

## EU Ambassador to Georgia calls on Georgian gov't to respect Mikheil Saakashvili's rights

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski met with the chairmen of the committee in the Parliament of Georgia regarding the process of implementation of the 12 recommendations of the European Commission.

Pawel Herczynski, in a conversation with journalists in the Parliament, said that the European Union's representatives in Georgia call on the Georgian government to respect the rights of all prisoners, including former president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili.

"We are closely monitoring the ongoing court proceedings. We hope that the proceedings will be concluded soon. We call on the Georgian government to respect the rights of all prisoners, including Mikheil Saakashvili. It is their responsibility. I will repeat once again that we are concerned about Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition and we hope that he will improve," Herczynski said.

As Herczynski noted, he and the representatives of the Georgian government have very open and honest conversations.

"We have very open, honest conversations and we listen to the opinions of the Georgian government, as well as different opinions in the Parliament of Georgia. We express our views and the sensitivities of our member countries on various issues. Most importantly, we agree more and more on all issues to avoid unpleasant surprises at the end of the year. I hope this is the direction we are heading. Our opinion is that it is the responsibility of the Georgian authorities to ensure that all the rights of all prisoners in Georgia are protected," said the EU ambassador.

According to him, at the end of this year, first the European Commission, and then the EU member states will discuss the progress achieved by Georgia and decide on the prospect of the country's future membership in the European Union.

"As the ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, I am ready to help you in this process. I hope that we will have a positive attitude, which in itself will affect the future steps of the country's accession to the European Union, including the granting of candidate status," Herczynski said.



## Court of Appeal acquits 6 convicts in July 5 case of group violence and reduces their sentences

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

On July 5, the Court of Appeal reduced the sentence of the first instance for those convicted of violence against TV Pirveli cameraman Lekso Lashkarava and journalist Miranda Baghaturia, as well as Public Broadcaster cameraman Iliia Tvaliashvili in the office of Tbilisi Pride and sentenced them to 4 years in prison instead of 5 years.

The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia does not agree with the decision of the Court of Appeal to reduce the sentence for the Putinist orcs and will appeal it to the Supreme Court.

Georgian Young Lawyers Association responded to Court's decision with a statement and said this is another example of

strengthening the syndrome of impunity for the violence perpetrated by hate groups on media representatives on July 5, 2021, which the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia have the primary role as the bodies authorized to conduct the investigation and file charges.

"Georgia's Prosecutor's Office disagrees with the verdict of the Court of Appeal, according to which on July 5, the convicts were partially acquitted of the facts of persecution and violence against the operator and journalist of TV Pirveli, as well as the operator of Channel One due to journalistic activities, participation in organized group violence and damage to health, and

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6738; Euro - 2.8949; GBP - 3.2660; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.9079; Swiss Franc - 2.8884

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will appeal this decision to the Supreme Court," the statement reads.

European Georgia's leader Giga Bokeria also responded to the court's decision and said that under Ivanishvili's regime, they are 'untouchable', because the Georgian Dream maintains its power based on them.

"One issue is the improper

punishment of the perpetrators, the soldiers who committed the crime. They were charged with the wrong article from the beginning, it should have been a more serious article. Now they have eased it even more and will probably ease it even more. The main issue is that the organizers and leaders of this Putinist part of Ivanishvili's regime are completely untouchable in public.

These are the same people who

publicly support Putin against Ukraine, also Georgia. These people are completely untouchable. Therefore, if anyone still has any illusions about the face of this regime, they should at least understand that Ivanishvili's face is Putinist propaganda, mood, and spirit because he relies on them to maintain his own power at the expense of the future of our country," said Bokeria.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

**Deputy Speaker of Sejm Ma<sup>3</sup>gorzata Gosiewska says she was threatened with being banned from entering Georgia**

said she was threatened with being banned from entering Georgia if she continues to talk about the situation of Georgia and Mikheil Saakashvili, allegedly in an official conversation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia.

As she specified, the ambassador was told that Gosiewska's "statements harm the relations

between Georgia and Poland." "I want to say that I am not afraid of the threats directed at me. If I continue to talk about the life of the president and the situation in Georgia, they threaten me that I will no longer have the opportunity to enter Georgia. Such threats were heard by our ambassador, who was directly informed about this. I, for example, don't have the opportunity to enter Russia and Belarus due to my work, and if Georgia is added to these countries, everything will be clear here..."

Such a threat was made in a formal conversation held with the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Maszkiewicz. This threat was heard in the official conversation. I hope it will not come to that. I want Georgia to return to a normal circle and to be able to visit political prisoners. For years, I visited the former prime minister, Mr. Vano Merabishvili, in prison. I had the opportunity then, now I don't have the opportunity, and several times I was refused to see Saakashvili, and I was also refused to visit Gvaramia..." Gosiewska said.

**Key to abolishing polarization is weakening of radical opposition, Irakli Kobakhidze says**

ened, if this process continues (and I think it will definitely continue), in this case, the country can finally get rid of the closed circle that we call polarization. Decreasing the degree of radi-



Irakli Kobakhidze, chairman of the Georgian Dream, told Imedi TV reporter that the key to Georgia abolishing polarization is "the weakening of the radical opposition." "Today, in fact, the radical opposition is essentially weak-

calism is important, and the main key to this lies in weakening the radical part of the opposition, which should be supported by everyone who is interested in the development of our country," Kobakhidze said.



Deputy Speaker of the Polish Sejm, Ma<sup>3</sup>gorzata Gosiewska

between Georgia and Poland." "I want to say that I am not

# Lithuanian foreign minister: The only way to end the war is by sending more weapons to Ukraine

FROM CNN'S ZEENA SAIFI IN LONDON

Lithuania's minister of foreign affairs, Gabrielius Landsbergis, speaks during an interview with CNN on Monday.

Lithuania's minister of foreign affairs said the only way to end the war in Ukraine is for Western allies to send weapons, particularly tanks, to counter Russian attacks.

"The discussion in the West



Lithuania's minister of foreign affairs, Gabrielius Landsbergis, speaks during an interview with CNN on Monday. (CNN)

is still about the end of the war, and there are those who believe that maybe a frozen conflict would be suited better, which I completely disagree with that notion," Gabrielius Landsbergis told CNN's Becky Anderson in an interview on Monday. "This thinking I think is the main obstacle for some countries to send the weapons that Ukrainians need."

As Russian attacks increase on civilian areas of Ukraine, Western allies have stepped up their support for Ukrainian forces with more advanced weaponry. Germany,

however, has received some heightened criticism over its reticence to send Leopard 2 battle tanks.

Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki called on the German government to supply "all sorts of weapons" to Ukraine on Monday.

Asked whether the Germans should be doing more, Landsbergis agreed. And he also noted that many countries had procured German-made tanks.

"They are willing to send the tanks to Ukraine. So far, they have not got a greenlight from Berlin, and I truly truly hope that this might change – and that will reduce the pressure on Germany itself," he added.

## Weather

Tuesday, January 17

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 8°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: -1°C

Wednesday, January 18

Day ☁️ Partly Cloudy  
High: 9°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: -1°C

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