

## Irakli Kobakhidze Discusses Possible 'Prosecution' of President Salome Zourabichvili

By Liza Mchedlidze

Chairman of the Georgian Dream, Irakli Kobakhidze, has once again spoken about the potential criminal prosecution of President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili. According to Kobakhidze, while Zourabichvili is in office, she is constitutionally immune. However, after her term expires, a criminal case could be initiated.

"During the term of presidential authority, the president is inviolable according to the constitution. In this case, they can be held accountable only by impeachment. Otherwise, it is impossible. But why did she not finance the illegitimate visits from the budget? She fears the post-presidential period.

A case may not be brought against her during this year, but as soon as the presidential term expires, such a criminal case may be initiated immediately. That's why she was apprehensive about violating criminal law when she didn't allocate expenses from the budget to finance the visits," said Kobakhidze.

On October 18, Kobakhidze mentioned during the president's impeachment in parliament that President Zourabichvili will likely continue to violate the constitution.

"She will break the law tomorrow too, what will prevent it? She still holds hope in the United National Movement. The only thing she can't hope for is the prosecutor's office and a criminal investigation. I don't know;



it will be difficult for me to provide a legal answer at this time. However, in light of the Constitutional Court's decision, the violation of the future constitution may already exhibit signs of a criminal offense, although it will

be challenging for me to discuss it," said Kobakhidze.

Salome Zourabichvili personally responded to Irakli Kobakhidze's mention of the prosecutor's office, stating that they cannot intimidate her.

"Today I am reminded of the example of the great Niko Nikoladze, who was convicted, and deposed, but they couldn't win against him. Despite this, he brought Europe to this country in many ways and forms. What

do you think should frighten me, his descendant, the mention of the prosecutor's office? What should make me tired, what should force me to leave this country? Don't count on that," President Zourabichvili said.

## Controversial Amendments to Broadcasting Law Approved in Second Reading by Parliament's Economy and Economic Policy Committee



By Liza Mchedlidze

The Parliament's Sectoral Economy and Economic Policy Committee has approved controversial amendments to the Broadcasting Law during the second reading.

These amendments concern a draft law being expedited through Parliament, allowing concerned parties to appeal decisions made by the broadcaster's self-regulatory body regarding programs containing hate speech or calls to terrorism to the National Communications Commission (ComCom). During the initial reading of the draft law, it was

revealed that, in contrast to the originally proposed version, obscenity would also be regulated by the same commission.

The committee meeting took place on October 19. In addition to the parliament majority members, opposition leaders Iago Khvichia from Girchi and Khatia Dekanoidze from Eurooptimists attended the session. Mamuka Andghuladze, the head of the media advocacy coalition, and Mari Kapanadze, a representative of the Georgian Democratic Initiative (GDI), were also present at the session.

Kobakhidze stated that the legislative amendments, included in

CONTINUED ON Page 2



# Controversial Amendments to Broadcasting Law Approved in Second Reading by Parliament's Economy and Economic Policy Committee

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

the Law on Broadcasting, which the ruling party is expeditiously working on, have been chosen with

the input of the European Union. "This norm is old. These regulations are entirely based on a European Union directive. We've submitted this bill to the Euro-

pean Union, and they've selected one of the three options we offered. The matter is settled," Kobakhidze said.

According to the Georgian

Dream Chair, he does not know the details of the draft law, however, he added that the ruling party "has no political interest".

"First is self-regulation, then

the Communications Commission. We offered three options and they chose. We will do whatever you tell us, we said. And this was chosen," said Kobakhidze.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgian Foreign Minister Iliia Darchiashvili Meets with US Ambassador to Georgia Robin Dunnigan



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Iliia

Darchiashvili, met with the US Ambassador to Georgia, Robin Dunnigan.

According to the information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the parties discussed a wide range of issues regarding the strategic partnership between the two countries and the pros-

pects of further development of the respective directions. "At the meeting, attention

was also placed on regional policy and security issues. The US Ambassador to Georgia, Robin Dunnigan, once again confirmed the unwavering support of the US for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, as well as the country's foreign policy priorities. The parties have confirmed their readiness to continue and further intensify the existing fruitful cooperation between the countries," the statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia reads.

### Foreign Relations Committee Chair Nikoloz Samkharadze, Meets with Qatari Ambassador to Georgia, Hassan bin Ahmed Al-Mutawa

Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Nikoloz Samkharadze, met with the Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Georgia, Hassan bin Ahmed

Al-Mutawa.

