

PM Signs Application for EU Membership on Behalf of Georgia

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili has signed the application for EU membership and addressed the public. He praised a "historic day" for Georgia with his signing of the country's bid for European Union membership on 3rd of March, emphasizing that the move "continues the efforts of our ancestors, which was aimed at unification in a common European family." According to him this move marks the next important stage on Georgia's European integration path.

"Georgia is a European state; Our country, throughout its long history, has always belonged to the area of European culture and civilization, and even today it makes a valuable contribution to its protection and development," Garibashvili said in his address, highlighting our "history of the struggle for freedom and the proof that European values are in Georgian people's character, thus are inseparable."

During the speech, PM spoke about the Association Agreement signed in 2014, when 'we assumed a tremendous responsibility towards our country and people to successfully start our journey of European integration and to make a strong and solid foundation to the eventual Europeanisation of our country.'

It was emphasized that we have a consistent performance of our authorities and public support since 2014, Georgia is successfully delivering its commitments in the capacity of an Associated Partner and has made significant progress towards legislative, economic and political approximation with the EU.

"I believe that we will be taking the journey of EU integration together with our Abkhazian and Ossetian compatriots and will build a united, strong European state together with them," said PM.

The signing of the EU membership bid follows Wednesday's reveal by Irakli Kobakhidze, the ruling Georgian Dream party Chairman, of the government's work on preparing the application in an expedited manner. On Tuesday, a draft resolution on the country's EU membership was prepared by the Committee on European Integration of the Georgian Parliament. The resolution called on EU member states and institutions to take all necessary steps to accelerate Georgia's accession to the Union.



► "History has deemed the European choice of the Georgian people as its strategic aim. Since gaining its independence, our country has been consistently progressing and this day is yet another manifest of our effort. Today Georgia is closer to the EU as never before."



Recall that obtaining candidate status is, by default, a lengthy process involving two major EU bodies: the European Commission, which consists of 27 Commissioners with different portfolios, and the European Council, which includes the Heads of Government of the EU Member States. The European Commission is examining

applications for EU membership within the framework of the (Copenhagen) accession criteria to assess whether the country should be awarded the title of candidate. Based on the opinion of the European Commission, the European Council decides on the issue of granting candidate status and begins negotiations with the state for

full membership. Although an expedited rule other than this procedure is not provided for in EU law, such a decision depends on the unanimous political will of the member states. In this case, too, the European Commission, the European Council and the Parliament must assess in a short period of time how ready the applicant country is for EU membership. The decision is based on consensus and all members of the Council of Europe, ie representatives of all countries, must agree to grant membership status.

Georgia's application for EU membership status will be considered by the EU through the same procedure, but is likely to be considered in a shorter timeframe. The window of opportunity was created by Ukraine, which made a similar statement to the European Union on 28 February 2022. The expedited procedure for Ukraine's candidate status was initiated by the European Parliament, which adopted a recommendatory resolution calling on EU institutions to work on granting Ukraine's candidate status.

Lawyer Alan Pellet has left the Russian Council of the International Court of Justice amid the war in Ukraine

BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Alan Pellet, a member of the International Court of Justice, who was a member of the Russian Council and defended Russia's interests in the International Court of Justice, has resigned.

He said it had become impossible to

defend and represent a country that hates the law.

"I am honored to work with you and protect the interests of your country, a country I love very much. I appreciated that while we were defending them together, we could freely express our opinion without making mistakes. I have seen the pangs of conscience in some of

you, and I have heard the unwavering devotion of some. It is enough, however.

"Yesterday I sent a letter of resignation to the relevant people: lawyers can defend more or less dubious cases, but it has become impossible to represent a country that hates the law so much in law enforcement forums," said Alan Pellet.

Pellet defended Russia's interests in

Crimea against Ukraine in the International Court of Justice in 2014.

Pellet represented the Russian side in the Georgia-Russia case at the International Court of Justice in 2008-2011. The case discussed the extent to which Russia violated part of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in the 2008 war.

EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.2419 | EURO - 3.5975 | GBP - 4.3182 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 2.9289 | SWISS FRANC - 3.5296 |

UN Votes For A Resolution To Condemn Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine

Voting Started		02-Mar-22	11:55:12
Item 5 - Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1			
Aggression against Ukraine			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFGHANISTAN ALBANIA ALGERIA ANDORRA ANGOLA ANTIGUA-BARBUDA ARGENTINA ARMENIA AUSTRALIA AUSTRIA AZERBAIJAN BAHAMAS BAHRAIN BANGLADESH BARBADOS BELARUS BELGIUM BELIZE BERMUDA BHUTAN BOLIVIA BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA BOTSWANA BRAZIL BURUNDI CABO VERDE CAMBODIA CANADA CENTRAL AFR REP... CHAD CHILE CHINA COLOMBIA COMOROS CONGO COSTA RICA COTE D'IVOIRE CROATIA CUBA CYPRUS CZECH REPUBLIC DEM REP OF KOREA DEM REP OF THE C... DENMARK DJIBOUTI DOMINICA DOMINICAN REP... ECUADOR EGYPT EL SALVADOR EQUATORIAL GUINEA ERITREA ESTONIA ESWATINI ETHIOPIA FIJI FINLAND FRANCE GABON GAMBIA GEORGIA GERMANY GHANA GREECE GRENADA GUATEMALA GUINEA GUINEA-BISSAU GUYANA HAITI HONDURAS HUNGARY ICELAND INDIA INDONESIA IRAN (ISLAMIC REP...) IRAQ IRELAND ISRAEL ITALY JAMAICA JAPAN JORDAN KAZAKHSTAN KENYA KIRIBATI KUWAIT KYRGYZSTAN LAO PDR LATVIA LEBANON LESOTHO LIBERIA LIBYA LIECHTENSTEIN LITHUANIA LUXEMBOURG MADAGASCAR MALAWI MALAYSIA MALDIVES MALI MALTA MARSHALL ISLANDS MAURITANIA MAURITIUS MEXICO MICRONESIA (FS) MONACO MONGOLIA MONTENEGRO MOROCCO MOZAMBIQUE MYANMAR NAMIBIA NAURU NEPAL NETHERLANDS NEW ZEALAND NICARAGUA NIGER NIGERIA NORTH MACEDONIA NORWAY OMAN PAKISTAN PALAU PANAMA PAPUA NEW GUINEA PARAGUAY PERU PHILIPPINES POLAND PORTUGAL QATAR REP OF KOREA REP OF MOLDOVA ROMANIA RUSSIAN FED... RWANDA SAINT KITTS-NEVIS SAINT LUCIA SAINT VINCENT-GIL... SAMOA SAN MARINO SAO TOME-PRINCIPE SAUDI ARABIA SENEGAL SERBIA SEYCHELLES SIERRA LEONE SINGAPORE SLOVAKIA SLOVENIA SOLOMON ISLANDS SOMALIA SOUTH AFRICA SOUTH SUDAN SPAIN SRI LANKA SUDAN SURINAME SWEDEN SWITZERLAND SYRIAN ARAB REP... TAJIKISTAN THAILAND TIMOR-LESTE TOGO TONGA TRINIDAD-TOBAGO TUNISIA TURKEY TURKMENISTAN TUVALU UGANDA UKRAINE UNITED ARAB EMIR... UNITED KINGDOM UNITED REP TANZA... UNITED STATES URUGUAY UZBEKISTAN VANUATU VENEZUELA VIET NAM YEMEN ZAMBIA ZIMBABWE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IN FAVOUR: 141 AGAINST: 5 ABSTENTION: 35 		

▶ 141 of the 193 member states voted for the resolution, 35 abstained, and five voted against.



