

## Georgia's Removal from Belgium's Safe Countries List May Be Due to Technical Error, Says Georgian Ambassador

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgian Ambassador to Belgium Vakhtang Makharoblishvili, has suggested that Belgium's decision to remove Georgia from the list of safe countries may be attributed to a technical error.

Despite Georgia being recognized as a safe country by the majority of European Union member states, Makharoblishvili highlighted the varying approaches among EU countries. He revealed positive consultations with Belgium's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who recommended Georgia's continued inclusion on the safe countries list. Makharoblishvili indicated that such decisions are sometimes influenced by technical or statistical data.

Ongoing communication between Georgian authorities and Belgian ministries, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is underway to clarify the specific reasons behind the decision. However, Makharoblishvili assured that the visa-free regime is not in jeopardy, as there has been no communication from the European Union indicating any concerns in this regard.

"Out of the 20 member states



of the European Union, Georgia is recognized as a safe country. I would also like to point out that not all EU countries have a similar approach and principle in general. We had active consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, and I can openly say that the Ministry had a positive attitude and recommended that Georgia remain on the list of safe countries. Consequently, decisions of this type are sometimes made based on certain types of technical or statistical data.

We had active consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and we also had communication with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Internal communication between Belgian agencies is also ongoing, and probably in the near future, they will clarify the specific, possibly technical and statistical reasons.

Decisions of this type are made once a year; however, I cannot rule out that, based on various circumstances, a review will take place, and some decisions will be made more quickly. As for the visa-free regime, I can tell you that it is not in danger. There has been no communication from the European Union regarding this," said Makharoblishvili.

## David Arakhamia Official Urges Investigation into Alleged Premeditated Murder of Saakashvili and Calls for His Pardon

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

David Arakhamia, the chairman of the "Servant of the People" faction in the Ukrainian Rada, expressed concerns about Mikheil Saakashvili's safety and called for an investigation into the possibility of premeditated murder.

"I appeal to the General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine to initiate an investigation into the case of premeditated murder. If anything happens to Saakashvili, it will be considered murder," stated Arakhamia during a forum in support of the former Georgian president.

Arakhamia emphasized the importance of the Verkhovna Rada's resolution being adopted by multiple European parliaments to exert pressure on Georgian authorities for necessary actions.

"We have already adopted a resolution in the Verkhovna Rada, and now we need to work tirelessly to ensure as many European parliaments as pos-

sible adopt a similar resolution. If ten European countries pass such resolutions, the Georgian authorities will have no other option. A country aspiring to join the EU cannot disregard the decisions of EU member state parliaments. I believe this strategy will be effective. My hope is to see a fully recovered Mikheil Saakashvili on this stage," said David Arakhamia.

Arakhamia emphasized the vitality for Mikheil Saakashvili to be pardoned by the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, following the recent pardon of Nika Gvaramia. He stated that the President of Georgia is actively seeking to influence society and the international arena, demonstrating aspirations to play a role in international politics.

"The President of Georgia is seeking to exert influence over society and the international arena, displaying a clear aspiration to become a participant in



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.5702; Euro - 2.8935; GBP - 3.3721; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.8360; Swiss Franc - 2.9963

# David Arakhamia Official Urges Investigation into Alleged Premeditated Murder of Saakashvili and Calls for His Pardon

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global politics. She has expressed a desire to be recognized as a significant player in the West. The recent pardon of Nika Gvaramia brought us extremely positive

news. Now, we must move on to the next stage: the pardon of Mikheil Saakashvili. In Georgia, there are concerns that Saakashvili's release would enable him to become an influential figure in Georgian politics,

particularly with the upcoming parliamentary elections in the autumn. It is believed that his release could result in him becoming a leader before the elections. However, during informal discussions, we have repeatedly

emphasized that the current conversation is not centered around politics. Instead, it is about the urgent mission of saving a human life. Saakashvili is a citizen of Ukraine, and he is currently suffering in prison. If any

harm befalls him, the blame would lie entirely on the Georgian authorities. They are well aware of this fact, which is why they granted European doctors permission to examine Saakashvili," Arakhamia stated.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### German Ambassador Reaffirms NATO's Support for Georgia's Path to Membership



German Ambassador to Georgia, Peter Fischer, affirmed that NATO is a dependable partner for Georgia in advancing through the process that will ultimately lead to Georgia's membership.

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Fischer highlighted that strong statements in support of Georgia were made during the Vilnius summit. He mentioned, "At the Vilnius summit, a very robust statement supporting Georgia was made, emphasizing that Georgia can rely on NATO to move forward in the process that will lead to its NATO membership."

Regarding the implementation of the 12 priorities of the European Union, Fischer explained that some priorities have already been accomplished, while others require further progress. He expressed support for Georgia's aspiration to join the European Union and affirmed that Germany will work alongside Georgia to advance on this path. "We support Georgia's ambition in relation to EU membership, and together with Georgia, we will make progress on this journey," Fischer stated.

### Mikheil Saakashvili Reveals West Ignored Warnings about Putin's Aggressive Ambitions

Former Georgian President, Mikheil Saakashvili, has written a letter to The Times from his hospital, highlighting that Vladimir Putin announced his in-

tention to take over Ukraine nearly two decades ago. According to Saakashvili, the West ignored warnings about Putin's aggressive territorial ambitions.

Saakashvili revealed that during their 2004 meeting at the Kremlin, Putin did not conceal his plans to seize territory and openly shared his intentions. According to the former president, after the meeting, he traveled to Berlin to express his

concerns about Putin to German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who displayed indifference and reprimanded Saakashvili to Putin.

