

Georgian FM Zalkaliani, President Zourabichvili Discuss Situation in Ukraine with Foreign Officials



"Our statements in support of Ukraine are fully backed and shared by the US," Minister of Foreign Affairs, David Zalkaliani said.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs David Zalkaliani met with the US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan yesterday. The meeting focused on developments in Ukrainian, as well as Georgia's support.

The minister noted that statements of the Georgian side in support of Ukraine are fully backed and shared by the US, stressing that solidarity and support to Ukraine are crucial in these challenging times. According to the US Ambassador, they welcome the 'strong statements' made by Zalkaliani and MFA against Russian aggression as well as the clear support in the multilateral organizations like the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe.

Zalalkiani stresses that he received unwavering support from the United States for Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Ambassador Degnan also noted that every meeting she attended in Washington stressed the strong support for Georgia's Euro-Atlantic path. According to her, there needs to be a clear response that Russia does not have a veto over the futures of countries like Ukraine and Georgia.

Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and reiterated Georgia's full solidarity with the people of Ukraine, stressing that "in these tragic times for Ukraine and for all of Europe, President Zelenskyy is an exemplary leader." Zelenskyy has stated that he informed the President of Georgia about the current situation in Ukraine and expressed gratitude towards Georgia for the support.

Zourabichvili also discussed the matters concerning Ukraine with European leaders on Sunday. She spoke with her German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier, underscoring the historical importance of EU unity and resolute German support to Ukraine facing Russian aggression.

The Georgian president also discussed the situation in Ukraine with her French counterpart. The officials expressed concern over Russian aggression against Ukraine's sovereignty, while President Macron reiterated support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. President Zourabichvili is invited to pay a working visit to Paris in the coming days.



"European increased support to Georgia more timely than ever," Georgia's President Salome Zourabichvili tweeted.



President Zelensky Signs Application for EU Membership

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has signed an application

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky signing the EU membership application.

for Ukraine's membership in the European Union. Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala has supported Ukraine's request to join the EU as soon as possible. "Although I am in favor of standard procedures, we are now in a non-standard situation," said

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Russian and Ukrainian delegations meet for talks at the Belarus border on February 28.

President Zelensky Signs Application for EU Membership

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the Czech Prime Minister. According to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Joseph Borrell, Ukraine has the prospect of joining the EU, but membership is not on the agenda. As he noted, EU membership is something that will take many years, while the war in Ukraine must be answered in the coming hours. Borrell stressed that the international community would not allow a situation where a

“powerful country smashes their neighbor using its military capacities.”

Meanwhile, the first round of Russian and Ukrainian talks took place at the Belarus border yesterday. As the Ukrainian President’s adviser Mikhaylo Podolyak told reporters, the main goal was to discuss a ceasefire and the end of combat actions on Ukrainian territory. The parties have returned to their capitals for consultations around the decisions made at the meeting.

Gharibashvili Says Sanctions Against Russian Would Negatively Affect the Georgian Population

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili declared continued military activities by Russian soldiers in Ukraine as unacceptable and in violation of international law, outlining his team’s proposals for assisting Ukraine’s citizens in the current situation.

He welcomed the Council of Europe’s decision to suspend Russia’s rights of representation, highlighting the government’s dialogue and solidarity with its Ukrainian counterpart. According to the PM, at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, Minister Davit Zalkaliani spoke very clearly about Georgia’s position. Georgia, together with 80 other states, has co-sponsored the UN Security Council resolution.

“The whole world is facing great challenges today. In this situation, every emotion, every step, every word, every action is very risky and we, as the government, are responsible for both domestic and foreign policy. As the PM of the country, I will not do anything that is against the interests of our country and our people. I will be guided only by our national interests,” he said, adding that the sanctions imposed by the West are not effective.

Gharibashvili also addressed the sanctions against Russia, imposed on the country since its invasion of Ukraine, saying it would have adverse effects on Georgian citizens. According to



“As the Prime Minister of the country, I will not do anything that is against the interests of our country and our people. I will be guided only by our national interests.”

him, this would negatively affect the Georgian population. I’ll no longer be able to transfer money if we complicate financial operations for them.

In his speech at the government meeting he also referred to Georgian opposition parties, claiming that the “radical” section of political opposition in Georgia is seeking to serve its own self-interest in the local discourse around Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. According to him, “destructive opposition tries to play on the noble feelings of the citizens [and] manipulate and mislead” citizens.

He also recalled the actions of the UNM government during the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, discussing the examples of the UNM selling strategic assets to Russian state-owned companies following the conflict that saw occupation of 20% of Georgia’s internationally recognised territory by Russian troops.

“In addition, since they failed to open the market, Saakashvili issued a decree in 2012 unilaterally opening a visa-free regime for Russian citizens in February 2012, at a time when [UNM’s] anti-Russian rhetoric was raging here,” Gharibashvili, adding that if former president Mikheil Saakashvili was in power now, war would first starts here and then in Kiev.

Gharibashvili also highlighted the post-2012 Georgian Dream government as “the only exception when the country has not had a war and has [enjoyed] lasting peace and stability.

Due to the Western-skeptic comments on Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine he is facing resignation calls. Opposition Droa Party announced the demonstration demanding resignation of “Traitor Gharibashvili”, which makes for the second time Prime Minister Gharibashvili faces public outcry over controversial re-



Humanitarian supply included first aid items, more than 30 types of medicines, oxygen concentrators, as well as a certain supply of blood - blood components and materials and tests needed for hemotransfusion.

marks regarding Russia’s full-scale attack on Ukraine.

At the government session, Economy Minister Levan Davitashvili noted that Georgia is ready to provide maximum support if there are refugees from Ukraine and the assistance and humanitarian support from our side will continue, Georgia is in solidarity in this part and we stand clearly and unequivocally on the side of the truth. As for the closure of airspace for Russia, he responded that the issue will be discussed after consultations with neighboring countries in the region. Meanwhile Canada and the EU have already shut their airspace for intruder and the number of such countries is growing.

Georgia donated 100 tons of humanitarian supplies worth one million GEL to Ukraine, which was carried to Ukraine via Poland by the Georgian Post for free. Government has also

pledged that all Ukrainian citizens currently in Georgia will be provided with all services free of charge. Besides that, the private sector and citizens have been offering accommodation and other forms of assistance to Ukrainians in the country since the outbreak of the war, mostly through social media groups. Additionally, the Georgian National Tourism Administration has established a hotline for the purpose, which can be reached at 0 800 800 909.

Russia began its unjustified and unprovoked invasion in Ukraine last week, following President Putin’s announcement of the recognition of the independence of the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk on February 21.

In the meantime, thousands of Georgians are protesting daily in Tbilisi and other cities across the country to condemn the invasion of Ukraine.

Weather

Tuesday, March 1

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 15°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 8°C

Wednesday, March 2

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 14°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 7°C

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