

United National Movement Leaders meet with EU Ambassador to Georgia Pawel Herczyński



try, from which our citizens do not flee to EU member states, but have a decent income in Georgia," Khabeishvili stated.

According to him, the European partners understand the significance of the 2024 elections and are prepared to observe them.

"Our partners are more active and interested than ever before. There will be unprecedented observation of the elections, both from us and our partners. We and our partners will be mobilized like never before," said Khabeishvili.

Following the meeting, Petre Tsiskarishvili stated that there is widespread support within the party, including himself, for Mikheil Saakashvili's candidacy for prime minister in the upcoming elections.

"It's not just my opinion; there are quite a number of people, fellow party members, who share this view. You will definitely see how Mikheil Saakashvili will be involved in the election process. Of course, the decision has to be made by Mikheil Saakashvili. I hope that in the next few weeks, he will announce himself if such a decision is made," said Tsiskarishvili.

By Liza Mchedlidze

The leaders of the United National Movement, Levan Khabeishvili and Petre Tsiskarishvili, met with the EU Ambassador to Georgia, Pawel Herczyński, and the ambassa-

dors of the EU member states at the EU representation.

After the meeting, the UNM chairman Levan Khabeishvili told the media that they had introduced the three priorities of the UNM and the coalition to the ambassadors.

"It is unimaginable to evaluate the elections as competitive when the main opposition figure, President Saakashvili, is in prison. Second, we have provided our partners with up to three hundred identified districts where Ivanishvili's party man-

ages to manipulate and write results.

And the third important issue, which we have been discussing for these few hours, is the economic opportunities of Georgia and how Georgia should become an economically successful coun-

Lelo's Ana Natsvlishvili Urges Government Action on Disaster Risk Management Strategy

By Liza Mchedlidze

At a briefing held at the party's office, Lelo member Ana Natsvlishvili stated that the government is obligated to promptly develop a natural disaster risk management strategy and action plan to ensure that people are not left alone and vulnerable in the face of natural disasters.

She emphasized that the government is obliged to incorporate all steps and measures to be implemented in the developed strategy and action plan.

"Six months have passed since the Shovi disaster. It is a fact that the government still does not have a natural disaster risk management strategy and action plan. As a result, we witnessed more victims in Keda and Baghdati. Yesterday's announcement by the Prime Minister and the government's praise, despite the loss of 11 lives and severe material damage to many families, is nothing but cynicism.

In the government plan presented by Kobakhidze's cabinet, it was not even considered necessary to devote a separate



chapter to this issue. Only a few sentences are dedicated to this topic in the chapter on environmental protection, and the content is extremely general and vague," said Natsvlishvili.

Natsvlishvili emphasized the importance for the government to investigate the causes of the disasters in Shovi, Guria, Khulo, Keda, and Baghdati, as well as the state's readiness and response levels.

According to the Lelo leader, the government should turn to local and international experts for help and include their knowledge and experience in the development of the strategy. Additionally, they should reach out to the international community, particularly countries vulnerable to natural disasters, to seek expert assistance, share experiences, and secure additional funds for the system's creation.

"At both the central and local levels, a system focused on disaster risk management should be created and maintained, which will focus directly on these issues and will not be hindered by other functions and obligations," Natsvlishvili stated.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Parliament Members Meet with Residents Living Near the Occupation Line



First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, Gia Volski, Chairman of the Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration Committee, Mikheil Sarjveladze, along with members of Parliament Aluda Gudushauri, Giorgi Sosiashvili, and Ketevan Charkviani, met with residents living near the occupation line.

The parliament members gathered information from the local population in the village of Tkviavi regarding their legal status and needs.

The meeting was organized within the framework of the Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration Committee's

work on the 2024 action plan, which entails studying the needs of the population living near the occupation line and determining ways to address them within the committee's competence. The committee plans to continue meeting with

various groups.

These meetings were held in the Shida Kartli region with the support and participation of the state representative, Mikheil Shakulashvili, and the mayor of Gori municipality, Vladimir Khinchevashvili.

