

Georgian Foreign Minister Darchiashvili Meets Turkish Counterpart Hakan Fidan

By Liza Mchedlidze

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Ilia Darchiashvili, paid an official visit to the Republic of Türkiye. During the visit, Darchiashvili held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, Hakan Fidan.

Georgian Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili stated at a press briefing that discussions included exchanging opinions and making plans for future cooperation. Darchiashvili emphasized the significance of high-level visits to enhance ties between Georgia and Türkiye, and both parties agreed to work on organizing visits, including the President of Türkiye visiting Georgia and the Prime Minister of Georgia visiting Türkiye.

"Today, both face-to-face and during the meeting with the extended composition of the delegations, we discussed extremely important issues of the dynamic agenda between our countries. We exchanged opinions and set plans for future cooperation. We emphasized the need for high-level visits and agreed to continue working to organize visits, including those of the President of Türkiye to Georgia and the Prime Minister of Georgia to Türkiye," said Darchiashvili.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan remarked that bilateral relations between Georgia and Türkiye are developing excellently. He added that political, economic, cultural, and people-to-people relations between the two countries are at



the highest level.

It should be noted that we have close cooperation in the fields of energy and transport. I would like to emphasize that our bilateral relations are developing excellently. Political, economic, cultural, and people-to-people relations between the two countries are at the highest level.

At the meeting with my Georgian colleague, we welcomed the positive dynamics of economic and trade relations between the two countries. During the last 15 years, the Republic of Türkiye has been the largest trade partner for Georgia. Last year, the trade turnover increased to three billion dollars, and thus we

reached the set goal.

Currently, our goal is to increase the trade turnover to five billion dollars. We also talked about this topic," Hakan Fidan stated.

Fidan also discussed ongoing processes in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions during a meeting with the Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

According to the Turkish Foreign Minister, they reiterated support for peaceful conflict resolution, emphasizing Turkey's commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized framework. They also discussed Turkey's role in the conflict resolution process.

Irakli Gharibashvili Addresses Government Decree Publication Practices

By Liza Mchedlidze

Georgian Dream Chairman Irakli Gharibashvili discussed the practice of publishing government decrees and stated that this practice was already in place when he became Prime Minister, and he hasn't spent much time on changing it. He emphasized that there's no international standard mandating the publication of all decrees.

"I encountered such a practice in the government, and I haven't spent much time on changing it. Firstly, there is no established international standard that requires all decrees to be published. This is not a mandatory rule or practice. We have studied examples from many countries, such as the USA and European countries. Do you think everything is transparent?"

"Why have you never asked before, as the media? Let me remind you that I served as prime minister for three years. Can you recall a single instance when you asked

for a copy of this or that decree? Of course, I would have shared it with you," Gharibashvili stated.

Gharibashvili stated that the government had not hidden any information and that it would be made public in case of an appeal.

"I did not make any illegal decisions during my prime ministership. I have not taken any decisions against the interests of the country and people. I have never hidden any information.

Honestly, I will explain it to you simply: my position was as follows - when the most corrupt, most closed, anti-European, anti-Georgian former government representatives, representatives of the United National Movement, and their satellites asked me for this or that information, I protested. Of course, all this was political, and naturally, our reaction was appropriate.

Of course, we responded and acted in accordance with the law, but I want to tell you that there was no obligation to do so," said Gharibashvili.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

EU Ambassador Urges Government-Civil Sector Collaboration for EU Membership Steps



Pawel Herczyński, the Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, emphasized the need for collaboration between the government and the civil sector

to achieve the 9 steps required for EU membership. He also stressed the importance of involvement from non-governmental organizations within the civil society platform of the Eastern Partnership in these working groups.

“Civil society involvement in legislative and decision-making processes is very important in any democratic state, including Georgia. That is why, in one of the 9 steps, there is specific dis-

ussion about maximizing civil society involvement in legislative and decision-making processes.

We are happy to see that Georgia has a vibrant civil society, with a huge diversity of organizations focusing on different issues.

In our opinion, it is extremely important for these civil society organizations to be involved as much as possible in legislative and decision-making processes.

