

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Irakli Kobakhidze: Government Consent Required for President's Visits

Chairman of 'Georgian Dream,' Irakli Kobakhidze, while justifying the submission of the President's impeachment to the Constitutional Court, stated that it is necessary for the government to consent to the President's visits.

The ruling party initiated the impeachment procedure because President Salome Zourabichvili visited European Union member states' leaders despite the government's refusal.

Kobakhidze cited an example, suggesting that the President might visit countries like Syria, which has recognized the independence of Georgia's occupied territories, or Nicaragua. According to him, the President expresses the state's position through such visits.

"Any such visit requires consent. We can provide clear examples that demonstrate the necessity of this practice, as it stems from constitutional provisions.

For instance, consider if the president were to visit countries like Syria, which has recognized Abkhazia and the so-called Independence of South Ossetia, to attend a parade, or if the visit were to take place in Nicaragua or any similar country.

This, of course, does not imply conducting negotiations, but it does signify that the president is



expressing the political position of the state. Therefore, it is crucial for the President to obtain approval from the Government of Georgia for any such visit.

That is, we are not only referring to visits where negotiations

are conducted, with the goal of, for example, concluding agreements or attaining candidate status. By attending any ceremonial event, the President of Georgia expresses the position of the state of Georgia. This constitutes

the exercise of representative authority during any such visit," Kobakhidze said.

Kobakhidze suggested that it is necessary for the government to grant approval for such visits. He mentioned that the

President, in the past, had been aware of this requirement and had sought government approval for her visits. However, there were instances where the President did not receive approval but still proceeded with the visits.

Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili Meets with European Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE



During his working visit to Strasbourg, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ilia Darchiashvili met with the European Commissioner for Economy, Paolo Gentiloni.

The meeting focused on the process of implementing the 12 recommendations of the European Commission by Georgia. The Minister provided the European Commissioner with comprehensive information about the steps Georgia has taken in this direction and the results achieved. Ilia Darchiashvili expressed hope that Georgia's efforts would be duly evaluated, leading to the country being granted candidate status.

Additionally, it was noted that the process of implementing reforms is being closely coordinated with relevant European Union institutions, while also considering the recommendations of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR.

The significance of the agreement on the deep and comprehensive free trade area with the European Union was emphasized, particularly in relation to Georgia's business sector development. Furthermore, the positive progress in the agreement's implementation process was acknowledged.

The parties also stressed the importance of sectoral integration with the European Union, with particular attention to Georgia's full integration into the European single market.

Furthermore, the parties discussed prospects for further enhancing cooperation and future plans.

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6802; Euro - 2.8097; GBP - 3.2339; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7007; Swiss Franc - 2.9057

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

Georgian Politics: Controversy Surrounds Alleged US Military Base Proposal

Today's Georgian politics is a strange mixture of acute topics. One such issue was voiced by Mtavari Arkhi. As the opposition TV channel reported, before the war in Ukraine, the United States proposed to create a military base in Georgia, which was rejected by the "Georgian Dream" government. The Georgian Defense Agency and the US Embassy in Georgia denied this information, but the leaders of the Georgian Dream made such statements regarding the possible American base that caused a separate dispute.

On September 12, in the evening of the Main Channel program Guest of the Day, journalist Lika Basilaya-Shavgulidze, referring to the employee of the US Embassy, said that two years ago, a few months before the start of the war in Ukraine, the US offered the Georgian government to locate a military base. She stated that the US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin had visited Georgia with this proposal. By opening a military base and offering military assistance, the Americans aimed to guarantee Georgia's security. The Georgian Dream refused the offer, which shocked the administration of the White House. According to the assessment of the "Main Channel", it was "a rejection of a historical chance equal to treason." With this decision, the gov-

ernment deprived the citizens of Georgia of solid security guarantees.

The Ministry of Defense of Georgia responded to this statement the next day, calling it a "complete lie in its essence", which was spread by a "politically biased person" and is being used by "separate media outlets and politically engaged persons" to "produce a disinformation campaign."

The US Embassy in Georgia responded to the information spread in the media and stated that the US has not proposed the creation of an American military base in Georgia. Temur Iakobashvili, the former ambassador of Georgia to the USA, responded to this topic and said that it was not about the creation of a military base, but "there was talk about the presence of some elements", which is also very important, and he recalled the 2008 war when the Russians could not bomb the Vaziani airfield because there were two American cargo planes.

