

Statement of Rally in Support of Ukraine



“For Ukraine and our freedom” - this is the name of a rally in support of Ukraine in front of the parliament in Tbilisi.

There are no speeches at the rally. The organizers released footage of the war in Ukraine on a screen mounted in front of the parliament, as well as included Ukrainian songs.

The organizers of the action are: Freedom Institute, Voter Education Society, European Georgia and Tabula.

The rally statement reads:

“For more than a month, the Ukrai-

nian people have been defending their freedom from evil, at great cost of blood!

The world is divided into black and white, support for freedom today means support for Ukraine, and it is a matter of dignity for all self-respecting nations!

The Georgian government violates our national dignity, it presents us as a society that does not know the enemy and condemns the lover, who has not learned to be smart from the past, is ready to give up freedom for the illusion of security and, as a result, lose both freedom and security!

100 years ago, our democracy lasted

three years before it was conquered by a Russian monster and stripped its brain, heart and soul!

We have been doing it for 30 years now! But if we continue like this, there is a great danger that we will be trapped in the swamp of Putin’s defeat with the free world and lose the historical opportunity to establish ourselves in the free world.

Now, as never before, we need to gather strength, recall what lies at stake, and unite to defend our historic goal.

European Georgia, the Freedom Institute, Tabula and the Voter Education

Society will hold a rally on April 3 in support of Ukraine and our freedom.

You will hear the words at the rally, but there will be no speakers. The action is dedicated to the national goal.

A goal that is far greater than all of us and gives us the strength to unite when we walk the streets uncooperatively, regardless of party tastes.

On April 3, at 20:00, we will gather in front of the Parliament to support Ukraine, to deploy force and to declare a common goal! Long live free Ukraine and Georgia!”

The News in Brief

PREPARED
BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia to Not Join Economic Sanctions Against Russia, PM Gharibashvili Says

According to Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, Georgia will not join the economic sanctions imposed on Russia, explaining that he is acting in the interests of the country and the people in making this decision.

“From the very first day, today and tomorrow, I will always and everywhere we are going to act in accordance with the interests of our country and our people. No one can change this decision. What is acceptable for the national interests of our country and the interests

of our people, I will only pursue that policy.”

According to the prime minister, Georgia has politically supported Ukraine in all formats, be it the UN, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OSCE or others.

However, according to Irakli Gharibashvili, Georgia will not join the economic sanctions imposed on Russia.

“As for sanctions, I want to clarify once again that economic sanctions will not be imposed by Georgia. My team and I are guided by this decision in the national interest of our country and the interests of the people. Do not forget, today our country is occupied. We need to take more responsibility for our people. We have been through 3 wars in 30 years, and sadly hundreds of people have been affected.

We have tens of thousands of refugees

in our own country. It must stop and we must not repeat mistakes, we must no longer show carelessness.

Our policy is peace-oriented and based. We want peace, stability and development. This is what our country needs today,” Gharibashvili stated.

PM Reminds of His Comment on Possible ‘Oppression and Punishment’ in Ukraine on February 25

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili stated that on February 25 he said that Ukraine would be ‘oppressed and punished’ in the ongoing war in Ukraine, adding that no one is there to stop it yet.

“This is what I was talking about on February 25, that if anyone were op-

pressed and punished in this war, it would be Ukraine, thousands of Ukrainians would be killed, their territorial integrity would be violated, and so it is. You see, a number of territories are already occupied by Russia in Ukraine today and it is still happening and no one seems to be there to stop this process,” he said.

Gharibashvili also spoke about Georgia having sent 400 tons of humanitarian aid to Ukraine, adding that the country pays attention and cares about the Ukrainians seeking shelters in Georgia as a result of war.

“We will continue to do so, and of course our great desire and dream is that this war will end as soon as possible. Therefore, once again, the countries and leaders who are capable of stopping this war must do everything in their power to end this war soon,” the Prime Minister said.

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.0918; Euro - 3.4195; GBP - 4.0629; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.7211; Swiss Franc - 3.3457

Georgia and IMF Reach Agreement on \$289 million Macroeconomic Program



International Monetary Fund

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

IMF mission chief James John announced on Friday that Georgia and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached a deal on a \$289 million program for the macroeconomic and financial stability of the country. As the IMF's statement reads, the International Monetary Fund team led by Mr. James John held virtual meetings

with Georgian officials between November 18, 2021, and March 31, 2022, to discuss a three-year economic program that could be supported by the IMF under a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA).

According to him, Georgia's economy was enjoying a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the 10,4 percent growth in 2021 before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He also noted that economic

growth in Georgia was expected to decrease to around three percent in 2022 due to the war in Ukraine and sanctions imposed against Russia, underscoring the probability of rising inflation, and widening of the current account deficit.

