

Government Approves Communication Strategy, Prioritizing Combating Disinformation and Fake News

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Georgian government administration reported that at a government meeting, led by Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, the members of the Cabinet of Ministers discussed the 13 issues on the agenda and approved the draft of the decree outlining the communication strategy of the Government of Georgia for the years 2024-2027.

According to the head of the government's administration, the document is structured into three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the information environment, the second outlines the government's communication vision and goals, and the third is dedicated to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy.

"This document defines three important goals. First, the production of communication relevant to national interests and based on values, with five associated tasks defined. The second goal of the strategy is to combat disinformation, addressing the respective visions of our services in this direction. The third goal focuses on institutional perfection within the strategic communications system," stated Revaz Javelidze.

The government administration emphasized that the communication strategy is based on the national policy document approved by the government in 2023 - "Vision 2030 Development Strategy of Georgia," and it is fully consistent with the country's long-term development vision, strategic priorities, goals, and objectives.

"The purpose of the document developed by the Government of Georgia is to establish a unified vision for a proactive, consistent, and coordinated communication system between the government and the public. This system aims to increase awareness among the country's population while



aligning with the long-term communication goals of the Government of Georgia.

One of the priority goals of the strategy is to combat disinformation and fake news. This involves strengthening efforts in the fight against disinformation and concurrently developing the capabilities of strategic communication units within state agencies," the administration's statement reads.

As per the statement, representatives from the strategic communications units of Georgian government agencies, along with international and local experts, participated in the collaborative effort to develop the document. This also included representatives from the strategic communications of the National Security Council, NATO, and the European Union Information Center.

According to the government administration, under the program 'Strategic Communications for a Better Future' funded by the US State Department for strategic purposes, a systematic study of the strategic communications of Georgian government agencies was conducted. This study highlighted challenges in this direction, while also identifying opportunities for the development of strategic communications.

President Zourabichvili's Meeting with Czech President Pavel Sparks Criticism from Parliament Vice Speaker Volski

By Liza Mchedlidze

On December 11, President of the Czech Republic Petr

Pavel hosted Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili. Following a warm welcoming ceremony, the two presidents engaged in a

face-to-face meeting.

According to the Czech public broadcaster 'Cht-24', President Pavel's reception of his Georgian

counterpart signifies his support for Georgia's European aspirations. The Czech President recognizes President Zourabichvili as a politician who significantly contributes to the promotion of European values in her country.

As part of the visit, Zourabichvili will also meet with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and, on Tuesday, with the Speaker of the Senate.

According to the administration of the Czech president, President Pavel aims to express his support for Georgia's European path ahead of the European Council meeting.

Parliament First Deputy Vice Speaker Gia Volski addressed President Zourabichvili's meeting with the Czech president and criticized her once again, saying "The trip to the Czech Republic of a person called a violator of the Constitution will not suit the political image of Georgia and is damaging."

According to Volski, the government cannot grant a mandate to someone who supports views

contrary to the official position of the government and society.

"This mandate is inappropriate and inadequate for a violator of the Constitution. The trip to the Czech Republic of a person who is called a violator of the constitution is not good for the political image of Georgia and is damaging. The European Union decided that Georgia deserves the status. Salome Zourabichvili's task is to create a feeling in society that violation of the Constitution will not have consequences and damage the reputation of the Constitutional Court. Her task and task is to prevent the society from having a feeling of stability, the stability created by the government," said Gia Volski.

Due to visits to EU countries without government permission, the Georgian Dream initiated the impeachment procedure against the president in September of this year. The Constitutional Court confirmed the violation of the Constitution by the President, although the Parliament was unable to impeach Zourabichvili.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Ilia Darchiashvili Meets with European Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi in Brussels



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Ilia Darchiashvili held a meeting with European Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi in Brussels to discuss issues related to enlargement and neighborhood policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has disseminated information about this meeting.

According to the agency, during the meeting, the parties reviewed the steps taken by Georgia on the path of integration into the European Union and the reforms implemented at both the legislative and institutional levels. The efforts made by the Georgian side and the achieved results were duly noted.

The conversation also touched on the European Commission's enlargement report and recommendations, which were determined for Georgia by the decision of November 8, 2023.

Darchiashvili informed the European Commissioner about the action plan approved by the Government of Georgia, aimed at fulfilling the nine recommendations of the European Commission. During the conversation, he emphasized that the Georgian side is ready to closely cooperate with the EU side in fulfilling the mentioned tasks. Additionally, the minister highlighted that the country is eagerly

awaiting the decision of the European Council to grant Georgia candidate status.

The parties also discussed the Eastern Partnership ministerial, exploring the prospects of cooperation in this format and the overall future development of the partnership. Additionally, the conversation touched upon other crucial aspects of Georgia-EU cooperation, including sectoral integration and the progress achieved in this direction.

Parliament Chair Shalva Papuashvili Meets with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev

The Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Shalva Papuashvili, met with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev.

According to the Parliament's press service, the parties positively assessed the close friendly, and partnership relations between the two countries and peoples.



They discussed current and planned projects and activities in the fields of transport, energy, culture, and people-to-people relations. Emphasis was placed on the role and importance of the parliaments of Georgia and Azerbaijan in strengthening bilateral ties.

The meeting also addressed the security environment in the region, the ongoing processes related to Karabakh, and the possibilities of establishing long-term peace.