The sudden appearance of information about the proposal to open a military base two years ago was rejected by both the Georgian authorities and the American side. This should have ended the issue, but the opposi-

tion did not believe that the issue of creating the base was not on the agenda, and the leaders of the Georgian Dream made slighting remarks towards their Western partners. According to the Main Channel, the leaders of the Georgian Dream once again used the opportunity to mock the Western partners with the Kremlin's rhetoric. The opposition is convinced that Bidzina Ivanishvili's clan would have rejected the unique possibility of a military partnership with the West in all cases.

Georgian Dream Chairman Irakli Kobakhidze, in addition to calling the information about the opening of the American base "unserious", said that the opening of the American base in Georgia will not be a guarantee of security. According to him, NATO is the only guarantor of security for Georgia.

Georgian Dream General Secretary and the mayor of Tbilisi Kakha Kaladze expressed the same opinion. According to him, "the only thing that will guarantee the security of our country is NATO membership." But there he made a mocking and insulting statement using Georgian slang and addressed NATO. According to him, the statements made over the years about

the "open door" are tiresome: "If you can be bothered, make a decision and make our country a member of NATO."

Guram Macharashvili, a member of the parliamentary majority, did not approve of the idea of placing the American base either. These statements of the leaders of the Georgian Dream became a confirmation for the opposition that the current government is against the location of the American base and looks at NATO with derision.

According to the opposition MP Teona Akubardia, the statements made by the government regarding the American base theoretically exclude the possibility of an American base in Georgia, because the current government not only does not have the political will to do so but is also afraid. The opposition called the statements about the American military's inability to guarantee Georgia's security ridiculous. Some also pointed to Taiwan, which is protected by the American military presence from the Chinese invasion. "The presence of US military bases in Georgia would have been a step forward of great importance for security," said MP Roman Gotsiridze.

Military cooperation with

Western countries has been deliberately restricted throughout the rule of the Georgian Dream, and this tendency has accelerated after Russia's attack on Ukraine. Giorgi Vashadze, the leader of Strategy Agmashenebeli, recalled the American proposal in the fall of 2021 when, in addition to the military base, they offered new weapon systems for the Georgian army, which the Georgian Dream refused. According to Vashadze, that is why Irakli Gharibashvili was refused to attend the NATO summit in Vilnius. "This is not an ordinary issue, it is a betrayal of the national interests of Georgia, and both Gharibashvili and Defense Minister Burchuladze must answer for this," said Vashadze.

The ongoing debate about the non-existent American base is another confirmation that "reducing polarization" is impossible in Georgia. The government of the Georgian Dream talks to the Western partners in a stern tone and demonstratively moves towards Russia-China. Meanwhile, the opposition speaks about the need to maintain the Western orientation of the country and to use the unique chance of receiving the status of a candidate for EU membership.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Dream Chairman Deems US Embassy's USAID Statement 'Shocking' and 'Insulting'



Weather

Wednesday, October 4

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 20°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 13°C

Thursday, October 5

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 22°C

Night Clear
Low: 12°C

Georgian Dream Chairman Irakli Kobakhidze assessed the US embassy's statement regarding USAID as surprising and deeply disturbing. He found the statement to be shocking and insulting to Georgian society.

The US Embassy responded to the accusations of the State Security Service of Georgia, according to which, on September 26-29, USAID-funded training was held, where the participants "were taught how to act against target groups, namely the government, the Orthodox Church, the State Security Service and against other agencies."

"Yesterday, I read the statement of the embassy on this topic. I was surprised, I can tell you directly. This is an absolutely disturbing statement. Instead of seeing a separation from the processes that are directly related to the preparation of the revolution, we saw an absolutely different statement, which is disturbing. The Georgian society wants peace in this country and does not want a revolution and

the trouble, for example, that the revolution brought to our friendly country, Ukraine. Society does not want this, and society expects to hear a different position from the embassy in this case, that they will not, under any circumstances, support the revolutionary processes, although yesterday's statement was absolutely shocking and insulting to Georgian society," Kobakhidze stated.

Georgian Foreign Minister, Iliia Darchiashvili, Meets with Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President of the European Commission

During his visit to Strasbourg, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Iliia Darchiashvili met with Dubravka Šuica, European Commission Vice President for Democracy and Demography. According to the press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the discussion during the meeting focused on the implemen-

tation of 12 recommendations by the European Commission.

The Minister informed the Vice President of the European Commission about the steps taken by the Georgian side and the achieved results. Iliia Darchiashvili expressed hope that European partners would

The parties also discussed the issue of carrying out reforms and strengthening democratic institutions. The minister once again confirmed the readiness of the Georgian side to enhance future cooperation.

On October 3-4, the Minister of Foreign Affairs will hold meet-



make another historic decision by granting Georgia candidate status.

ings with European Commissioners in Strasbourg as part of his working visit.

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