It is the government’s responsibility to find ways to involve civil society as much as possible,” Herczyński said.

Irakli Gharibashvili Accuses Salome Zourabichvili of Treason and Constitutional Violations

Irakli Gharibashvili, Chairman of Georgian Dream, accused Salome Zourabichvili of treason, claiming that she made no efforts to attain EU candidacy status and has violated the Constitution.

“I will say it directly; now that I am no longer the head of the

government and I am the head of the party, I will allow myself. Salome Zourabichvili committed treason. In the eyes of every member of our party and from our point of view, she does not serve the interests of our state. She has flagrantly violated the



Constitution more than once, and unfortunately, continues to do so.

What can I say to you except that it is a shame? It’s a shame to behave like this, especially from a lady who grew up in Europe and from a president brought by the founder of our

team, our party. I have to remind Ms. Salome that her rating was one percent.

Her visit is, of course, a confirmation of this once again, everything is obscured. Her campaign was also fake and hypocritical; she didn’t do anything

for the country to attain the status. Her goal was to somehow take away this greatly earned status that we brought to the people, the government, together with the people. But here too, she suffered a fiasco.” Gharibashvili stated.

The EU Ambassador to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski, visited the Marneuli municipality and the Samshvilde village. Welcomed by Marneuli’s Mayor, Kenan Omarov and the Chair of the Marneuli Municipality Council (Sakrebulo) Amiran Giorgadze, Ambassador Herczynski had an in-depth discussion about the region’s current and future projects and development strategies. The visit aimed at directly engaging with local organisations, civil society and youth and getting a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced in the region. As Georgia continues its journey towards the EU membership, the EU is a steadfast partner for promoting development in all of Georgia’s regions and to all of its communities.

Meeting with the Red Bridge NGO was the central part of the visit. The founders presented their projects promoting the inclusion of ethnic Azerbaijanis into Georgia’s development. An interactive session with the local youth at the NGO’s premises provided a platform for vibrant discussions with the Ambassa-

The European Union promotes regional development and empowers communities across Georgia



dor, highlighting the EU’s emphasis on youth engagement, commonality of values and Georgia’s European integration.

“We are not just open to your ideas and participation but are actively seeking them out. Your energy, creativity, and innovative thinking are crucial to shaping a future that is not only prosperous but also inclusive and sustainable,” the Ambassador said.

At the EU-funded STAR’s re-

gional hub, Ambassador Herczynski convened with the civil society representatives and local activists. The meeting facilitated a rich dialogue on local initiatives, the challenges faced by the civil society, and potential avenues for EU cooperation, reinforcing the EU’s role as a supportive partner in civic development.

“Your efforts will ensure the development of a more inclusive, vibrant, and interconnected com-

munity, based on the principles that resonate deeply with the values of the European Union,” Ambassador Herczynski said.

The visit culminated in Samshvilde village, where Ambassador Herczynski explored the “Orbis Bude” social enterprise, an EU-supported project exemplifying sustainable tourism and local empowerment. Offering a range of tourist services, this venture not only promotes the region’s cultural heri-

tage but also champions inclusivity by involving local women in its operations.

“I was so impressed by the energy and enthusiasm seen in the “Orbis Bude”. It provides unique opportunities to the local youth by providing the skills helping these young individuals to become proficient guides and, more broadly, fosters a spirit of inclusivity and empowerment”, the Ambassador noted.

Ambassador Herczynski’s visit to Marneuli and Samshvilde is a testament to the EU’s dedication to grassroots engagement, support to local initiatives and promoting inclusivity across Georgia.

For more than 30 years, the European Union has built a close partnership with Georgia, supporting its development through knowledge and experience sharing, expertise, innovation and financial support. The relationship between the EU and Georgia is based on shared values of peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and inclusive economic growth. More about the EU’s support in Georgia <https://eu4georgia.eu/the-european-union-in-georgia/>

Weather

Friday, February 16

Day Showers High: 8°C

Night Showers Low: 4°C

Saturday, February 17

Day Showers High: 6°C

Night Showers Low: 2°C

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