

Government Leaders Pay Tribute on the 30th Anniversary of the Fall of Sokhumi



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

On the day marking the 30th anniversary of the fall of Sokhumi, Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili, Tbilisi's mayor Kakha Kaladze, and State Minister for Reconciliation and Civil Equality Thea Akhvediani, along with other government officials, paid their respects to those

who lost their lives in the fight for Georgia's unity and laid a wreath at the heroes' memorial to honor the fallen.

"This war has left a devastating mark in our country - ethnic cleansing has turned hundreds of thousands into refugees in their own homeland and, most regrettably, many of our compatriots have tragically

fallen victim to it... The de-occupation of the Russia-occupied regions and the country's unification remain the main challenge facing our state and society," Prime Minister stated.

"The day of the fall of Sokhumi embodies the immeasurable pain experienced by the entire nation of Georgia, recalling the tragic history of hundreds of thousands

of people affected by the Russian-inspired armed actions of the 1990s. Today, we remember our compatriots, including heroes, military personnel, and civilians who lost their lives in Abkhazia. We pay tribute to the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom and the unity of our country.

I believe it is crucial to ac-

knowledge that, alongside the brutality of war, we also remember instances of dignified cooperation, human empathy, support, and the enduring friendship between Abkhazians and Georgians. Their history of peaceful coexistence, built on mutual respect over many years, forms the foundation upon which we can establish long-term peace and reconciliation. We are confident that, in this spirit, we can unite our people, foster prosperity, and create a better future for them within a strong, developed, and European state," stated Akhvediani.

Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze emphasized at the municipal meeting that peace and development are the only viable paths to reunify Georgia. He also stressed that there is no alternative to pursuing peace and the potential for coexistence with the Abkhazians.

"One of the most difficult and tragic dates in recent history is the day of the fall of Sokhumi. This date is undeniably painful for each of us, every Georgian. It marks the beginning of interrupted lives for our civilians, heroic fighters, the displaced population, and the division of Georgia. I would like to pay tribute to the memory of those who sacrificed for our territorial integrity, and I want to emphasize that there is no alternative to peace and development. Only through these means can our homeland be reunified, and together, we can build a brighter future. I am confident that we will find our way back to one another and live together," stated Kaladze.

Prime Minister Gharibashvili Delivers Speech Emphasizing EU Support for Peace in Georgia

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

During his speech at the event commemorating the 15th anniversary of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili emphasized that the EU Monitoring Mission's presence in Georgia, among other valuable tools employed by the EU for the peaceful resolution of the Russia-Georgia conflict, serves as a clear testament to the European Union's substantial support for Georgia, which is greatly appreciated.

According to Irakli Gharibashvili, the EU observation mission symbolizes the close cooperation and strong support of Georgia's European friends.

"Dear friends, in recent years,

the European Union Monitoring Mission has played a decisive role in preventing the escalation of the conflict in Georgia. The mission aligns with our goals, which are to maintain peace, assist the local population on both sides of the administrative border, and foster trust," said the Prime Minister.

As Irakli Gharibashvili noted, since 2012, the government has consistently and successfully maintained peace and stability for ten years, resulting in significant economic progress.

"Peace is of great importance to Georgia, and we are fully aware of the high cost of conflict. Since 2012, our government has consistently and successfully



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6778; Euro - 2.8259; GBP - 3.2522; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7703; Swiss Franc - 2.9186

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maintained peace and stability for ten years, resulting in significant economic progress. We

are committed to enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of Georgia, including those in the occupied territories.

The 2008 Russian invasion

had severe consequences for our people. The ongoing instability resulting from Russian aggression and the conflict in Ukraine serves as a reminder of the ur-

gent need for peace and conflict resolution in Eastern Europe, including the Russia-Georgia conflict. The involvement of the EU Monitoring Mission in this

process is truly crucial, and we remain hopeful that, sooner or later, we will achieve this goal," said Gharibashvili.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili Meets Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda in Vilnius



The President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, met with Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda in Vilnius. President Zourabichvili addressed the

meeting on Twitter, saying:

"Had an important meeting with President Gitanas Nauseda of Lithuania, a long-standing friend & ally of Georgia. Amid the critical juncture in Georgia's EU integration path, your unwavering support is invaluable. Lithuania has always stood

strong with Georgia- grateful for your pivotal support."

