, yet he informed that next meeting is scheduled for December, 8.

Grigol Vashadze, the chairman of the United National Movement, also commented to the media. "The first is the request of our facilitators not to go into details; Second - to reassure, rejoice and tell you that a compromise has appeared on the horizon, the main demands of the opposition - it's not the case".

According to Giorgi Vashadze, one of the leaders of "Strategy Builder", after discussion, the opposition will have an internal discussion. According to him, positions were converged on a number of issues, but not on the main ones.

"For example, everyone agrees that the electoral environment in the country is fundamentally changing. There are issues



"There is no compromise on our main demands", "round IV is ahead of us".

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# Lviv Security Forum experts call on NATO to provide Georgia and Ukraine with MAP



The international expert community of the Lviv Security Forum, calls on NATO to provide Ukraine and Georgia with clear and implementable steps to ensure their admission to NATO, in accordance with the decision taken at the Bucharest Summit in 2008.

By KHATIA BZHALVA

According to the Ukrainian media, Experts of this year's Lviv Security Forum (held on November 9-14, 2020) demanded Georgia and Ukraine to be provided with a realistic NATO Membership Action Plan as soon as possible. It is noted in a resolution of the forum that the experts call on NATO, the United States, the European Union, and the Black Sea countries to unite forces and develop a clear strategy to counter Russian aggression in the Black Sea. The resolution is supported by 17 experts.

According to the resolution, the experts highlighted the importance of the Black Sea for Transatlantic security and acknowledged Russia's aggressive foreign policy as the main threat to the region's Safety and prosperity. As the resolution notes, increase of Russian military force in the region is considered as a threat, namely "an increase in the military presence in the South Caucasus due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the transformation of the Black

Sea into a launchpad for Russian military operations in the Middle East."

The document reads that experts have expressed their concerns over the lack of NATO's clear strategy in the region, which according to them, creates a vacuum that is easily filled by Russia.

According to the resolution, the experts suggest specific steps to improve security in the Black sea region. In particular, "banning the entry of ships from the occupied Crimea to all European ports and ensuring a permanent presence of German and American ships in the Black Sea, also in the Ukrainian ports," the document reads that it is important to organize a training base in the region to perform joint regular exercises of NATO and Black Sea countries.

"Experts also consider efforts to counter hybrid threats important, including reviewing ownership of critical infrastructure along the coast and reducing Russia's political influence in the region," read the statement. The international expert community of the Lviv Security Forum, calls on NATO to provide Ukraine and Georgia with clear and implementable steps to ensure their admission to NATO, in accordance with the decision taken at the Bucharest Summit



The 2020 Lviv Security Forum resolution is supported by 17 experts, including Batu Kutelia, Vice President of the Atlantic Council of Georgia.

in 2008. The community also calls on leaders of the Black Sea countries, NATO, the European Union, and the United States to ensure finalisation of Anaklia

deep-water port in Georgia "as a driving factor for linking the Black and the Caspian seas, the incorporation of the region into greater international trading

routes, and providing impetus for the development of other Ukrainian, Romanian, Turkish and Bulgarian ports on the Black Sea."

## Round 3 of negotiations - step towards agreement, next meeting scheduled today

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that will continue to be debated. There are issues we cannot agree on, this is the issue of early elections and political prisoners. However, we agreed to continue the discussion," said Vashadze, clarifying that the discussion was not about entering the parliament.

After the end of the third round of talks with the opposition, one of the leaders of the Georgian Dream, Archil Talakvadze, said that the Georgian Dream "will not consider re-elections or any version related to it, including a

plebiscite." He called this meeting 'a step towards agreement' and emphasized that this has served to bring the positions even closer to the important issues related to the stabilization of the political system, further long-term cooperation between the opposition and the majority, which our country desperately needs today.

As Irakli Kobakhidze, Executive Secretary of the Georgian Dream, said after the meeting, the talks were held in a business process, no agreement was reached, but the process is ongoing and there is optimism that

the positions between the opposition and the government will eventually converge and the talks will be successful.

Kobakhidze reminded that the results of parliamentary elections cannot and shouldn't be reconsidered by the Georgian Dream.

According to the GD leader, the deadline for the negotiations is the day of the first sitting of the new parliament. "Given that this session should be held in all cases by the end of the week, naturally, there is a deadline and I have high hopes that we will reach an agreement before that," Kobakhidze said.

### Weather

Tuesday, December 8

Day Snow Showers  
High: 3°C  
Night Snow Showers  
Low: 0°C

Wednesday, December 9

Day Snow Showers  
High: 4°C  
Night Snow Showers  
Low: 1°C

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## USAID and Enterprise Georgia launch two-year partnership to support Georgia's economy.



# USAID

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

“This new partnership will help move Georgia’s economic recovery forward, channeling investment into innovative industries that create higher-paying jobs and make Georgia competitive on international markets,” said USAID/Georgia Mission Director Peter Wiebler.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

USAID and Enterprise Georgia have launched a two-year partnership that aims to facilitate Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Georgia’s economy. According to USAID’s official statement, the initiative will promote high-value opportunities for international investors, helping the country’s business sector recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and create higher-value jobs for Georgian citizens.

As the statement notes, with financial assistance from the USAID, the investment team of Enterprise Georgia agency will work closely with OCO Global, which is a foreign investment advisory firm, to promote the attraction of high-value investment opportunities into Georgia’s economy and to raise awareness about Georgia’s economical potential among international investors.

