

Russia definitely wanted to overthrow Saakashvili, Condoleezza Rice says

By Liza Mchedlidze

According to former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the United States stands by Ukraine and helps it, but it should do more so that Ukraine repels Russian aggression. Condoleezza Rice told the Ukrainian editorial office of "Voice of America" about this.

As an example, Rice cited a need "that wouldn't have been difficult to identify a few months ago," namely providing Ukraine with more air defense systems to deter Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure. The former secretary of state called on the West to step up and give Ukraine what it needs most.

According to Rice, Ukraine is not asking for the help of American troops. "Ukrainians there are fighting and suffering to maintain an international system that does not adapt to attacking a small neighbor with military force," Rice said. She also added that "it is in the interests of the United States to send a message to Russia that it will not allow such a thing to happen."

When asked whether she believes that a mistake was made at the 2008 Bucharest NATO Summit when Georgia and Ukraine were rejected from the membership action plan, Rice said that the United States was asking for it, but the consensus-based NATO did not have a unified position on the issue. According to her, that is why Washington achieved the next best result in Bucharest, which ensured that these countries would become members of the alliance in the fu-



ture. And now, according to her, "Putin has achieved that Ukraine has become closer to NATO, not as a member, but as a beneficiary of everything, except for troops, that NATO can provide."

Condoleezza Rice believes that sanctions against Russia should have been imposed in both cases, but the global financial crisis that began in 2008 and

other economic problems did not make this possible.

According to her, "we could not have done anything more than that in the case of Georgia."

"I will tell you frankly, I believe we stopped Russia's ambition to take over Tbilisi. "Russia definitely wanted to overthrow Saakashvili," Rice said.

The former state secretary also commented on the imprisonment of the former president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili.

"Let me use this opportunity to appeal to Georgia on behalf of Saakashvili, who is sick and in prison. He is someone I hope we fully understand his historical role and his humanitarian situation now," Rice said.

Tea Akhvlediani meets with delegation of OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

By Liza Mchedlidze



The Minister of Reconciliation and Civil Equality, Tea Akhvlediani, held a meeting with the delegation of the Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian State Issues of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

According to the Office of the Georgian State Minister for Reconciliation and Civil Equality, the State Minister thanked the members of the delegation for their strong support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within the internationally recognized borders of the OSCE and emphasized the importance of the visit of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to Georgia, especially in the conditions when the international human rights Monitoring missions are not allowed to enter occupied regions.

According to the agency, Tea Akhvlediani introduced the guests to the priorities, achieved results, and future visions of both areas within the competence of the State Minister's Office - reconciliation and engagement, and civil equality and integration policy.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6789; Euro - 2.9039; GBP - 3.2766; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.9731; Swiss Franc - 2.8886

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“At the meeting, the severe legal and humanitarian situation in the occupied regions of Georgia was discussed in detail, including gross violations of the fun-

damental rights of the local population, ethnic discrimination, restrictions on free movement, illegal construction of barbed wire and other artificial barriers along the occupation line, illegal detention of Georgian citizens, as well as including

the prohibition of receiving education in the mother tongue.

Tea Akhvlediani introduced the 2021-2030 plan approved by the Georgian government to the members of the delegation. The priorities, goals, and objectives

of the state strategy for civil equality and integration, as well as the results achieved within the framework of the mentioned policy and future plans.

The parties agreed on further deepening of cooperation,” the information reads.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Tea Tsulukiani calls on Mikheil Saakashvili to ‘serve his sentence’, calls him ‘criminal’



The Minister of Culture, Tea Tsulukiani responded to the so-called Magnitsky list analogy that Mikheil Saakashvili’s lawyer has been working on and said that “they can create these lists and keep them in the drawer.”

“We were not afraid of the so-called list when they told us that they will catch you, arrest you, put you in prison, nobody would shake their hand when they told us, the members of the National Movement of Georgia and their criminal leader, who is now fully deservedly imprisoned in a two-chamber cell and still has audacity. Back then we were not afraid, because we knew that we were

fighting for the truth. Now they can compile these lists, then read them carefully and keep them in one of their drawers,” said Tsulukiani.

She called on the imprisoned ex-president, Mikheil Saakashvili to serve his

sentence.

“Now, if Mikheil Saakashvili is listening, I will tell you that you can not do anything bad. You are a criminal, you are sitting where you should be sitting and please serve the sentence that was sentenced to you by the independent, impartial and reformed court of Georgia,” Tsulukiani said.

MEP Jukneviėienė accuses Salome Zourabichvili of being on the ‘wrong side of history’

The President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, reacted to the Russian

missile attack on a nine-story building in Dnipro, Ukraine, on January 14, and condemned the violence against civilians.

“I strongly condemn the atrocious attack on a residential building in #Dnipro, Ukraine. An unacceptable show of vio-

Salome Zourabichvili’s condolence tweet about the incident in Dnipro on Twitter and wrote that Zourabichvili is ‘standing on the wrong side of history’.

Jukneviėienė responded with “And what? You are on the wrong side of his-



lence against peaceful civilians, breaching all norms of international law.

We stand with those who lost loved ones in Dnipro and across Ukraine,” President Salome Zourabichvili wrote on her Twitter page.

MEP Rasa Jukneviėienė responded to

tory!”.

Rasa Jukneviėienė wrote in the same tweet that the Vice Prime Minister of Georgia, Tea Tsulukiani, said that her country refuses to provide military aid to Ukraine because it does not want to become a party to the conflict.

Top EBRD officials to visit Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Vice President for Policy

Weather

Monday, January 16

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 7°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: -2°C

Tuesday, January 17

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 8°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: -1°C



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and Partnerships? Mark Bowman and Managing Director for Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Matteo Patrone will tour the Caucasus from 16 to 19 January, first visiting Armenia, then Georgia, before concluding their trip in Azerbaijan.

The purpose of the trip is to discuss upcoming projects in both the private but also public sectors. Discussions on financial resilience, policy reform and the preparation for the Bank’s upcoming new country strategies are also on the agenda.

The visit follows EBRD President Odile Renaud-Basso’s re-

cent tour of the Caucasus in September.

In all three countries, the delegation will meet the political leadership, diplomats, international development partners, leaders of the business community and the Bank’s existing partners.

While in Tbilisi, Mark Bowman is also expected to sign a sovereign loan agreement with the Ministry of Finance of Georgia for the rehabilitation and upgrade of up to 12 metro stations in the capital.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

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