

PM Garibashvili Says Gov't Ready for 'Constructive Dialogue' with Opposition

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili within the framework of Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer's visit to Tbilisi held a press conference together with Nehammer after the meeting between the two parties

The Prime Minister said in his speech that most of the recommendations of the European Union have already been implemented, several recommendations have been sent to the Venice Commission, and the implementation of the first recommendation, which concerns the end of polarization, is impossible without cooperation with the opposition.

"We have understood this well, it is our responsibility. Our entire team, the authorities, are working with this responsibility and spirit on the recommendations that were presented to us and conveyed to Georgia. From the very first days, we started working actively on this topic. The Parliament of Georgia has done a lot of work in this direction together with the government. Most of the recommendations have already been implemented, with a few remaining that have been sent to the Venice Commission. The involvement of the opposition is also necessary here, because the first recommendation, which is about ending polarization, cannot be achieved without cooperation with the opposition," Garibashvili stated.

According to the Prime Minister, the government is always ready for a constructive dialogue



with the opposition. Garibashvili added that the Georgian government understands very well that there are certain criteria and requirements that must be met

"We have always been and are ready to open the door and have a permanent dialogue with the opposition. This dialogue should be in a constructive format," he said.

Gharibashvili also noted that in the last 10 years, the government has achieved all possible progress on the path of European integration, for example, the signing of the association agreement, the free trade agreement with Europe, visa-free travel and the historic decision on the country's European perspective.

"I would like to thank Austria, our friendly state and Mr. Chancellor personally for this. We greatly appreciate Austria's support for our country's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and now for our country's European aspirations," he said.

Relations between Austria and Georgia are at the highest

political level. Today's visit is a confirmation of that. Once again, we would like to thank our esteemed guest. We also discussed how to deepen relations in other areas such as trade, economy, tourism and investment. "Georgia is a very interesting place for making investments," Garibashvili stated.



Chancellor of Austria Expresses Support for Georgia in European Integration Process

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Chancellor of Austria Karl Nehammer spoke about Georgia's European integration at a press conference held with Irakli Gharibashvili within the framework of his visit to Tbilisi.

According to Nehammer, the implementation of the recommendations issued by the European Union is not easy, but it is worth increasing efforts.

"We talked a lot about what needs to be done to be successful

in this direction. Mr. Prime Minister talked about what was done to fulfill the recommendations issued by the European Commission, and it is clear to us that it is not always easy to do this, but it is really worth moving in this direction.

It is worth strengthening efforts, making more investments in this direction, in the literal sense of the word, because this process will bring a lot of

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6410; Euro - 2.8813; GBP - 3.2788; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.7888; Swiss Franc - 2.8753

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changes from the internal political point of view, including for the citizens of Georgia.

Politically, for people who have political responsibilities, this is always a very big challenge. I offered Mr. Prime Minister support from our side in all

directions, in whatever direction it is needed," said Nehammer.

Also, according to the Chancellor, the starting conditions for all candidate countries of the European Union should be the same. Nehammer also promised Austria's support for Georgia in the European integration process.

"This process makes it clear

that there should be the same starting conditions for all candidate countries. There shouldn't be any short-cut way to achieve the goal.

Recently, there has been a discussion on this topic within the European Union, what successes were there in the case of the three candidate countries, and when we talk about Austria's support, in this case, I once again emphasize Austria's readiness, including know-how, to support you. We were in a similar situation when we had the status of EU membership and we know what needs to be done in this direction," said Karl Nehammer.

Karl Nehammer also spoke about the Ukraine war, Georgia's 'special' geopolitical situation, and Russian aggression.

According to him, the Rus-

sian military is stationed on the territories of Georgia and this automatically brings the reality that the policy implemented by Georgia should be expressed in a different reality.

"Of course, we talked about the topic that worries and scares us all for almost a year now, we are talking about the war in Ukraine. People are in dire straits, the war is getting more and more severe and the suffering of people is increasing. Georgia is really in a special situation, the Prime Minister also drew attention to this. The ambassador of Georgia in Austria always points to the special geopolitical situation of Georgia.

