

Georgia observes 13 years from the 2008 Russo-Georgian war

August 7 marked 13 years from the beginning of the 2008 war

By Nika Gantsemlidze

On Saturday, August 7, 13 years have passed since the beginning of the 2008 Russo-Georgian war. The Russian forces still occupy 20 percent of the Georgian territory even after 13 years, and the creeping occupation continues to threaten people living near the so-called border.

Partners of Georgia made numerous statements regarding the 13 years of the war, saying that the crimes committed by Russia should not be forgotten. Senator Jeanne Shaheen, a member of the Democratic Party, wrote on Twitter saying that Russia's incursion will not be forgotten.

"13 years ago, Russia invaded Georgia, which marked the start of a prolonged conflict w/Georgia. It also marked the start of Putin's war on democracy. We will not forget Russia's incursion & we stand by our Georgian partners in support of their sovereignty & territorial integrity," wrote the Senator on her Twitter page.

The European Union representatives to Georgia also issued a statement saying that the EU condemns Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and its continued military presence in those regions in violation of international law and once again calls on Russia to adhere to the obligations taken under the August 12, 2008 agreement.

The statement talks about the situation of those leaving near the occupation line, saying that the rights of people are



Goga APTSIAURI (RFE/RL)

Garibashvili visited Gori on August 8 to honor those who died in the 2008 war

in danger every day due to the so-called borderization process. The statement also discusses the worsening situation in the regions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lack of medications in the occupied regions.

The statement, issued in agreement with the heads of EU missions accredited to Georgia, reaffirmed the EU's strong support for Georgia's independence,

sovereignty, and territorial integrity within the country's internationally recognized borders.

The representatives of the ruling party, as well as the opposition of Georgia, also issued statements regarding the 13 years passing from the beginning of the war. The majority of ruling party representatives made statements on August 8, which was negatively assessed by the

opposition, saying that it is repeated "Russia's narrative" on war.

As a sign of respect for the heroes who died in the August 2008 war, the leaders of European Georgia visited the Mukhatgverdi Brothers Cemetery. The anniversary of the start of the 2008 Russia-Georgia five-day war is marked in Georgia on August 7-8. Opposition parties and a part of the public consider August 7 to be the start date of the war. According to them, the Russian army crossed the Georgian border on August 7 and after that, the Georgian state decided to resist.

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Members of European Georgia visited the Mukhatgverdi Cemetery

Politics

TI Georgia and ISFED leave the process of staffing the SEC Advisory Group

The announcement was made yesterday, on August 8



FULL STORY ON Page 2

TI Georgia and ISFED leave the process of staffing the SEC Advisory Group



The statement of NGOs read that the organizations invited to select Advisory Group members can't ensure selection of qualified people by consensus

The main basis of the decision was the changes made by CEC, which the NGOs say could mean that the group would be staffed by observers with a dubious reputation

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Non-governmental organizations, Transparency International Georgia and International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy, ISFED, have announced that they have decided to leave the process of staffing the SEC Advisory Group.

"The list of the organizations invited to select the members of the Advisory Group and the decision-making procedure, in our opinion, can not ensure the selection of qualified and reliable people by consensus," reads the joint statement published by the NGOs.

According to the amendments to the Election Code of Georgia in June 2021, within 10 days from the day of calling the elections, an advisory group of the

Central Election Commission (CEC) with at least 9 and not more than 15 members should be formed to submit recommendations on election disputes to the CEC.

The Advisory Group should be composed of a representative of the Public Defender's Office of Georgia and international and/or local experts selected by the monitoring organizations.

Because of this, the CEC drafted a resolution stipulating that no less than 7 and no more than 11 candidates from the group should be submitted to the CEC by local observer organizations. The CEC also invited Transparency International Georgia and the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy to select members of the group, to which the organi-

zations agreed.

In addition, according to the organizations, the CEC invited all the local observer organizations that were registered with the CEC during the last three general elections to select the members of the advisory group.

"During the first meeting, we were informed that 15 such observer organizations expressed a desire to participate in this process. However, the credibility, good reputation, operations, and financial transparency of the vast majority of these organizations can be seriously questioned," reads the joint statement of ISFED and TI.

The statement of the NGOs also read that many of them have been repeatedly negatively reported in the election assessments of the credible interna-

tional and local observer organizations.

In addition, the CEC resolution initially stated that observer organizations should select members of the advisory group by consensus. However, on August 6, the CEC amended its resolution stating that if the members of the advisory group could not be elected by consensus, the candidates would be elected if they

were supported by at least two-thirds of the observer organizations.

According to the statement, because of the changes made by CEC, it could mean that the group would be staffed by observers with a dubious reputation. The NGOs named among-mentioned factors as the main reasons for their decision.

News in Brief

PREPARED BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Badri Japaridze: De-occupation is inevitable

The de-occupation process will definitely begin, it is inevitable, despite all the efforts of Russia, - Badri Japaridze, one of the leaders of Lelo, told reporters speaking about the August 2008 Russia-Georgia war.

As Japaridze notes, we must oppose the occupation with unity, intolerance of injustice.

"It is 13 years since the beginning of the active intervention of the Russian military, which killed civilians, Georgian servicemen - followed by ethnic cleansing, occupation, which leads to the daily violation of the rights of our fellow citizens beyond the occupation, this remains a great challenge for our country, our statehood.

We must oppose the occupation with unity, intolerance to

the injustices that are now being perpetrated in the occupied regions, the process of de-occupation will inevitably begin, it is inevitable, despite all the efforts of Russia. We must achieve this in honor of the devotion of those people who did not spare their lives to resist the entry of Russian occupation forces into our country," said Japaridze.

Davit Zalkaliani: Russia must fulfill the ceasefire agreement

August 8 marks 13th years since Russia's military aggression against Georgia, occupation of Georgian regions. Russia must fulfill the ceasefire agreement, Georgian Foreign Minister Davit Zalkaliani wrote on Twitter.

"Recently European Court of Human Rights ruled its verdict on the Russia-Georgia conflict and found Russian Federation exercising effective control responsible for human rights violations in the August 2008 War. Russia must fulfill the ceasefire agreement," stated Zalkaliani.

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According to Giorgi Kandelaki, one of the leaders of European Georgia, all those who believe that the war started on

August 8, 2008, repeat the Russian version that "Georgia attacked Russia on its territory".

The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Garibashvili visited Gori and the memorial of people who died during the Russo-Georgian war. He said that it was a day for everyone to remember that the country should unite. "Only with unity we can accomplish the de-occupation of our country," said Garibashvili.

The President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, also made a statement regarding the war, saying that the country should not lose its hope. She also again said that "we all will see Georgia united again".

August 7 marks the 13 years anniversary of the Russo-Georgian war. The war was ongoing for five days and ended with Russian forces controlling 20 percent of Georgian territory. Although the war is over, the conflict is far from ending. Majority of Georgians living near the occupation line constantly live in a fear of losing their freedom to occupation.

Weather

Monday, August 9

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 36°C

Night T-storms

Low: 22°C

Tuesday, August 10

Day Clear

High: 37°C

Night Clear

Low: 21°C

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