The parties discussed political relations, and economic cooperation, and emphasized deepening inter-parliamentary relations. They also addressed regional security, including ongoing events in the South Caucasus and the Middle East.

tween the two countries are at a high level and we want to further develop economic cooperation, including in the direction of free trade," said Samkharadze.

Samkharadze invited the members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Qatari



"At the meeting with the ambassador of Qatar, we mentioned that the political relations be-

Legislative Body to Georgia for an official visit.

## Creative Europe call for European cooperation projects – open for Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine

### Weather

Friday, October 20

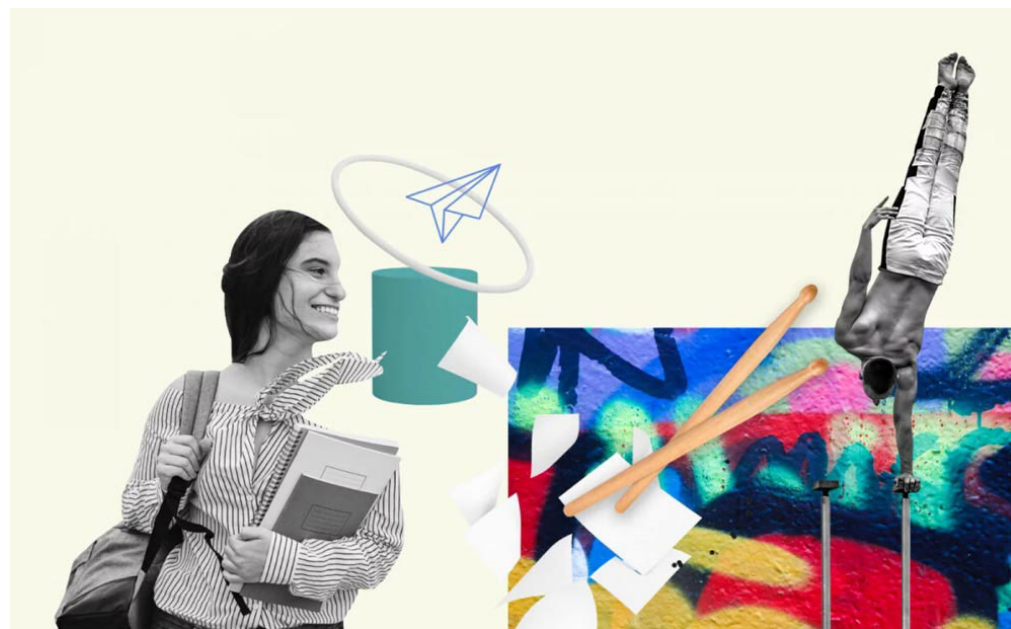
Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 19°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: 7°C

Saturday, October 21

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 23°C

Night 🌙 Clear  
Low: 11°C



The EU-funded Creative Europe programme has launched a major call for Euro-

pean cooperation projects to carry out a broad spectrum of activities and initiatives involving

artists and stakeholders active in different cultural and creative sectors. The action will support at least 130 projects, and is open for all countries participating in the Creative Europe programme, including Armenia, Georgia, and Ukraine.

The call aims to foster cooperation between organisations active in the field of culture, and to increase the cross-border dimension of creation and circulation of Eu-

ropean artistic content. It will also encourage the development, experimentation, dissemination, and application of new and innovative practices.

Considering that this action is part of the Culture strand of the Creative Europe programme, projects with exclusive audio-visual content and/or exclusively composed of organisations from the audio-visual sector are not eligible to apply.

The estimated available call budget is almost •60 million.

The maximum grant amount is •200,000 per small-scale project and •1,000,000 per medium project. For small-scale projects, the funding should cover a maximum of 80% of total project funding, and for medium-scale a maximum of 70%.

The deadline for applications is 23 January 2024.

([euneighbourseast.eu](http://euneighbourseast.eu))

published by

**The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia  
Founded by Prof.

**Zaza Gachechiladze**

**Tamar Gachechiladze**  
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000  
E-mail: [messenger@messenger.com.ge](mailto:messenger@messenger.com.ge)  
<http://www.messenger.com.ge/>

**Nino Metreveli**

Commercial Director

**Mariam Mchedlidze**

Editor-in-Chief

**Khatuna Gogichaishvili**

Layout Designer, Photographer

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact.

All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.



# *Apostolic Nunciature and Caritas Georgia held a Vin d'honneur Farewell Reception in honour of Apostolic Nuncio and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps H.E. Jose A. Bettencourt on October 19.*