President Gitanas Nauseda also addressed his meeting with Salome Zourabichvili and affirmed Lithuania's support for Georgia's EU and Euro-Atlantic integration. He added that Georgia's future depends on implementing reforms to align with European values, stating: "Welcomed the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili Vilnius today. Lithuania remains a supporter of Georgia EU & Euro-Atlantic integration. Georgia's future depends on its ability to focus on reforms and foster European values."

With this visit, President Zourabichvili concluded her visits to the Baltic countries. Prior to coming to Lithuania, she met with top officials in Estonia and Latvia.

Acting President of the National Bank of Georgia, Natia Turnava, Meets with Commercial Bank Representatives

The National Bank of Georgia has disseminated information regarding the working meeting conducted today by Natia Turnava, the Acting President, with representatives from the business association and the banking sector.

The press release highlights that the Acting President of the National Bank, along with representatives from commercial banks and business associations,



engaged in discussions regarding the current state of the banking sector and outlined upcoming initiatives aimed at stimulating the economy and improving access to financial services for the population.

"The banking sector and the National Bank, as always, are cooperating very closely; we share a common vision and a common goal. Both the banking sector and the National Bank are

committed to our international obligations. We have very exciting future development plans. We will address the questions raised by the banks regarding

how to provide an additional boost to the economy. Our common objective is to ensure that the economy continues to grow rapidly and that banks can invest more resources. These are highly interesting initiatives that will be introduced in the banking sector, under our supervision and taking into account all the associated risks," said Turnava, as reported.

More EU in Georgia: Young European Ambassadors conduct series of events to highlight cooperation and opportunities

Starting from 26 September, Young European Ambassadors (YEAs) from Georgia and the European Union are carrying out three days of activities in Western Georgia, highlighting the message of "More EU in Georgia".

A total of 17 young people, in-

cluding Georgian and EU YEAs, are visiting public and private schools, state universities, and EuroClubs in three western regions: Imereti (Kutaisi), Samegrelo (Zugdidi), and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (Batumi, Keda). The meetings bring together students and young people between the ages of 16 and 26, all sharing a keen interest in the European Union and civic activism.

The first meetings took place in Kutaisi on 26 September, and included two school visits (N26 public school and Georgian-American school 'Progress'), and a meeting with students at the Kutaisi University, before finishing with an event at the Kutaisi EuroClub founded in cooperation with the Research-Intellectual Club 'Dialogue of Gen-

erations'.

"The interactive sessions not only shed light on the EU's strategic goals but also showcased the practical opportunities that it offers for skill development and entrepreneurship," said Ebba Fagerlund, a Young European Ambassador from Sweden. "It's clear that the EU's presence in Georgia is making a positive impact, and I'm excited to see more young people, especially from rural areas, becoming part of this dynamic initiative."

The visits are taking place during the last week of the call for young people wanting to join the 'Young European Ambassadors' initiative and will aim to encourage more young people from rural areas to join the YEAs. The deadline for applications is 1 October.

Today, on 27 September, the YEAs will head to Zugdidi to visit the N4 state school, Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University, and will meet with local youth in Zugdidi EuroClub founded jointly as a result of cooperation between YEAs and the Association Atinati.

In Keda, on 28 September, the YEAs will join one of the activities initiated by the Keda EuroClub, which was officially launched in June 2023 in cooperation with the Keda Public School. During the activity, students will make handicrafts using epoxy, on which the symbols of the EU and Georgia will be printed. As part of the activity, students will learn about cooperation with the EU and the history of the flags of Georgia and the European Union.

Throughout the week, the YEAs will lead interactive activities aimed at informing young people about opportunities to develop their skills within EU-funded actions and will present practical examples of how the EU supports skills development and entrepreneurship in Georgia. The Young European Ambassadors (YEAs) initiative is a non-political, voluntary, communication network connecting young people from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the EU Member States and the United Kingdom. The YEAs initiative was created by the European Union in 2016 and has so far involved more than 1,700 young people from over 30 different countries.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Thursday, September 28

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 25°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 13°C

Friday, September 29

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 24°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 16°C

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On the occasion of the National Day “The Day of the Czech Statehood” the Czech Republic Embassy in Tbilisi organized the reception on September 26. The Ambassador of the Czech Republic, Mr. Petr Kubernát and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Mr. Vladimer Konstantinidi delivered their opening speeches.









