

## SEC Workers Union Demands Accountability for Culture Minister Thea Tsulukiani's 'Repressive Policies'

By Liza Mchedlidze

The SEC Workers Union has issued a public statement, directing its concerns to the Prime Minister, the President, the Chairman of the Parliament and the Ministry of Culture of Georgia.

In their address, the union demands accountability from the Minister of Culture, Thea Tsulukiani, for alleged violations of the law under her purview. As of now, 430 people have signed this statement.

The SEC Workers Union, as stated, strongly condemns Minister Tsulukiani's oppressive and destructive policies, which they believe are harmful to Georgia's international reputation, cultural heritage, museums, scientific institutions, arts, and its people. The union categorically opposes her 'anti-national' and 'anti-social' approach.

"We, the members of the Professional Union of Science, Education, and Culture Workers of Georgia—scientists, artists, teachers, individuals employed in the field of culture, and representatives of Georgian society—strongly condemn and categorically oppose Minister Tsulukiani's repressive, purposefully destructive, anti-national, anti-social, and unqualified policies. These policies, in our view, jeopardize Georgia's international reputation, secular, religious, and prehistoric ar-



მეცნიერების, განათლებისა და კულტურის პროფკავშირი - SEC Workers Union

5.4K likes • 6.9K followers

chaeological and historical cultural heritage, as well as museums, scientific institutions, theaters, cinema, opera, creative spaces, writing, art, and the well-being of the people.

The minister systematically violates fundamental human rights, the labor code, and drastically restricts the professional activities of specialists in the field of culture. Instances of harassing people and applying pressure

on them are reported," the statement reads.

The SEC Workers Union is also demanding that cultural institutions be granted professional autonomy, that scientific, educational, artistic, and exhibition projects continue without interruption, that archaeological excavation permits be issued in accordance with the law, and that repressions cease. Addition-

ally, they call for the full restoration of the rights of those employed in the field of culture.

"We demand that the minister immediately be held accountable for numerous law violations and injustices, including aggravating the condition of the wall painting of the Gelati Monastery complex, violating the labor code, insulting people employed in the field of culture, slandering them, and illegally firing hundreds of

people, among others. Additionally, we call for institutions in the field of culture to be granted professional autonomy. We urge that scientific, educational, artistic, and exhibition projects continue without interruption, permits for archaeological excavations be issued in accordance with the law, repressions cease, and the rights of employees in the field of culture be fully restored," the statement reads.

## UNM Leader Tina Bokuchava Advocates Changing the 'Russian Regime' for Georgia's Compliance with International Sanctions

By Liza Mchedlidze



The leader of the United National Movement, Tina Bokuchava, expressed concern about the significant threat posed under the Georgian Dream government, which she referred to as the 'Russian regime'. She pointed out various facts suggesting the potential use of Georgia's territory for evading sanctions.

Bokuchava was asked by reporters regarding the findings of the "fact-meter," which corroborates Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili's statement that no violations of sanctions were detected.

The UNM leader emphasized that for Georgia to adhere to international sanctions, a crucial step involves changing the 'Rus-

sian regime' and establishing a pro-Western government.

"The fact that there is a serious danger of using the territory of Georgia to evade sanctions is evidenced by the high-level visits made to Georgia by the United States of America and the European Union. This is supported by numerous sources and facts. However, the international pressure felt by the 'Georgian Dream' is crucial because they are well aware that openly violating the regime of sanctions would require them to pay a serious political price. We have to face this reality; under the conditions of the Russian regime, this threat is very high and real," Bokuchava stated.

Bokuchava expressed concerns about the impact of the

CONTINUED ON Page 2

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6878; Euro - 2.9405; GBP - 3.4218; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.9921; Swiss Franc - 3.1584

# UNM Leader Tina Bokuchava Advocates Changing the 'Russian Regime' for Georgia's Compliance with International Sanctions

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

'Russian regime' on Georgia, specifically in relation to sanctions. She highlighted a perceived serious danger, pointing out indications that Georgia's territory might be utilized to evade these sanctions. To address this issue and integrate Georgia into the EU policy, including aspects related to sanctions, Bokuchava emphasized the necessity of changing the current government.

dress this issue and integrate Georgia into the EU policy, including aspects related to sanctions, Bokuchava emphasized the necessity of changing the current government.