"Georgia's economy has proven resilient in the past, and with the support of policies under the authorities' program, we expect growth to pick up in 2023

and other key indicators to strengthen as well," he noted.

According to John, the authorities' program aims to maintain and further entrench macroeconomic stability in the context of shocks from the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, strengthen medium-term growth, and enhance economic resilience.

"To strengthen growth and make it more inclusive, the authorities' structural reform priorities focus on education and training to tackle high unemployment and address labor market mismatches, and on upgrading the country's infrastructure," UMF mission chief noted adding

that actions in these areas will improve the business environment, foster regional integration, and enhance the country's potential as a transportation and logistics hub.

According to the statement, the IMF team met with the Governor of the National Bank of Georgia Mr. Gvenetadze, Minister of Finance Mr. Khutsishvili, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Levan Davitashvili and his predecessor Natia Turnava, and other senior government officials, as well as with representatives of Georgia's international development partners, civil society, and the banking and business communities.



According to IMF mission chief James John, the program aims to maintain and further entrench macroeconomic stability against the background of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

EU-China Summit: Restoring peace and stability in Ukraine is a shared responsibility

The European Union and China held their 23rd bilateral Summit via videoconference on 1 April, bringing together President of the European Council Charles Michel, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, China's Prime Minister Li Keqiang and President Xi Jinping.

The EU and China discussed extensively Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, the world's economy, food and en-

ergy security, and the fight against COVID-19. support efforts to bring about an immediate end to the bloodshed in Ukraine, consistent with China's role in the world as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and its

EU and China must work together on stopping Russia's war in Ukraine as soon as possible. We have a common responsibility to maintain peace and stability, and a safe and sustainable world," Charles Michel said. "We count on China's support to achieve a lasting ceasefire, to stop the unjustifiable war and address the dramatic humanitarian crisis it has generated."

"We underlined that the Russian invasion of Ukraine is not only a defining moment for our continent, but also for our relationship with the rest of the world. There must be respect for international law, as well as for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity," said Ursula von der Leyen, adding that China, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, has a special responsibility.

Referring to the tightening of sanctions against Russia, von der Leyen said that more than

40 countries in total have joined these sanctions. "So we also made it very clear that China should, if not support, at least not interfere with our sanctions," she stated in a joint press conference following the summit.

She also said that in terms of bilateral trade between the EU and China, continuing business with Russia carries great reputational risks: "This is a question of trust, of reliability and, of course, of decisions on long-term investments. Let me remind you that every day, China and the European Union trade almost • 2 billion worth of goods and services. In comparison, trade between China and Russia is only some • 330 million per day. So a prolongation of the war, and the disruptions it brings to the world economy, is therefore in no-one's interest, certainly not in China's."

(euneighbourseast.eu)



ergo security, and the fight against COVID-19.

The EU called on China to

uniquely close relations with Russia.

"As major global powers, the

Weather

Monday, April 4

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 19°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 5°C

Tuesday, April 5

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 18°C

Night Showers

Low: 7°C

published by

The Messenger

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ESU Public Speaking Competition 2022

On 30th of March the English Speaking Union of Georgia held its 24th Public Speaking Competition at the Writers' House. The winners were: Mariam Jvarsheishvili, First Place, Luka Natriashvili, Runner Up and Nutsa Bejashvili, Third Place. Mariam will represent Georgia on 13th of May at the International Public Speaking Competition in London.

Due to pandemic situation the competition will be held on line.

This year's topic was: "Our real

choices are made without us realising it"

The competition was judged by: Mr. Mark Clayton, the British Ambassador. Zoe Borden, Fulbright Researcher, from the American Embassy, Maya Kipshidze, former Georgian Ambassador to Norway, Sophio Gorgodze, Director of National Assessment and Examinations Centre and Marina Tsitsishvili, ESU-Georgia President

The English Speaking Union is a unique global educational charity that brings together people of different lan-

guages and cultures.

The main goal of the ESU is promoting friendship and understanding through the English language.

The ESU is more than one hundred years old. It was set up in London in 1918. Initially it was the union between the USA and the UK. Now there are more than 50 ESUs all over the world.

The Patron of the ESU is Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, current President is the Princess Anne.

One of the most popular ESU

programmes is the Public Speaking Competition. The first ESU Public Speaking Competition was held in 1981 with speakers from only three countries. Today it is the largest public speaking competition in the world. It involves 1000 000 students. The best speakers gather in London to take part in the final.

Georgia joined ESU in 1998 and since then it has already sent 36 young Georgians to take part in the final in London. For 11 years the competition is supported by the Bank of Georgia.





