

Restoration of direct flights between Russia and Georgia is 'welcome', says Irakli Kobakhidze

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Chairman of Georgian Dream Irakli Kobakhidze, at the broadcast of Imedi LIVE said that restoration of direct air traffic with Russia will be welcome because of millions of Georgians living in Russia for whom direct flights to Russia are important.

"Do you remember that in 2019, Russia unilaterally decided to stop flights, it was a kind of sanction that came into force against Georgia, and it hurt the citizens of Georgia, up to a million people live in the Russian Federation, our fellow citizens, ethnically Georgians, as well as ethnically Azerbaijanis and Armenians, our fellow citizens and of course, the decision made in 2019 made the conditions and situation very difficult for them. If flights are restored, of course, it is important for our fellow citizens and it will be welcome," said Kobakhidze.

Irakli Kobakhidze was also asked about the CNN journalist's question to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen who, when asked about circumventing the sanctions imposed against Russia, cited Georgia as an example.



Kobakhidze called it a 'lie' and said that this indicates the existence of a serious force that has "an interest in creating problems for Georgia".

According to Kobakhidze, their goal is to create artificial problems and a 'second front'.

"There are people, not people, but serious forces, what we call

the Global War Party, we don't reveal the cards to the end, we know exactly what is meant behind it and we don't say. We know the Global War Party, which has an interest in involving Georgia in the war, and they are trying to do this in various ways and methods. One recent case was yesterday, involving

Ursula von der Leyen, where a CNN journalist, based on a fake article, asked Ursula von der Leyen based on the supposed fact that Georgia is one of the main contributors to the fact that Sanctioned products are flowing into Russia. This is CNN, not TV Pirveli or the Mtavari channel, the pocket televisions of the

Nationalist Movement. When lies of such a scale are heard on CNN, it indicates that there is some serious power that has an interest in artificially creating problems for Georgia. The goal of artificially creating problems can be the only one - escalation, and its final result should be the second front," said Kobakhidze.

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili speaks about Anaklia port at Davos Economic Forum

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE



Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili at the panel discussion held within the Davos Economic Forum, talked about the Ukraine war's 'catastrophic' impact on the whole region, including Georgia, and said that countries should 'diversificate' Economies.

He noted that Georgia, together with its partners, attaches great importance to the development of both road infrastructure and ports.

"Before the war, countries paid attention to the Middle Corridor, but after the war, the attention intensified and increased. Therefore, as President Ilham Aliyev said, I will repeat, we have excellent relations with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkey, we have a strategic partnership. Combining our chemical substances is very good. We are currently investing heavily in infrastructure. I would like to mention that our highways, which are under construction,

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6695; Euro - 2.8983; GBP - 3.2952; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.8780; Swiss Franc - 2.9248

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili speaks about Anaklia port at Davos Economic Forum

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should be completed by the end of 2024. 2.3 billion dollars were invested in the construction of this road infrastructure. This will help the direction of transportation," said Gharibashvili.

He also spoke about the development of the port infrastructure and mentioned the deep-water port of Anaklia.

"I would like to mention one specific deep-water port of

Anaklia. We decided that the government of Georgia will start the construction of this port, 51% of this consortium will be owned by the government of Georgia, and 49% will be announced at the international tender. We are talking to many potential investors in this direction. We will tell you why we are doing this and why we want to build this port. President Aliyev said that the potential in the ports is increasing. Georgia can carry 550 tons,

more than 200 in Batumi, this is not enough. I want to implement this project in order to increase the possibilities," Gharibashvili said.

He also noted that together with Azerbaijan, Georgia is implementing various initiatives, including the Black Sea submarine electric cable.

"I would also like to mention that together with Azerbaijan, we are implementing various initiatives, including the Black Sea

submarine electric cable. This is also an interesting initiative, we are doing it together with Azerbaijan, Romania, and Hungary. This initiative is supported by the European Union. In September, we signed a memorandum of understanding in Bucharest, all four countries will implement this project and invest in this ambitious project. This is a very interesting initiative. Therefore, we should be prepared that the turnover of goods in this

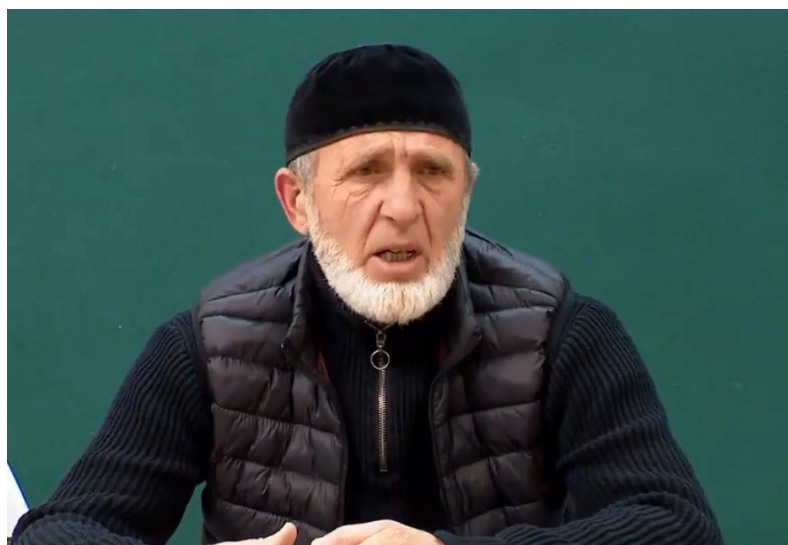
corridor will increase. This route is the shortest between Europe and manufacturers. For example, a train coming from China, passing through Georgia, will arrive in Georgia in 15 to 10 days. Therefore, this is an interesting and important corridor," said Gharibashvili.

