

77th Anniversary of the End of World War II

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

May 9 marks the day when the Soviet Union celebrated victory over fascism. On May 8, 1945, after the declaration of capitulation by Germany, World War II ended. May 9 was declared the day of victory over fascism.

War veterans traditionally mark the Victory Day by visiting the grave of an unknown soldier in Vake Park in Tbilisi, but this year, like last year, due to the rehabilitation work in Vake Park, people honored the memory of World War II victims at Veterans Culture and Recreation Park (Kikvidze).

Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili, together with the members of the Cabinet of Ministers paid tribute to the memory of those killed in World War II. The head of government laid a wreath at the bust of Meliton Kantaria, congratulated World War II veterans on the 77th anniversary of their victory over fascism, and thanked them.

"As you know, Georgians have greatly contributed to winning this war. Once again, I want to pay tribute to our heroes who sacrificed themselves for a better future of the world, and it is a great merit of us, the Georgians, to win this war. I want to congratulate you on May 9 and wish you all victory and peace."

By the decree of the Government of Georgia, veterans of the Second World War received ₾ 1000, the families of the victims of this war received ₾ 500.

"One-time financial assistance for the



participants of World War II and the families of the victims of World War II is provided by the Social Service Agency of the Ministry of Refugees, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of the Occupied Territories of Georgia, and for those registered in Tbilisi - the Capital City Hall," the PM announced.

Currently, 173 people, who participated in World War II reside in Georgia, the oldest of them is 103 years old. The Prime Minister visited one of them at home. He congratulated the war veteran, 100-year-old Ioseb Tukhashvili, on the 77th anniversary of 'his victory over fascism' and handed over gifts on the date.

Recall that Europe marks the Victory in Europe Day on 8 May. It's the annual recognition of the end of the Second World War, one of the darkest periods Europe has ever seen. This day is on the 8th to coincide with the anniversary of Germany signing an act of military surrender.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Charles Michelle Visits Odessa, Ukraine



European Council President Charles Michel has arrived in Odessa. Michelle wrote this on her official Twitter page and reiterated the EU's support for the

Ukrainian people.

"I came to Odessa to celebrate Europe Day. The city where Pushkin said, 'You can feel Europe.' Michelle.

In a city where today the Ukrainian people protect their monuments from bullets, missiles, and their freedom from Russian aggression. "You are not alone, the European Union stands by you," Michelle wrote.

Chemical Weapons in the war With Ukraine

Russia uses chemical weapons in Ukraine. Poisoned soldiers report that clinics have received a response to the discovery of phosphorus in the body.

As a result of the use of phosphorus replacement weapons, 4 more Georgian servicemen were hospitalized. Some Georgian soldiers have already claimed to have used chemical weapons.

Ukraine Completed Second Part of the EU Questionnaire

Ukraine has completed the second part of the EU questionnaire. According to the Administration of the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky met with the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen at an online store.

"I have submitted the second part of the completed questionnaire to Ukraine for EU candidate status," Zelensky said.

The President of Ukraine thanked Von der Leyen for "clear messages of support for Ukraine on an important path."

Georgian MFA Condemns So-Called Presidential Runoffs in Russian Occupied Tskhinvali



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia appeals to the international community to properly assess and react to the actions directed against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has condemned the so-called second round of presidential elections held on 8 May in the Russian-occupied Tskhinvali region. According to the ministry, this illegal action contradicts the fundamental principles and norms of international law and blatantly violates Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The ministry notes that under the ongoing Russian occupation no election would have any legal consequences as hundreds of thousands of IDPs and refugees expelled from their homes as a re-

sult of the ethnic cleansing of Georgians in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions are still hampered to safe and dignified return home. The ministry says that fundamental rights and freedoms of people on the ground are blatantly violated and stresses that Russia's responsibility for the violations of human rights on the ground is reflected in the Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of 21 January 2021.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia appeals to the international community to properly assess and react to the actions directed against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

The State Ministry for Recon-

ciliation and Civic Equality of Georgia has also published a statement condemning the so-called presidential runoffs in the Russian-occupied Tskhinvali region, stating that the fact contradicts the fundamental principles and norms of international law and violates Georgia's sovereignty.

"The Georgian government and the international community do not recognize the legitimacy of such actions and their results," the statement reads.

The so-called second round of de facto presidential elections took place on Sunday between incumbent de facto president Anatoly Bibilov and Nikhas party leader Alan Gagloev. As of now, Gagloev is leading in the so-called elections. After the elec-

tions, Bibilov told RIA Novosti that a referendum would be held on the unification of South Ossetia with Russia. According to him, all the documents for the referendum have been collected and submitted to the central election commission.