Part of Georgia's territory is occupied, and the Russian military is stationed on the territory of your country, and this auto-

matically, by itself, brings the reality that the policy implemented by Georgia must be expressed in a different reality. That is why I can say that I am glad that Georgia supported all the financial sanctions imposed by the European Union, it is really not easy, because the pressure on Georgia is very high.

A very large flow of Georgian refugees came from the Russian Federation and for the Georgian government along with everything, this is also a very big challenge, especially in such a difficult period. However, at the same time, I would like to give you a guarantee from my side and say that Georgia is going in the right direction and I promise to help you on the path of Georgia's European integration," said the Chancellor.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

President Salome Zourabichvili Meets Chancellor of Austria in Orbeliani Palace



The President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili met with the Chancellor of Austria Karl Nehammer in Orbeliani Palace and discussed Georgia-EU relations, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the current situation in the region.

According to the information released by the press service, the President noted that giving Georgia a European perspective on the path of European integration is a historic decision supported by the majority of the Georgian population.

The Chancellor of Austria

emphatically confirmed Austria's firm support for Georgia's territorial integrity and European integration process.

"During the meeting, it was mentioned that Georgia should continue implementing institu-

tional reforms. At the same time, the European Union should make a strategic decision

regarding Georgia and show the Russian Federation that Georgia has the support of the European Union.

The conversation touched on the occupation, which remains one of the main challenges of Georgia, and it was noted that the country will not deviate from its declared policy, which implies the restoration of territorial integrity only in a peaceful way. In addition, the conversation touched on the war waged by Russia in Ukraine and noted that it is a great challenge for the security of Europe.

The importance of strengthening the economic cooperation between Georgia and the Republic of Austria was also emphasized.

At the end of the meeting, the Federal Chancellor of Austria once again expressed the full readiness of Austria to support Georgia in the process of European integration," the information reads.

Levan Khabeishvili Wins UNM Party Chair Elections, Devotes Win to Saakashvili

Levan Khabeishvili made his first statement after winning the elections for the chairmanship of the United National Movement.

He thanked the voters and said that he is starting to fight against the Russian regime from today, to release Mikheil Saakashvili and Nika Gvaramia.

"Democracy is not a word for us. The United National Movement is the only party in Georgia that proves its commitment to Western values, this election is a direct manifestation of that.

We are not going to celebrate, of course. Today begins the process that will lead our country to peace, just as Misha and his comrades did in 2003.

We are going to work and we will never get tired of this work. From today we begin a difficult but continuous struggle to defeat



the Russian oligarchic regime. From today, the NMM will be open to all new people, old and new comrades of ours, who can lay even one brick in this struggle.

This victory belongs to Mikheil Saakashvili, who is now fighting for his life, and his fight is also related to the freedom of our country. Obviously, the first decisions will be related to the fight for President Saakashvili's freedom. "Misha, I want to promise you that we will not stop until your life and health are secured for the freedom of our country," Khabeishvili said.

Tbilisi premieres documentary winner of EUMM Special Prize for Peace Journalism 2021

The premiere of the documentary film 'My links to Abkhazia', directed by Zviad Mchedlishvili and winner of the EUMM Special Prize for Peace Journalism 2021, took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 26 January.

The production of the documentary was sponsored through the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM).

"I am particularly happy that



this documentary focuses on young people who are our best hope for successful reconciliation

among the divided communities. As you may know, the goal of EUMM is to contribute to sta-

bility, dialogue and peace in Georgia. That is why we support journalists who share the same values and who work towards the same goal," Tibor Kozma, the Acting Head of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM), said at the premiere.

The EUMM Special Prize for Peace Journalism is one of the eight categories of the EU Prize for Journalism, organised by the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia. Since 2013, EUMM has been awarding this Prize to honour independent, conflict-sensitive journalism which contributes to confidence building and lasting peace in Georgia.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Tuesday, January 31

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 6°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 0°C

Wednesday, February 1

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 10°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 2°C

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