According to the Prime Minister, he is optimistic about this project and believes that all countries will benefit from this corridor.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Strasbourg orders Georgian government to pay Euro 10,000 to Machalikashvili family



The European Court of Human Rights has court ordered the Georgian government to pay the applicants 10,000 euros as compensation for moral damages and 15,000 euros for expenses in the case of Temirlan

Machalikashvili. The Court found that the authorities had failed to fulfill the requirements of an effective and thorough investigation for the purposes of Article 2 of the Convention. However, they considered that there was not enough

evidence to conclude that Temirlan Machalikashvili died under the state's responsibility.

In addition, the Court did not accept the applicants' complaint regarding Article 3 of the Convention (prohibition of inhuman

or degrading treatment) due to lack of justification.

The Center for Social Justice defended the interests of the Machalikashvili family in the European Court of Human Rights.

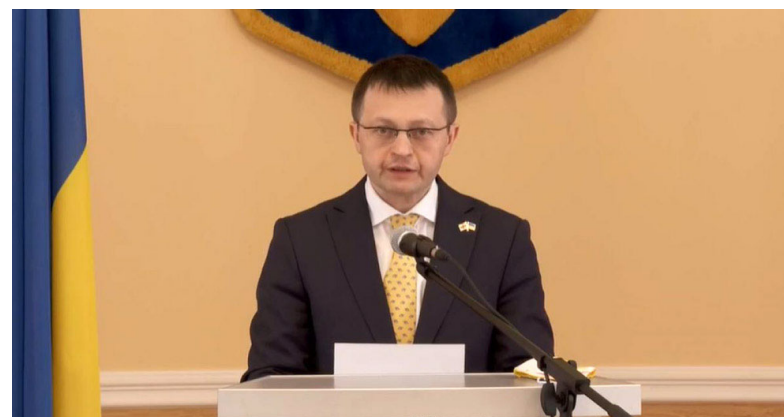
"This decision basically gives us all the opportunities we expected. First of all This is an opportunity to re-open and investigate the case at the national level," explained Tamta Mikeladze, lawyer of the Center for Social Justice.

Chargé d'Affaires of Ukraine to Georgia calls ruling party's statements on Buk missile defense systems 'incomprehensible'

The Chargé d'Affaires of Ukraine to Georgia Andrey Kasyanov, called the statements of Georgian Dream leaders that Ukraine asked Georgia to hand over Buk missile defense systems for free 'incomprehensible'.

According to Kasyanov, Ukraine wants to transfer or purchase weapons and military equipment.

Kasyanov notes that Ukraine sent 30 official requests to the Ministry of Defense of Georgia in this regard, but the requests



remained unanswered.

"Weapons have been vital since the beginning of a large-scale invasion of the Russian Federation. We do not understand the statements of Georgian politicians, in particular, the recent statements of the Vice Speaker of the Parliament, as well as the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, that Ukraine requested the transfer of Buk air defense systems for free. I would like to say, in this regard, and emphasize that Ukraine has already sent 30 official requests to

the address of the Ministry of Defense in Georgia. The last one sent by the Ukrainian Embassy was on January 12, and the re-

quests remained unanswered. We have noted that arms and military equipment may be transferred or purchased.

Ukraine confirms its readiness to purchase them from Georgia on mutually beneficial terms. I would like to emphasize once again that Ukraine opposes the use of this issue in the domestic political agenda of Georgia and officially denies any accusations regarding the attempt to drag Georgia into a war with the Russian Federation," Kasyanov said.

EBRD launches IT Hubs in Azerbaijan and Georgia

Weather

Friday, January 20

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 8°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 0°C

Saturday, January 21

Day ☁️ Partly Cloudy
High: 4°C

Night ☁️ Cloudy
Low: 1°C

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has launched IT Hubs in Azerbaijan and Georgia that will support the training of 280 students for their future employment with international ICT companies.

The programme will boost re-



gional development, support youth, and in the case of Georgia, internally displaced persons and refugees from Ukraine.

For Azerbaijan, this is the first project to be funded through a bilateral donor agreement between the Bank and the Government of Azerbaijan.

The EBRD is implementing this project in partnership with Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency and the Centre for Coordination and Analysis of the Fourth Industrial Revolution Azerbaijan.

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