"To ensure Georgia's compliance with international sanctions, it is necessary to change the Russian regime and establish a pro-Western government. Unlike the Russian government, no other country accuses its own nation of starting a war, a claim consistently made by the 'Russian Dream.' What accusations are you referring to? It is quite strange for me to hear. It is regrettable that Salome Zourabichvili blamed Georgia for the start of the war; I have repeatedly expressed a different position on this topic. I've always said it, and I'll say it again.

the Russian regime and establish a pro-Western government. Unlike the Russian government, no other country accuses its own nation of starting a war, a claim consistently made by the 'Russian Dream.' What accusations are you referring to? It is quite strange for me to hear. It is regrettable that Salome Zourabichvili blamed Georgia for the start of the war; I have repeatedly expressed a different position on this topic. I've always said it, and I'll say it again.

regrettable that Salome Zourabichvili blamed Georgia for the start of the war; I have repeatedly expressed a different position on this topic. I've always said it, and I'll say it again.

"As for the sanctions, there is a serious danger under the conditions of the Russian regime, with numerous facts indicating that the territory of Georgia may be used to evade the sanctions. To ensure, exclude, and integrate Georgia into the EU policy, including aspects related to sanctions, a change in the Russian government is necessary," Bokuchava stated.

with numerous facts indicating that the territory of Georgia may be used to evade the sanctions. To ensure, exclude, and integrate Georgia into the EU policy, including aspects related to sanctions, a change in the Russian government is necessary," Bokuchava stated.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Extradition of Interpol Red Notice Subject from Georgia to the USA, Confirms Prosecutor's Office



According to information provided by the General Prosecutor's Office, a person wanted by Interpol with a red notice for particularly serious crimes was successfully extradited from Georgia to the USA.

The extradited person was wanted by the authorities of the United States of America from 2017 to 2021 for charges related to sexual violence against minor children and assault on a family member in the state of Texas. Additionally, there were charges in 2020-2021 for membership in an organized criminal group in the state of Louisiana, along with other crimes.

2017 to 2021 for charges related to sexual violence against minor children and assault on a family member in the state of Texas. Additionally, there were charges in 2020-2021 for membership in an organized criminal group in the state of Louisiana, along with other crimes.

"The Tbilisi City Court, based on the petition from the General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, deemed the extradition of the mentioned person to the United States of America as admissible.

On December 26, 2023, the Minister of Justice of Georgia made a final decision on extradition, following which the wanted person was transferred by the employees of the Special Penitentiary Service to the representatives of the competent authorities of the United States of America.

wanted person was transferred by the employees of the Special Penitentiary Service to the representatives of the competent authorities of the United States of America.

The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia expresses its readiness to cooperate successfully with the competent authorities of partner countries in the future to bring wanted persons to justice," the statement reads.

### Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Nikoloz Samkharadze Meets with US Ambassador Robin Dunnigan

Nikoloz Samkharadze, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, held a meeting with Robin Dunnigan, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Georgia.

The parties discussed the current relations between Georgia and the USA, exploring opportunities for developing and strengthening parliamentary cooperation

The meeting also addressed regional security issues, with Nikoloz Samkharadze highlighting the challenging conditions in the occupied regions of Georgia, namely Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region, and the perceived threats originating from Russia.

Nikoloz Samkharadze highlighting the challenging conditions in the occupied regions of Georgia, namely Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region, and the perceived threats originating from Russia.



Samkharadze briefed the ambassador on the government's plan and forthcoming actions concerning the implementation of the nine steps outlined by the European Commission for Georgia.

The meeting with the ambassador also addressed the matter of Georgia's integration into NATO. Nikoloz Samkharadze emphasized that NATO integration remains one of the foremost priorities in Georgia's foreign policy.

The Ukraine Energy Support Fund has presented the results of its activities in 2023. The Fund was established by the Energy Community Secretariat, co-chaired by the European Commission, to provide support to Ukraine's energy sector which has suffered from Russian attacks since February 2022.

The Fund has successfully concluded supply contracts valued at more than Euro 129 million for essential equipment, materials, and services. Since its creation, the Fund has received Euro 405 million in grants from a variety of public and private donors.

## Ukraine Energy Support Fund contracts Euro 129 million in 2023



lion for essential equipment, materials, and services. Since its creation, the Fund has received Euro 405 million in grants from a variety of public and private donors.

"As part of this initiative, the delivery of critical equipment – including specialised vehicles, transformers, electric switchgear, and district heating sector equipment among others – is underway. A considerable number of these items are already operational within Ukraine, offering immediate support to the energy sector and consumers," the Energy Community Secretariat said in a press release.

Ukraine, offering immediate support to the energy sector and consumers," the Energy Community Secretariat said in a press release.

The Ukraine Energy Support Fund collects contributions from governments, international organisations, and corporate donors to repair Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure damaged by Russians.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

## Weather

Wednesday, January 10

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 8°C

Night Showers Low: 3°C

Thursday, January 11

Day Partly Cloudy High: 7°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 1°C

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

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.

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.