

## Georgian Government Rejects President Salome Zourabichvili's Official Visit to Ukraine and 9 Other Countries

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Based on the information from the government administration, President Salome Zourabichvili has been denied official or working visits to 10 different countries recently, including Ukraine. The government has now issued a statement in response to Zourabichvili's planned trip to Germany. The statement clarifies that the president was formally notified of the denial of this visit by the government in a written communication on August 3.

As per the government's explanation, the constitution stipulates that the president's involvement in foreign relations requires approval from the government, as outlined in the relevant constitutional article. Furthermore, according to Article 54 of the constitution, the responsibility for implementing the nation's foreign policy lies within the jurisdiction of the Georgian government.

"We wish to address the information that has been circulated by the presidential administration in relation to the planned visit of the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, to the Federal Republic of Ger-

many. On July 12, 2023, the President's administration submitted a proposal concerning the aforementioned visit to the Government of Georgia. However, the proposal was officially declined in writing on August 3,

2023, in accordance with the relevant article of the Constitution of Georgia.

Furthermore, formal written refusals were extended to the President for work visits to several destinations: August 22-24

for Ukraine, September 16 for the Swiss Confederation, October 2-3 for the Republic of Poland, October 4-6 for the Kingdom of Belgium, October 31 to November 2 for the Kingdom of Denmark, and December 1-2 for

the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, official visits to the Republic of Bulgaria (September 27-29), the Czech Republic (December 10-12), and the State of Israel (December 18-20) were also denied in written form.

It is important to remind President Salome Zourabichvili that, as stipulated in Article 52, Clause 1, Sub-Clause 'a' of the Constitution of Georgia, her authority to engage in representative activities related to foreign relations is contingent upon the approval of the Government of Georgia. This limitation is aligned with the provisions of Article 54, Clause 1 of the Constitution, which designate the execution of the country's foreign policy as the prerogative of the Government of Georgia," reads the statement issued by the administration.

On August 30, the President's administration announced that Salome Zourabichvili would commence meetings with European leaders to advocate for the granting of EU candidate status to Georgia. As per the administration's information, the inaugural meeting is scheduled for August 31 in Berlin, and it will involve the President of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier.



## Georgia and Moldova Added to German Government's List of Safe Countries

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The German government has designated Georgia and Moldova as safe countries, a provision outlined in the bill presented by Germany's Minister of Internal Affairs, Nancy Faeser. The bill has received approval from the Cabinet of Ministers.

Being included in the list of safe countries signifies that the asylum requests submitted by nationals of these countries will undergo expedited processing. Additionally, if such applications are declined, the deportation procedure will be fast-tracked.

According to statistics from the German Ministry of Internal Affairs, during the entirety of 2022 and the first half of 2023, 99.9% of asylum applications from Georgian and Moldovan citizens faced rejection. In the previous year, a total of 8,865 individuals from Georgia and 5,218 individuals from Moldova sought asylum in Germany.

"The European Union is the common aspiration for both countries. Political persecution is not a prevalent issue in either



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6292; Euro - 2.8621; GBP - 3.3257; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7387; Swiss Franc - 2.9891

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nation. Additionally, approximately one out of every ten asylum seekers in Germany comes from one of these countries. Designating them as safe countries will facilitate a swift and efficient reduction in illegal migration," the minister stated during an in-

terview with German media. According to Faeser, Germany intends to establish a migration agreement with

Moldova and Georgia. As explained by the minister, both Moldova and Georgia will commit to repatriating citizens who

lack the legal right to remain in Germany. "This approach not only provides opportunities for individuals

seeking education and work in Germany but also allows us to attract the qualified workforce we require," remarked Nancy Faeser.

# Georgia and Moldova Added to German Government's List of Safe Countries

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili Meets with UK Parliamentary Delegation



The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili, held a meeting with a parliamentary delegation from the United Kingdom, led by Jonathan Djanogly, who chairs the inter-party parliamentary group focused on Georgian matters in the House of Commons.

The discussions, which took place at the government administration, centered around the existing strategic partnership between Georgia and the United Kingdom, as well as the potential avenues for future collaboration.

Prime Minister Gharibashvili emphasized the productive nature of Georgia's bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the United Kingdom. Recent high-level visits underscored the

robust political dialogue maintained between the two nations.

The Prime Minister highlighted the visit of the parliamentary delegation as yet another clear testament to the established strategic partnership between Georgia and the United

Kingdom.

The talks encompassed various topics, including the nation's current economic landscape. The head of the Georgian government, Jonathan Djanogly, shared positive indications of economic growth. During the meeting, both parties deliberated on the necessity of enhancing trade and economic ties between

Georgia and the United Kingdom.

The conversation also delved into matters of regional and global security challenges. Given the prevailing challenges, Prime Minister Gharibashvili emphasized the paramount significance of close security collaboration between Georgia and the United Kingdom.

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili extended gratitude to Jonathan Djanogly for his steadfast and unwavering support in upholding Georgia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-recognition policy.

### EU Ambassador Pawel Herczynski Discusses EU Expansion and Georgia's Candidacy Status

The European Union Ambassador to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski, is hopeful that Georgia will attain European Union membership by 2030. In a conversation with Georgia's First Channel regarding the possibility of Georgia's EU membership by 2030, Herczynski affirmed that he and his team are working tirelessly towards this goal.

"I sincerely hope it will come to fruition. This is why I am here, and our team is tirelessly

collaborating to assist the government in implementing reforms. We are also considering future administrations. As the European Union, we are committed to providing assistance, facilitating, and supporting as much as possible, even though much relies on the efforts of the Georgian people. Collective effort is essential. The nation needs to be prepared, compliant, to fully enjoy the advantages of eventual membership. Concurrently, 27 member states must be ready to embrace new entrants, which is quite intricate. We are discussing multiple states from the 'Eastern Partnership,' specifi-



cally Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, along with our partners from the Western Balkans, who embarked on this journey much earlier, some 20 years ago. Hence, a substantial expansion is being contemplated, posing a challenge for the EU itself. This underscores the significance of Charles Michel's speech. It initiates a discourse not only about the readiness of aspiring nations but also about the readiness of existing members for enlargement. Remarkably, we now have a proposed date - 2030, seven years hence. I genuinely hope this vision becomes reality and I remain optimistic for Georgia," Herczynski stated.

## New platform highlighting youth opportunities launched in Georgia

Georgia has launched the first government website dedicated to opportunities for young people.

The Youth Platform („სახელმწიფოებრივი პლატფორმა“) website was prepared with the support of an EU-funded project.

The page divides the informa-



tion into the following topics: youth activities, education, volunteering, etc.

The website also provides separate information on organisations that work in the youth sector and with educational institutions.

All projects offering opportunities for young people can also be found on an interactive map. (euneighbourseast.eu)

### Weather

Thursday, August 31

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 31°C

Night Clear

Low: 20°C

Friday, September 1

Day Clear

High: 32°C

Night Clear

Low: 21°C

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