

Georgian Government's Delay in Democratic Reforms Backfired, Ned Price says

By Liza Mchedlidze

The US State Department spokesman, Ned Price, was asked about the rhetoric of the Georgian Dream in relation to America at the press conference.

"We expressed concern about some disturbing statements," Price said in response to the question of how he would assess the comments of lawmakers who "claim that the US is trying to drag Georgia into a war."

"We have expressed concern about some disturbing statements that we have heard are coming from corners of the Georgian political system and Georgian society. We have expressed concern about some of the government's actions. Government actions, including delaying or rolling back important democratic reforms, have backfired. They caused a setback to the clear, unwavering aspirations of the Georgian people towards EU membership and wider Euro-Atlantic aspirations. We are concerned about these actions because they have also deepened the polarization in Georgian society, instead of promoting the unification of the country around the core issues of Euro-Atlantic integration. We are seeing a level of polarization that is not good for the country. This is not useful for Georgia's broader political aspirations", said US State Department spokesman Ned Price.

Ned Price's statement makes



it clear who is responsible for the fact that we still do not have the status of a candidate, and it is likely that if "Georgian Dream" continues like this, the country will not be able to receive the status, "Lelo" MP Salome Samadashvili said, thus responding to Ned Price's statement.

According to her, the representative of the highest US gov-

ernment exactly repeats the assessment of the society, the opposition and the non-governmental sector in the country.

"What we saw in Ned Price's statement is that the current government of Georgia has jeopardized the implementation of reforms in the country, this is a setback that has jeopardized our future in the European Union.

Of course, it is good when a representative of the highest US government accurately repeats the assessment that the public has in our country, both the opposition and the non-governmental sector, and once again makes it clear who is responsible for the fact that we still do not have the status of a candidate and Probably, if "Georgian Dream" con-

tinues like this, it will not be accepted. This assessment echoes the decision of "Georgian Dream" to strengthen the judicial clan, I personally would treat this message very carefully, because it is a very clear message that as long as Ivanishvili and the Georgian Dream rule this country, there will be no progress," said Samadashvili.

'Georgian Dream' government does not want fundamental reforms, which is a problem, Nino Dolidze says

By Liza Mchedlidze

In the part of the recommendations of the European Union, we look only at cosmetic reforms and cosmetic improvement, there is no mention of fundamental reforms, which is a problem. The government does not want changes that will be related to giving up power, said the Chairman of Fair Elections Nino Dolidze while talking to journalists.

Regarding the election of Levan Murusidze and Dimitri Gvritishvili as judge members of the Supreme Council of Justice, according to Dolidze, taking such a step not only strengthens the clan rule, but also creates a big problem in the part of our country's European integration.

"When we constantly talk about the fact that the judicial system needs fundamental re-



form, there is clan rule in it and this is one of the 12 recommendations of the European Union, taking such a step is very bad for Georgia. In addition to strengthening the clan rule and being a step backwards, it also creates a big problem in the European integration part of our country. We call on the authorities to implement 12 recommendations in order for the country to receive candidate status. In the part of the recommendations of the European Union, we look only at cosmetic reforms and cosmetic improvement, there is no mention of fundamental reforms, which is a problem.

Dolidze stated that the "Georgian Dream" government does not want reforms:

"The government does not want changes that will be related to giving up power. It is important to carry out reforms

in the judicial system that will actually bring judicial independence, fair elections and show the political will of the country that we are ready to take such steps", Nino Dolidze noted.

Two judge members of the Supreme Council of Justice - Levan Murusidze and Dimitri Gvritishvili were elected at 31st conference of judges.

Dimitri Gvritishvili's candidacy was nominated by the judges, while Levan Murusidze nominated his own candidacy.

The seats of two members in the Supreme Council of Justice became vacant after Gocha Abuseridze and Giorgi Goginashvili left their positions based on their own application. We remind you that the judge members of the Supreme Council of Justice are appointed for a term of 4 years.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Parliamentary delegation participates in the summit of the international platform of Crimea



Shalva Papuashvili, together with the parliamentary delegation, is participating in the first parliamentary summit of the international Crimean platform in Croatia.

“At the Crimean platform, we will have the opportunity for parliamentary delegations to

once again express their solidarity with Ukraine,” said the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament.

According to him, Georgia knows what Russian aggression means and how important it is to respond appropriately from the international community.

“About our delegation and my

speech, based on Georgia’s experience, we will have a conversation about what Russian aggression means, what the international community’s inappropriate response was at the time, and what should be the correct response to Russian aggression.

We are a country that has

experienced Russian aggression several times and we know very well what the right reaction should be. Based on our experience, we will talk about what should be meant by solidarity with Ukraine”, said Shalva Papuashvili.

Within the framework of the summit, the Speaker of the Parliament addresses the participants.

43 delegations of 32 parliaments, 5 international parliamentary organizations and 26 parliament chairpersons are participating in the first parliamentary summit of the Crimea International Platform.

Within the framework of the visit, bilateral meetings of the Speaker of the Parliament and the parliamentary delegation are also planned.

Levan Ioseliani attends the opening of 10th International conference of Election Administrations

It is very important to agree that the elections in this country should be held transparently, political parties should prepare for the elections, and on the day of the elections, it should be decided who deserves to be in

power, said Levan Ioseliani, Deputy Speaker of the “Citizens” Party, at the 10th International Conference on Election Administrations.