British Ambassador to Georgia, Mark Clayton, told InterPressNews that the UK does not recognize the independence of South Ossetia or Abkhazia and supports Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

"We are monitoring the situation very closely. It's hard for me to see how any referendum held in South Ossetia in the near future could have any legitimacy at all," he said in the interview.



The so-called second round of de facto presidential elections was held on Sunday in the Russian-occupied Tskhinvali region.

Europe Day: EU stands by Georgia in common values of peace and democracy

Weather

Tuesday, May 10

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 17°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 8°C

Wednesday, May 11

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 20°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 9°C

The European Union is standing by Georgia, in support of building a strong, prosperous and democratic country, during times of COVID and other crises, and with unwavering support for Georgia's independence and territorial integrity, EU Ambassador Carl Hartzell said in a statement to mark Europe Day on 9 May, in a year that has seen Georgia apply for membership of the European Union.

He said Europe Day was a celebration of a new vision for Europe, presented 72 years ago in the Schuman Declaration, "at a time when Europe was still rising from the ashes of a devastating war, determined to make sure there would be no more wars in Europe".

"While we remain faithful to that vision, unfortunately, others blatantly and tragically demonstrate that they still see things differently. But as Russia is waging its unjustified war in Europe, we are standing up in strong solidarity with Ukraine, based on the values and principles that unite us and on which our Union was built."

"Here in Georgia, our close partnership is based on these same values," the Ambassador said. "A partnership that is set to grow further as Georgia took the historic step to apply for EU membership, in line with the aspirations of an overwhelming majority of its population and in coping with its civilisational roots."

Activities to mark Europe Day in Georgia this year are centred

around a new film called Europe and me, directed by Giorgi Kvelidze. It highlights the shared values between the EU and Georgia and shows several human stories from Georgia's region.

The online premiere of the documentary film that has been produced for 2022 Europe Day will be held tonight, 9 May at 21:00 on the Delegation Facebook page.



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EU Delegation to Georgia Premieres Documentary on Europe Day

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

On May 9 Georgian and European Union marked Europe Day, commemorating the anniversary of the historic ‘Schuman declaration’, which laid a foundation for peaceful and unified Europe. On the occasion of the date, the Delegation of EU to Georgia premiered a documentary film ‘Europe and Me’ which unites stories from four regions of Georgia — Kakheti, Racha, Guria, and Imereti. According to the EU embassy to Georgia, the movie demonstrates the shared values of Georgia and Europe, including democracy, human rights, freedom, and equality.

According to the embassy, the movie combines stories of different people from Georgia’s regions - the shepherd and cook Irakli from Udabno village in Kakheti

who shows how a diverse society can enrich your life; Tengiz from Racha who is a radio collector and a great example of always striving for freedom; football players from Guria who qualified for the European Champions League for the first time in Georgian history; Akaki and Leonor, active citizens from Kutaisi who are trying to make our society healthier and our environment greener.

As EU Ambassador, Carl Hartzell has told media representatives, topics covered in this film are democracy, diversity, equality, and freedom. Ambassador noted that the values the EU and Georgia share are springing from the same source. According to him, the 1921 Constitution of the First Republic of Georgia is an example that “Georgia was, in so many ways, already more advanced than other parts of Europe.”

As Ambassador Hartzell told journalists, the theme of the movie has become more relevant after the Georgian government submitted a membership application to the European Union. According to him, the process leading to EU membership is not only about aspirations, but it is also about complying with the relevant criteria, including political and economic principles.

“It is important that Georgia seized this opportunity, which will require tough political decisions and the mobilization of the whole society behind these goals,” Hartzell stated.

According to the ambassador, the screenings of the movie would be held in different parts of Georgia. He also stated that the EU is willing to engage with young European ambassadors that have an interest in holding discussions around



the themes of the movie. As he stated, if someone was willing to take the movie to Europe and bring the message to a broader audience, the EU Embassy in Georgia would be glad to support this initiative.

The movie is directed by Giorgi Kvelidze, the creative director is George Gadrani, story producer – Tako Kvelidze, producer - Nutsi Malashkhia, cinematographer - Josh Braunreuther, and editors - Levan Butkhuizi and Charlotte Savage.



EU Ambassador, H.E. Carl Hartzell



Tako Kvelidze and Giorgi Kvelidze





H.E. Carl Hartzell and Mrs. Mette Hartzell