National Environment Agency Reports Relocation of 300 Families to Safer Areas

The National Environment Agency issued a statement about landslides and mudslides in Georgia. According to the

agency, from February 6 to 12, geologists assessed 541 families, with around 300 families relocated to safer areas.

“Three groups of geologists from the National Environment Agency remain in the disaster zones developed on the territory of Georgia and continue to study the events on the ground, including two groups in Imereti and one group in the Racha territory. Landslides have been recorded in Imereti, and landslides and

mudslides in Racha.

From February 6 to 12, groups of geologists assessed 541 families, including those in the Adjara region. Preventive measures were implemented, resulting in the relocation of about 300 families to safer areas. Specialists from the agency provided appropriate recommendations for further protective and disaster prevention measures,” the statement reads.

Immobilised Russian assets: Council decides to set aside extraordinary revenues

On 12 February, the Council of the European Union adopted a decision and a regulation clarifying the obligations of Central Securities Depositories (CSD) holding assets and reserves of the Central Bank of Russia (CBR) that are

immobilised as a result of EU's restrictive measures.

After Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU, in coordination with international partners, decided to prohibit any transactions related to the man-

agement of reserves as well as of assets of the CBR. As a result, the relevant assets held by financial institutions in the EU member states were immobilised.

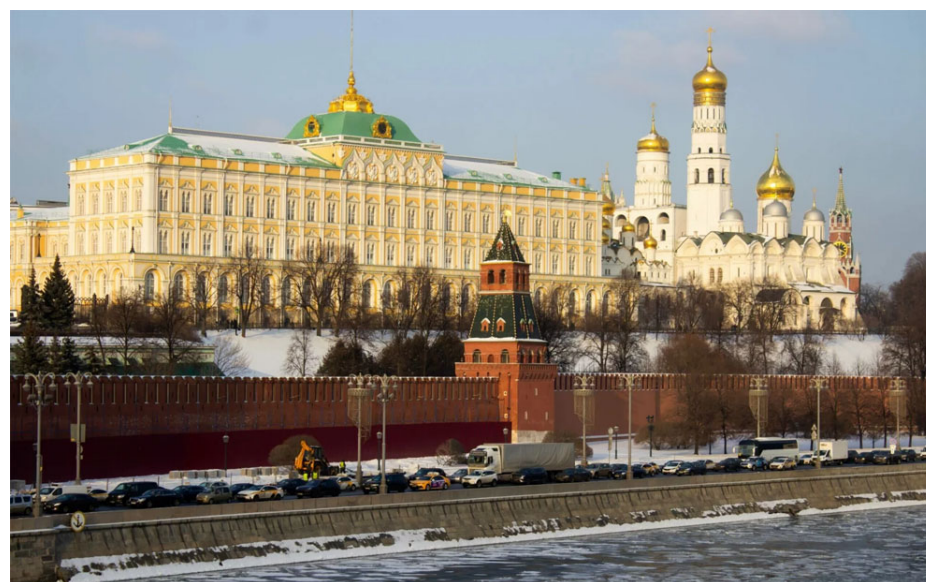
The Council's decision, in line with G7 position, clarifies the prohibition of those transactions as well as the legal status of the revenues generated by the CSDs in connection with the holding of Russian immobilised assets and sets clear rules for the entities holding them. The Council decided in particular that CSDs holding more than 1 million of CBR's assets must account for extraordinary cash balances accumulating due to EU restrictive measures separately and must also keep corresponding revenues separate. In

addition, CSDs shall be prohibited from disposing of the ensuing net profits.

In view of the risks and costs related to holding of the assets and reserves of the Central Bank of Russia, each central security depository may request its supervisory authority to authorise a release of a share of those net profits in view of complying with statutory capital and risk management requirements.

This decision paves the way for the Council to decide on a possible establishment of a financial contribution to the EU budget raised on these net profits to support Ukraine and its recovery and reconstruction at a later stage. This financial contribution may be channelled through the EU budget to the Ukraine Facility on which the Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on 6 February 2024.

(eunighbourseast.eu)



Weather

Wednesday, February 14

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 19°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 9°C

Thursday, February 15

Day Cloudy High: 14°C

Night Cloudy Low: 8°C

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