

## European Parliament's Resolution supports sanctions against Ivanishvili, release of Saakashvili and Gvaramia

By Liza Mchedlidze

The European Parliament adopted an annual resolution on the implementation of the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union. 430 out of 608 MEPs supported the drafted resolution, 52 voted against it, and 126 abstained.

The European Parliament expressed concern over the high level of polarization in Georgia and talked about oligarchic influences, anti-Western attacks, the pardon of Nika Gvaramia, and a politicized court. In the document, the European Parliament also calls on the authorities to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili abroad for treatment and calls on the President of Georgia to use her constitutional prerogative to resolve this issue.

Bidzina Ivanishvili is referred to as an oligarch in the amendment of the European Parliament and Georgia is recommended to fight his influence in political and public life with various reforms:

"Emphasizes the need to eliminate excessive influence based on personal interests in economic, political, and public life, as determined by the European Commission as one of the priorities for Georgia to receive candidate status. It recommends eliminating excessive influence based on interests, especially in the case of the oligarch and former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, through systematic structural and regulatory reforms in various political, economic, and public life of the country."

According to the 25<sup>th</sup> amendment, the text about sanctioning Ivanishvili was added to this paragraph.

"Again calls on the Council of Europe and democratic partners to take appropriate measures, including imposing personal sanctions on Ivanishvili and all individuals responsible for the deterioration of democratic political processes."

The document also mentioned Ivanishvili's alleged connections with



Russia. According to the European Parliament, they are concerned about reports of bypassing Western sanctions through Georgia. The European Parliament calls on the institutions of the European Union to consider these reports in detail, especially about Ivanishvili, and in case of confirmation, impose sanctions on him and his close circle.

"[The European Parliament] is concerned about reports that Russian citizens and entities are allegedly using Georgia to circumvent Western sanctions. Calls on the EU institutions to further

investigate these allegations, including the study of the report of the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption of Ukraine, which talks about the connections of Bidzina Ivanishvili with Russia.

If these accusations are confirmed, it calls for the imposition of personal sanctions against Bidzina Ivanishvili and his closest companies, noting that Ukraine has imposed sanctions on members of Ivanishvili's family and his close associates, who are behind the ambiguous position of the current Georgian government

towards Russia, due to their ties to the Kremlin;

In this regard, it welcomes the adoption of the eighth package of sanctions against Russia, which includes a list of new criteria, which will allow the EU to impose sanctions on those who facilitate the circumvention of sanctions," the European Parliament report noted.

The mentioned amendment was supported by 275 members of the European Parliament, 212 went against it, and 132 abstained.

## NGOs: The government should take responsibility for Saakashvili's health

By Liza Mchedlidze



Non-governmental organizations responded to Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition and called on the government to fully understand its obligations and take responsibility for saving Saakashvili's life and health.

NGOs call the statements of the representatives of the ruling party regarding Saakashvili "outrageous and cynical" and note that such an attitude is categorically incompatible with Georgian and international law, as well as with the political goal of EU membership.

"We, the signatory organizations, respond to the fact that the health condition of the third

president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, has become extremely serious. Despite the report of the medical examination, the report of the Special Council of the Public Defender and the call of the European parliamentarians, the government does not recognize the need to take immediate steps to protect the prisoner's life and health. According to the Public Defender, Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition already provides the basis for postponing the sentence.

The statements of the ruling party's high-ranking officials are extremely outrageous and cynical. In particular, the Prime Minister of Georgia said that Mikheil Saakashvili's life "is up to the Lord" and "he cannot take responsibility for it".

The ruling party still does not

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6736; Euro - 2.8487; GBP - 3.3115; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.2163; Swiss Franc - 2.8848

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recognize the aggravation of Saakashvili's condition, and a number of members are waiting for Saakashvili's death, one can say, with joy. Mikheil Saakashvili's life was already in critical danger once, the reason for which was that the government did not pay attention to the conclusion of the Council of the Public Defender for weeks.

We believe that a similar at-

titude towards the life and health of any prisoner is categorically inconsistent with Georgian and international law, as well as with the political goal of EU membership. Further worsening of Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition and lethal outcome will

not only be the worst violation of human rights, but also a political collapse that will cause irreparable damage to Georgia's reputation.

The signatory organizations call on the government to fully understand the state's obliga-

tions in the field of basic human rights, to stop being indifferent to Mikheil Saakashvili's serious health condition, and to take responsibility for saving his life and health. In addition, we hope that the scheduled court sessions regarding the postponement of

the sentence will be held in the shortest possible time, and the court will be guided only by the interest of protecting the life and health of the convicted person," the statement signed by 14 NGOs reads.

# NGOs: The government should take responsibility for Saakashvili's health

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

**MEP Rasa Jukneviene calls on Zourabichvili and the gov't to do everything so 'Saakashvili's life is not on their conscience'**

MEP Rasa Jukneviene said during the debate that "Bidzina Ivanishvili has taken Georgia hostage" and his goals are different from the goals of the Georgian people.

Rasa Jukneviene also spoke about the situation of Mikheil Saakashvili during the debate on the issue of Georgia in the Euro-

pean Parliament and noted that the detention of the ex-president in prison is not in line with European values.

MEP called on President Zourabichvili and the Government of Georgia to do everything so that the issue of Mikheil Saakashvili's life is not on their conscience.

"Georgia's place is in Europe. I am sure that Georgia will become a member of the European Union. The Georgian people deserve it. I am not sure that Bidzina Ivanishvili, who has taken Georgia hostage, has the same goals as the Georgian people. The Georgian government knows very well what to do. Everything is written in the recommendations of the European Commission, which must be carried out without manipulations and claims. Detaining Mikheil Saakashvili, the former president, in prison is not a European value. Torturing people is Putin's policy, and I want to call on the government of Georgia, including the president: do everything so that the issue of Mikheil Saakashvili's life is not on your conscience," Rasa Jukneviene said.

**Mikheil Saakashvili not allowed to attend his own trial at Tbilisi Court**

of the convicted Saakashvili. This is the first paragraph of this letter.

Also, the letter, which is this minute, was written: the doctor



Mikheil Saakashvili was not transferred from the hospital to physically attend his ongoing trial in Tbilisi City Court, nor was given an opportunity to remotely attend due to the 'lack of technical devices' at Vivamed clinic.

The judge read statements from the penitentiary service and the hospital:

"The letter of Mr. Nika Abramishvili himself states that, as of today, the Penitentiary Service lacks the ability to ensure the remote involvement

does not consider it appropriate to transport Saakashvili to the trial scheduled for December 14, 2022, based on his health condition," the judge said.

Lawyer Shalva Khachapuridze was interested in the reason why the convict from the hospital could not be included, to which the head of the penitentiary replied that the technical means need to be adjusted, and at this stage, there are no appropriate technical devices in Vivamed.



Georgia belongs in Europe.

## History Keepers: Ukrainian history podcast now available in Georgian

The Media and Communication Educational and Research Center (MCERC) in Georgia has launched an EU-funded series of podcasts on Ukrainian history.

The 'History Keepers' aims to raise awareness about Ukrainian history and to counter Rus-



sian disinformation, which aims to spread falsified information about the Ukrainian past.

You can listen to or watch the podcasts (with Georgian subtitles) narrated by Olena Shevchenko from Taras Shevchenko State University here.

The transcripts of the Podcasts in Georgian are published on Publika's (პუბლიკა) webpage. ([eunighbourseast.eu](http://eunighbourseast.eu))

### Weather

Thursday, December 15

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 12°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 3°C

Friday, December 16

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 13°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 4°C

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