BY JOSEP BORRELL AND WOPKE HOEKSTRA

BRUSSELS – “Present trends are racing our planet down a dead-end three-degree temperature rise,” United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently warned. He is right. Unless we act decisively – beginning at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) underway in Dubai – the threat that climate change poses to humanity will become nothing short of existential.

Already, climate change is a major risk multiplier for conflict and instability. Extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves have led to the forcible displacement of more than 20 million people each year since 2008. By 2050, more than one billion people may have insufficient access to water, and more than 200 million may be forced to migrate.

Water scarcity and food shortages are fueling violent conflicts in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and other parts of the world. Of the 20 countries that are most vulnerable to climate change, 12 are mired in conflicts. Authoritarian countries are taking advantage of the turmoil, attempting to gain influence over fragile governments and secure access to raw materials. Unless our mitigation and adaptation efforts are equal to the climate crisis, these trends will accelerate and spread, with truly catastrophic results.

The European Union is doing its part to avoid such an outcome.

Op-Ed
Europe Knows that Climate Action Is Vital to Global Security

With the European Green Deal, we are aiming, by 2030, to reduce our greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 55%, ensure that more than 42.5% of our energy comes from renewable sources, and increase energy efficiency by at least 11.7%. We strive to become climate-neutral by 2050.

Central to our strategy for achieving these goals is putting a price on carbon dioxide emissions. But imposing a carbon price only on EU production risks simply pushing carbon-intensive activities beyond our borders. Such “carbon leakage” would mean losing jobs in the EU without achieving any reduction in global emissions.

That is why we implemented the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which ensures that the most carbon-intensive imports are subject to a carbon price in line with that put on European goods. This is not protectionism. Rather, it is a necessary step to ensure that our ambitious decarbonization measures are helpful for the global climate.

We also want to take responsibility for the greenhouse-gas emissions caused outside the EU by our consumption of imported goods, which is why we are “greening” our trade policy. In particular, we want to ensure that the products we import no longer contribute to deforestation – one of the greatest threats to the climate and biodiversity. We know that the requirements stemming from this EU law are causing tensions with some of our partners. We are ready to support them in implementing these measures and to address together the chal-

lenge of deforestation.

The green transition will shake up the global balance of power. For the EU, this process implies both benefits and risks. On one hand, it will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels – a dependence that, as Russia's war against Ukraine has demonstrated, carries high political and economic costs. On the other hand, it could create new dependencies, such as on producers of critical raw materials. Avoiding that outcome – and bolstering our security – requires us to ensure diversity of supply. To that end, we must strengthen our ties with Africa, Latin America, and South Asia, developing tailor-made partnerships that allow for value-addition and job creation in our partner countries.

While Europe bears an important historical responsibility for climate change, we account for just 7.5% of global emissions today, meaning that the actions we take at home can have only a limited impact on the world's climate. The only solution to climate change is a global one. At a time when multilateralism is under growing pressure, agreement on how to meet the targets set at COP21 in Paris would not only ensure a safe future for our children, but also would show that multilateral institutions can still deliver.

COP28 must shift the world into higher gear. The EU is committed to pushing for the phase-out of unabated fossil fuels and all fossil-fuel subsidies, the doubling of energy-efficiency measures, and the tripling of renewable-energy capacity worldwide.

But to make this happen, we need the buy-in of the other industrialized economies, as well as China, which, despite its tremendous progress in renewables, still burns more coal than the rest of the world combined.

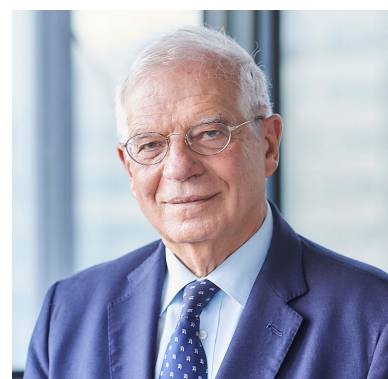
The green transition will succeed only if it is just and benefits all. The most climate-vulnerable countries have contributed little to climate change but risk bearing the brunt of it. While they must be part of the global race to net-zero emissions, they need and deserve greater support when it comes to climate adaptation and the green-energy transition. The EU is prepared to deliver such support – and help our partners avoid repeating our past mistakes.

The EU, its member states, and the European financial institutions are already the largest contributors of public climate

finance to developing economies, having delivered Euro28,5 billion (\$30 billion) in 2022. Moreover, the developed economies are finally on track to meet the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion annually for climate adaptation and mitigation in the developing world. But we must think beyond this pledge, which ends in 2025.

It is time to align both public and private financial flows with the goals laid out in the Paris climate agreement, and take climate finance from billions to trillions. At the same time, the international financial institutions and multilateral development banks need to be reformed, so that they can do more to support the delivery of global public goods. And the new Loss and Damage Fund needs the appropriate financial firepower. The first substantial pledges are encouraging. Here, too, China will be an indispensable partner.

In an increasingly multipolar world, shaped by the return of great-power politics, concerted international cooperation might seem far-fetched. But in the face of such a global existential challenge, we must succeed.



Josep Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, is Vice President of the European Commission for a Stronger Europe in the World.



Wopke Hoekstra is European Commissioner for Climate Action

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Weather

Tuesday, December 12

Day Light Rain
High: 8°C

Night Cloudy
Low: 6°C

Wednesday, December 13

Day Light Rain
High: 9°C

Night Cloudy
Low: 5°C

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Ms. Asunción Sánchez Ruiz, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, together with the Political, Press and Information Section team hosted an End of Year Event on December 7.





