

## Prime Minister of Georgia's Released Statement Emphasizes 'Historical' Significance of October 1, 2012 Elections

By Liza Mchedlidze

Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili, has released a statement emphasizing the importance of the October 1, 2012 elections in recent Georgian history.

"The Georgian people expressed their trust in the main architect of this historic victory, Mr. Bidzina Ivanishvili, who democratically replaced the autocratic, anti-national, oppressive regime with a completely new phase in the country's development. During a period of profound despair and hopelessness, Bidzina Ivanishvili united the entire society, and this unity among the people made the peaceful transfer of power possible for the first time in our history. Looking at it from today's perspective, the results of this victory are evident and impressive. Our political team ensured the longest period of peace since gaining independence. We implemented extensive economic and social reforms, contributed to the strengthening of democratic institutions, and took significant steps toward the historical aspiration of the Georgian people – joining the European Union."

Irakli Gharibashvili stated that the 'Georgian Dream' team is committed to continuing the process of democratic transformation, ensuring security, and fostering prosperity in the country.

"We continue the process of democratic transformation, enhancing security, and promoting prosperity in the country, and we aim for even more ambitious goals. Throughout this entire journey, our



strength has been derived from the immense trust and support of the people. Today, once again, I would like to express my gratitude to every member and supporter

of the 'Georgian Dream' and our entire society. The strength of the Georgian state lies in the unity between the government and the people, and I firmly believe that

this unity will ultimately lead our country to victory. The ultimate goal of the victory on the first of October is the reunification of our nation," wrote Gharibashvili.

## EU Monitoring Mission to Stay in Georgia as Long as Necessary, Says Dimitrios Karabalis

By Liza Mchedlidze

The EU Monitoring Mission has concluded its 15 years of operations, and on October 1st, the head of the mission, Dimitrios Karabalis, held a press conference.

Karabalis mentioned that exactly 15 years ago, on October 1st, more than 200 EUMM monitors began patrolling in Georgia following the August 2008 war and EUMM monitors have patrolled ever since contributing to stability, security, and lasting peace in Georgia.

According to Karabalis, "For a decade and a half, the EUMM has played a pivotal role in ensuring stability and reducing tensions in Georgia and the wider region. Our presence over the past 15 years stands as a testament to the EU's long-term commitment to fostering peace and security."

"The European Union's long-term commitment to peaceful conflict resolution in Georgia and the wider region was also clearly underscored by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Josep Borrell, who visited Georgia in September," the Head of EUMM said.

Mr. Karabalis highlighted that since 2008, more than 86,000 patrols helped make Georgia more stable and safer for the local population.

"Nearly 600 days ago, Russia launched an unprovoked and unjustified full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Although the war has many implications on the security environment in Georgia, we have so far not observed any significant deterioration of the security situation along the Administrative Boundary Lines (ABLs). However, the situation remains fragile, and we should not take this relative stability for granted, as there is always some potential for adverse development. Things can change quickly as we have recently seen in neighbouring countries," said Mr. Karabalis.

"We remain dedicated to our mission of improving the lives and security of local communities. We will stay in Georgia as long as necessary," Karabalis stated.

The head of the European Union Monitoring Mission, emphasized the importance of understanding the European Union's decision-making process



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6783; Euro - 2.8422; GBP - 3.2852; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7425; Swiss Franc - 2.9403

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while speaking to reporters. He pointed out that the European

Union consists of 27 member states, each of which retains its sovereign authority to make decisions. The European Union

operates on a consensus-based approach, and decisions are not imposed through decrees or unilateral actions.

Karabalis clarified that when it comes to granting candidate status for EU membership, it is a collective decision made by all 27 member states. This decision-making process reflects the cooperative nature of the European Union.

Regarding the question of whether obtaining candidate status would facilitate Georgia's efforts in peaceful conflict reso-

lution, Karabalis noted that the resolution of conflicts is a complex issue that does not solely depend on the EU monitoring mission. However, he emphasized that the mission's primary objective is to create a conducive environment that encourages all parties involved to engage in dialogue and negotiation at the negotiation table.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgian Parliament to Strengthen Regulations on Temporary Constructions During Gatherings and Demonstrations



Georgian Parliament is set to tighten the law regarding the arrangement of temporary constructions during gatherings and demonstrations. Corresponding changes will be included in the 'Assemblies and Manifestations' law, which will be proposed at the October 2 Bureau

meeting.