According to him, one of the topics discussed at the conference is the implementation of the electronic election system in Georgia, which already exists in many democratic countries.

“I am attending a very important conference, which serves one of the very important goals for our country - it is the introduction of electronic elections in Georgia, which is happening for the first time on such a scale and which should bring an absolutely different attitude towards elections in our country. The elections should no longer be the subject of controversy, heated

discussions between people and parties. At least on the day of the elections, we should have the feeling that there is no question mark regarding the elections”,

said Levan Ioseliani.

He also talked about the problems that exist in the country during the pre-election period.

“Certainly, in the pre-election period, there are many problems related, among others, to bribery of votes, use of administrative resources, and these problems still exist today. Today, we are talking about completely changing the administration of the election day, which should insure the election day from such types of problems, although this does not rule out that we will not have similar challenges in the pre-election period,” Ioseliani said.

Electoral gender quotas promote equality in politics, reveal gaps in legislation and party rules

NDI and UNDP, with support from the UK and Sweden, unveil key findings of analytical research on mandatory electoral gender quotas in Georgia

TBILISI. 25 October 2022 – Electoral gender quotas increase women’s political participation in Georgia and are supported by both citizens and political parties. Yet, to make this electoral mechanism truly effective, political parties need to introduce stronger internal gender policies and explore better ways of at-

tracting, engaging and promoting women candidates.

These and other findings are included in the research commissioned by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with support from the UK and Sweden, to analyse the impact of gender quotas on Georgia’s politics and society based on the results of the parliamentary elections in 2020 and the local elections in 2021.

The research examines the outcomes of public opinion polls undertaken after Georgia introduced mandatory gender quotas in 2020, looks into policies adopted in the same period and examines whether electoral quotas indeed supported women in entering political careers.

It also provides a set of recommendations for political parties and lawmakers aimed at enhancing electoral gender quotas and giving women better access to the resources and services they need to win in politics.

The findings and recommendations of the research were presented to the public on 25 October, at a conference attended by

representatives of parliamentary and non-parliamentary political parties, civil society and international organizations.

“Gender equality at all levels of governance is a matter of democracy and human rights. Involving 100 percent of the talent and experience in political decision-making, not just the male 50 percent, also improves the development of a country in all other areas including economic prosperity and security. Georgia has made important steps in this direction. The research by UNDP, within the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality, and NDI could help Georgian stakeholders to assess how the chosen quota mechanism has worked so far and how it could be developed further. Continued progress on gender equality is possible, and is also one of the 12 priorities for Georgia’s EU integration process,” said H.E. **Ulrik Tidestrom**, Ambassador of Sweden to Georgia.

“For many talented and motivated Georgian women, electoral gender quotas are an open door to a political career. However, the same mechanism reveals the remaining gaps in leg-

islation, party rules and social practices. UNDP helps study these challenges, stir public discussion, empower women in politics and find solutions that will bring Georgia closer to an equal, fair and inclusive society,” said **Nick Beresford**, UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia.

“The introduction of gender quotas triggered an unprecedented increase in the number of elected women both at the national and local levels. The number of elected women at the local level has doubled in 2021 compared to 2017. Despite this spike, Georgia is still far from achieving a ‘critical minimum’, which is at least 30 percent of women in decision-making. Political parties should continue empowering women meaningfully by improving internal party policies and practices, making them more gender-sensitive and interesting for women. One important finding of this research suggests that thanks to gender quotas parties have started looking for women internally and have identified quite a few talented candidates,” noted **Teona Kupunia**, Deputy Director for NDI Georgia.

The research team – Irma Pavliashvili and Salome Mukhuradze presented research findings and recommendations, focusing on improving the legislative framework, strengthening national gender equality mechanisms, and establishing institutionally strong political parties.

Following the adoption of mandatory electoral gender quotas in 2020, Georgian women increased their share of seats in parliament from 14 to almost 20 percent. In 2021, women’s representation in local councils increased from 13.8 to 24 percent. Women received 31.4 percent of mandates in proportional lists (441 mandates in total) compared to 19.8 percent of mandates received in 2017.

Yet, even this leap in numbers leaves Georgian women with just one-fifth of seats in parliament and one-fourth of seats in local councils, far from enough to make a meaningful impact on decision-making.

The expansion and improvement of quota policies can help Georgia make further steps towards gender equality and bring a diversity of perspectives into the political agenda.

Weather

Wednesday, October 26

Day Partly Cloudy High: 17°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 9°C

Thursday, October 27

Day Partly Cloudy High: 21°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 11°C

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Celebration of the 30th anniversary of Georgia's accession to the United Nations and the UN Day

On October 24, a celebratory concert and reception was held at the Rustaveli National Theatre. The event featured performances by the Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Nikoloz Rachveli; the outstanding musician of the new generation Tsofne Zedginidze; the internationally recognized Georgian viola Giorgi

Zagareli; Tbilisi Women's Choir directed by Omar Burduli, and Trinity Cathedral Choir, directed by Svimon Jangulashvili. The programme also included a photo exhibition entitled "The UN in Pictures: 30 years of partnership" and screening of a short film on the 30-year partnership between Georgia and the United Nations.