▶ The resolution is not legally binding, however, it expresses the views of the UN membership and is aimed at increasing pressure on Moscow and its ally, Belarus.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

The United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday voted for the "Aggression against Ukraine" resolution, demanding Russia to immediately cease the invasion of Ukraine, withdraw its forces, refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force

against any Member State and abide by the UN Charter and the Minsk agreements.

In an emergency session of the UN's general assembly, 141 of the 193 member states, including Georgia, voted for the resolution, 35 abstained, and five voted against. The only countries along with Russia to vote no in support

of Moscow were Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, and Syria.

The resolution reads that the UN "deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine." It demands that "Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military for-

ces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders." The resolution also demands that the Russian Federation immediately and unconditionally reverse the decision related to the status of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. The document deplores the involvement of Belarus in this unlawful use of force against Ukraine and calls upon it to abide by its international obligations.

Georgia's Ambassador to the UN, Kakha Imnadze tweeted that "Georgia, whose 20% is occupied, knows well the face of

war," adding that the war must be stopped. On March 2, the UK and 37 other countries, including Georgia, made a referral for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to probe alleged war crimes in Ukraine. The UK government describes the referral as the largest in the history of the ICC. "We are crystal clear that Putin cannot commit these horrific acts with impunity," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said. On Wednesday, ICC Prosecutor, Karim A.A. Khan, announced the opening of an investigation into alleged war crimes committed so far during the ongoing conflict.

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY



Biodiversity monitoring helps protect endangered species in Georgia

UNDP and the Global Environment Facility are supporting biodiversity monitoring in Georgia's 12 protected areas

TBILISI. 3 March 2022 – East Caucasian Tur, Bezoar Goat, Chamois, Red Deer, Vultures, Black Stork, Pheasant, Caspian Snowcock, Brown Trout, Chestnut and 20 more animals and plants are under regular observation in Georgia's twelve largest protected areas. Biodiversity monitoring assesses the status of endangered and rare species, examines the current and potential threats, and helps ensure sustainable management of natural resources.

The monitoring draws on UNDP's US\$1.8 million programme, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and

implemented in partnership with Georgia's Agency of Protected Areas (APA) and the Caucasus Nature Fund.

It is aligned with a 10-year biodiversity monitoring plan, developed by Georgia's Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture through its Agency of Protected Areas and the Biodiversity and Forestry Department.

In 2020-2021, UNDP-supported biodiversity monitoring provided vital data about the status of indicator species and ecosystems, including birds, fish and mammals, forests and pastures. Researchers and rangers

also collected information about plant diseases that plague Georgia's forests.

The APA regularly receives monitoring reports that include short and long-term recommendations for the adaptive management of protected areas.

"Protecting and conserving Georgia's rich biodiversity is one of the most important priorities of the Agency of Protected Areas of the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture of Georgia. We introduced modern technologies and approaches to biodiversity monitoring to address existing challenges with sustainable solutions, make patrolling more

effective and improve the management of protected areas," said APA Chairperson David Iosebashvili.

The modern approach to biodiversity monitoring equips researchers and rangers with tools and technology needed to collect real-time information, assess spatial and temporal trends of biological diversity, and evaluate the efficiency of management policies.

"Biodiversity monitoring helps assess climate change impacts and the environmental costs of economic activities, such as tourism and infrastructural projects. Based on its findings,

we can ensure that economic gains do not lead to biodiversity loss," said UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia Nick Beresford.

The 10-year biodiversity monitoring is set to continue through 2030, covering Algeti National Park, Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park, Javakheti National Park, Kazbegi National Park, Kintrishi Protected Areas, Lagodekhi Protected Areas, Machakhela National Park, Mtirala National Park, Pshav-Khevsureti Protected Areas, Tusheti Protected Areas, Tusheti Protected Landscape and Vashlovani Protected Areas.

FRIDAY MARCH 4

Day Windy
High: 7°C

Night Partly cloudy
Low: 1°C

SATURDAY MARCH 5

Day Windy
High: 8°C

Night Partly cloudy
Low: 2°C

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