According to the amendments, participants in assemblies and demonstrations are prohibited from setting up temporary constructions if their arrangement poses a threat to the participants, other individuals, or public order and security as maintained by the police, or if it disrupts the normal functioning of enterprises, institutions, or organizations unrelated to the gathering or demonstration.

Additionally, according to the proposal, participants in assemblies or demonstrations are prohibited from setting up temporary structures even if the absence of such structures does not significantly impede the gathering or demonstration.

Violation of the law will result in the confiscation of the offending object and a fine of 500 GEL or the confiscation of the object and administrative imprisonment for up to 15 days. If the violator is an organizer, the penalty includes the confiscation of the object and a fine of 5,000 GEL or administrative imprisonment for up to 15 days.

### Former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili Announces Plans for Future from Prison



Mikheil Saakashvili, the former president of Georgia, has released a statement from prison expressing his intentions for the future. He mentioned that in the coming weeks and months, everyone will wit-

ness his "active actions" aimed at helping the Georgian people and improving their lives in a more humane and dignified way.

"For two years now, I have been completely innocent in the captivity of Russia and the Russian oligarch. They themselves do not remember what I have been charged with, and sometimes they call me a 'murderer', and sometimes they call me a thousand different things. Of course, I regret not being able to directly help Ukraine in the war, but I don't regret my stay in Georgia because my presence here has both symbolic and practical meaning. Symbolically, it confirms the injustice of this war and the pro-Russian regime while demonstrating my unwavering resolve. Virtually everyone will witness my active actions in the coming weeks and months. I am here to help every Georgian, and I will make life much more humane and dignified for them. I have done it before, and I will be able to do it with you now," Saakashvili wrote.

# Fostering Public Dialogue on Freedom of Expression

Discussions on Human Rights and Liberties Continue with EU and UNDP Support

### Human Rights Talks: Freedom of Expression

An engaging and thought-provoking series of public discussions on human rights and liberties returned this September, promising to be an inspiring journey of discourse and reflection throughout 2023. The discussions are supported by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in close partnership with the Union of Tbilisi Museums – Ilya Chavchavadze Literary-Memorial Museum.

The fifth event of the series,



held on 29 September, brought together scholars, journalists, and youth, all convened to explore the challenges faced by modern societies in upholding the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression.

Gogi Gvakharia, a distinguished art expert, professor at Ilia State University, and highly regarded journalist at Radio Tavisupleba, the Georgian

branch of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, delivered the keynote address. His thought-provoking presentation served as a catalyst, sparking a spirited debate on the delicate balance between personal freedoms, fundamental human rights, and societal beliefs.

Gvakharia's insights captivated his audience, which represented a mosaic of perspec-

tives, from civil society representatives to a group of schoolchildren from the town of Gardabani and Ajara Highlands. This diverse blend of voices underscored the importance of engaging various segments of society in the discourse on human rights.

"The EU is honored to support Human Rights Talks in Georgia to foster a space for dialogue and understanding. These talks are a way for people to share their ideas, learn from each other, and chart the way toward a more equitable society that cherishes the rights and freedoms of every individual."

Asunción Sánchez Ruiz, Deputy Head of Delegation, Head of Political, Press and Information Section at the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia

"Human Rights Talks provide a platform for an inspiring array of speakers, each offering

unique perspectives and valuable life experiences. It's fascinating to see young people from all over Georgia getting involved. They are our dedicated listeners and active contributors. We hope that this collective dialogue will inspire us all to take action together and build a world where everyone's rights are protected."

Anna Chernyshova, UNDP Resident Representative a.i. in Georgia

The Human Rights Talks represent a pivotal component of the Human Rights for All initiative, a comprehensive project aimed at empowering Georgia to cultivate a culture of human rights, fortify human rights protections, and address longstanding concerns. This initiative, supported by the European Union, is spearheaded by two UN agencies, UNDP and OHCHR, with over EUR2.5 million in EU funding.

## Weather

Monday, October 2

Day Light Rain  
High: 21°C

Night Cloudy  
Low: 16°C

Tuesday, October 3

Day Light Rain  
High: 20°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 16°C

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