Despite issuing warnings about Putin's actions even after the 2008 war, Saakashvili claims that he was consistently dismissed by the West, being labeled as an unstable and embittered lunatic.

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Mikheil Saakashvili says the signs of a future war in Ukraine were there 20 years ago

Marc Bennetts

Monday July 17 2023, 7:00pm, The Times



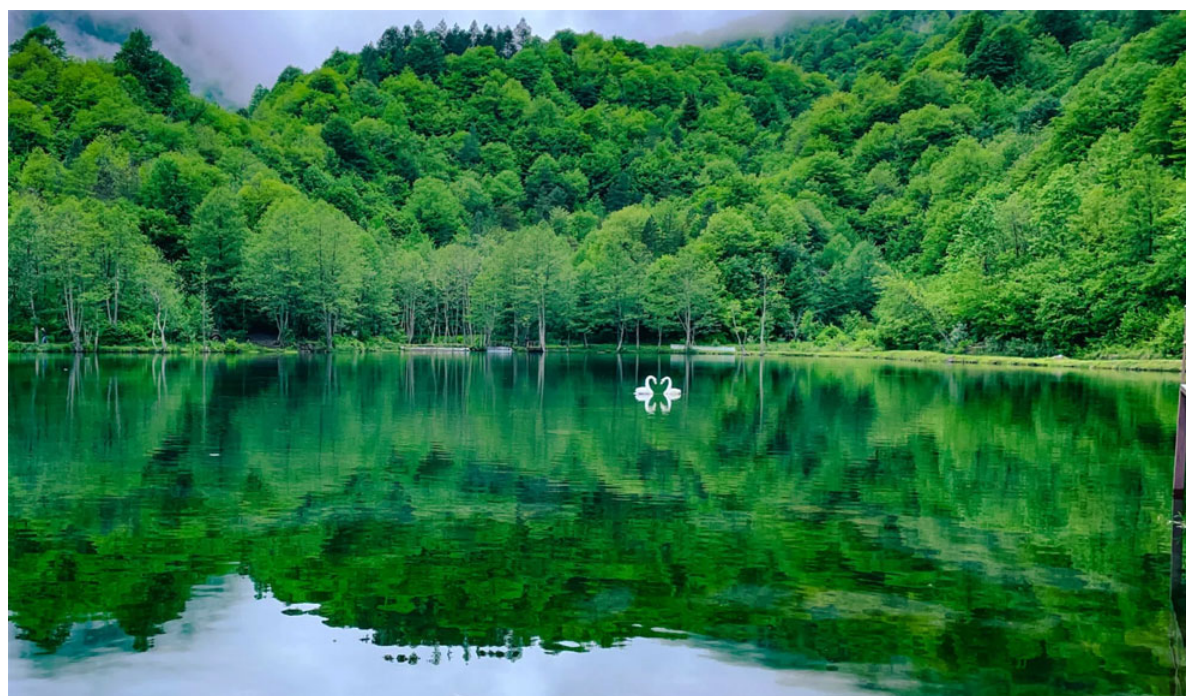
Concerns have been raised over Mikheil Saakashvili's health since his detention, with his appearance substantially altered  
REUTERS: SERGEI SUPINSKY/AFP

President Putin outlined his intention to seize Ukraine almost two decades ago but warnings about his aggressive territorial ambitions were disregarded by the West, the imprisoned former president of Georgia has claimed in a letter to The

## EU commends Georgia for adopting long-term low-emission development plan

Last week, Georgia presented its first-ever Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (Lt-LEDS) 2050, prepared with the support of the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme.

The Lt-LEDS sets the stage for Georgia's carbon-neutral future and will be instrumental in updating the national Climate Action Plan 2023-2025, outlining a roadmap towards sustainable, low-emission growth in specific sectors, including energy, building, transport, industry, agricul-



ture, waste, land use, and forestry.

The Lt-LEDS adheres to the main principles of the Paris Agreement and aligns with Georgia's needs.

Working closely with the government, civil society, and international partners, the EU and UNDP, through their regional EU4Climate programme, provided technical assistance, consultancy, and expert support in developing Georgia's first-ever Lt-LEDS in line with the best practices of EU Member States.

"The European Union commends Georgia on the adoption of its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy. We are proud to have supported Georgia in shaping its vision for carbon neutrality and smart technology development and look forward to continued collaboration in its implementation," said Pawel Herczynski, Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

### Weather

Wednesday, July 19

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 31°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: 18°C

Thursday, July 20

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 33°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: 22°C

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# Germany supports Ukrainian refugees in Georgia through the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB)

On July 18, a press conference was held at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Georgia on the project "Emergency humanitarian aid for the conflict-affected people of Ukraine", which is funded by the Federal Foreign Office.

The Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) has received a grant of about 5 million euro from the Federal Foreign Office for the project implemented in Georgia. This

is to provide cash assistance to approximately 7,200 individuals, winterization cash assistance to 3,000 households and psychosocial support to 2,000 people for a period of 1 ½ years.

In addition to financial support, Hresnics, i.e. traditional Ukrainian family helpers, will provide psychosocial support to beneficiaries and receive remuneration for their work.

The goal of the project is to improve the well-being of conflict-affected people from Ukraine in Georgia and meet their needs. The project is implemented by ASB Georgia, (The Project was presented by Programme Director Nia Gogvadze) together with its implementing partners Unite Together (Founder Dmitro Korin) and Samaritan Association of Georgia (Director Mikheil Mindadze).

Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany H.E. Peter Fischer, UNHCR Representative Kemlin Furley, Country Director of ASB Georgia Clemens von Heimendahl, Director of the Agency for Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihoods Zurab Utiashvili, representatives of partner organizations and Ukrainian beneficiaries of the project were participated in the press conference.