The initiative will prioritise investment

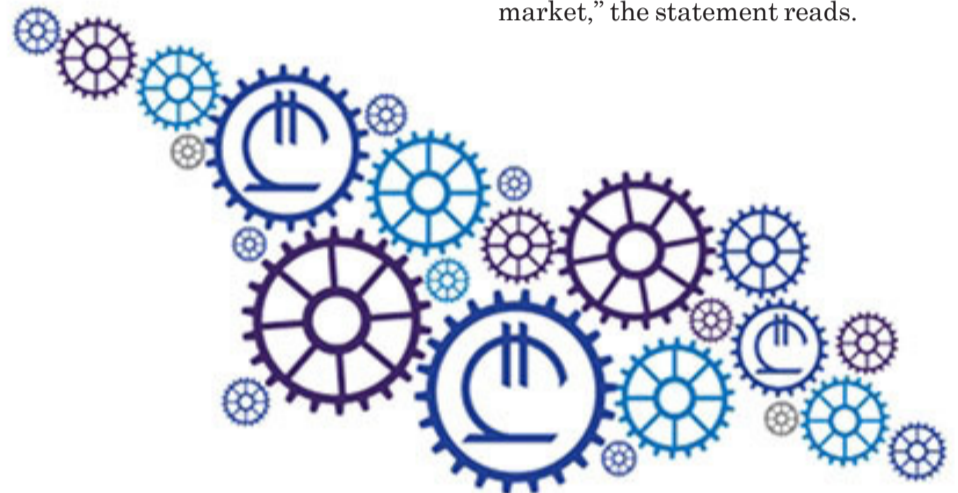
in greenfield and export-oriented projects, such as high-value manufacturing including electronics, medical instruments, aerospace parts, and automotive parts.

“This new partnership will help move Georgia’s economic recovery forward, channeling investment into innovative industries that create higher-paying jobs and make Georgia competitive on international markets,” USAID/Georgia Mission Director Peter Wiebler said.

According to Enterprise Georgia CEO Mikheil Khidureli, the partnership helps accelerate the implementation of one of the key goals of USAID’s new strategy for Georgia, which includes empowering the private sector to create higher-value job opportunities.

“Working with OCO Global, a renowned foreign investment advisory firm, will broaden our investment attraction area to a global scale,” stated Khidureli.

The USAID’s statement reads that



ENTERPRISE GEORGIA

Enterprise Georgia

## EU Launches Human Rights Week in Georgia

On December 7, 2020 EU Delegation to Georgia in cooperation with partner organizations and projects launches Human Rights Week. The activities in social and traditional media will be conducted under the motto of this year Human Rights Day theme **Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights**.

To learn more follow our social media channels. Find out more info at <https://www.facebook.com/europeanunioningorgia>

Human Rights Day, observed annually on 10 December, marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which sets out a broad range of fundamental rights and freedoms to which all of us are entitled. It grants the rights of every individual, without distinction based on nationality, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, language, or any other status.

10 December is an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of human rights in re-building the world we want, the need for global solidarity as well as our interconnectedness and shared

humanity.

During Human Rights Week, the EU will be sharing stories of EU support to Human Rights, and will be announcing five new projects in this area.

This year’s theme relates to the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts, through creation of equal opportunities for all, addressing the failures exposed and exploited by COVID-19, and applying human rights standards to tackle entrenched, systematic, and intergenerational inequalities, exclusion and discrimination.

Along with its international partners, the EU continues its commitment to promoting the rights of women, children, minorities and displaced persons, opposing the death penalty, torture, human trafficking and discrimination, with the overall objective to contribute to developing more inclusive societies.

In recent years in Georgia, the EU has made available over 100 million GEL for human rights protection and promotion, through supporting the

national structures responsible for policy making and granting of rights to citizens and through support to civil society organisations which are key players in the country’s comprehensive human rights system.

With the EU support, over 20 human rights projects are being implemented throughout Georgia through local and international partners to protect children’s and women’s rights, support ex-prisoners and inmates in re-integration, sustain gender equality and job equality in the country and protect the rights of the People with Disabilities and other groups in vulnerable situations. This includes funding for organisations supporting those most affected by COVID-19 and the resulting measures, including persons with disabilities (PwDs), internally displaced persons (IDPs), victims of domestic violence or people and children living below the support is delivered through civil society organisations around Georgia.

Detailed information about projects is available at <https://eu4georgia.ge/>

## Human Rights Tulip 2020 awards for Georgian media activists handed out by Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands at an online meeting on Monday 7 December

The ceremony has been held in the framework of the International Human Rights day, which is marked every year in December, and World Press Freedom Conference, hosted by the Netherlands in 2020. The Local Human Rights Tulip award has been initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in 2018 and is being organized in Tbilisi for the third time.

At today’s event, the Ambassador of the Netherlands, H.E. Maaïke van Koldam, has awarded three courageous and outstanding media activists, who conduct their work in various regions of Georgia, with a local Human Rights Tulip prize.

The winner is Kamilla Mamedova, founder of community radio “Marneuli”.

The second prize went to two outstanding women: Tsabunia Vartagava, LGBTI and Women’s rights activist from Samegrelo, and Manana Qveliashvili, journalist working on various human rights issues in Adjara.

The Netherlands is a strong supporter of protecting human rights and carries out various projects throughout the world, including Georgia, in this respect.

