

EU Ambassador Pawel Herczyński Reaffirms NGOs' Crucial Role on World NGO Day

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Pawel Herczyński, released a statement on World NGO Day emphasizing the crucial role played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide, including in Georgia. He acknowledged NGOs as key contributors to upholding shared values between the European Union and Georgia, such as democracy, freedom, the rule of law, and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

Herczyński highlighted the significance of NGOs in monitoring governments, providing essential social services to vulnerable communities, and fostering a vibrant civil society in Georgia. He emphasized that NGOs serve as a vital link between citizens and political leaders, amplifying voices that might otherwise go unheard.

In reaffirming the European Union's commitment to supporting NGOs in Georgia and worldwide, Herczyński underscored the importance of ensuring their meaningful involvement. He emphasized that this involvement is crucial for building a more just, equitable, and pros-



perous future for everyone.

"Today on World NGO Day, we recognise the work of non-governmental organisations around the world. NGOs play a pivotal role in ensuring the values that European Union and Georgia share – democracy, freedom, rule of law and human

rights, including rights of minorities.

The role that NGOs perform in monitoring government is an essential element of any democracy. NGOs often provide vital social services, particularly to vulnerable communities. Georgia benefits from vibrant civil

society. NGOs make valuable contribution to Georgia's EU integration.

They serve as a vital bridge between citizens and political leaders. They amplify the voices that might otherwise go unheard.

On the occasion of the world

NGO day, let me reaffirm the European Union's commitment to support NGOs' work in Georgia and worldwide. Ensuring their meaningful involvement is crucial to build a more just, equitable, and prosperous future for all of us," Herczyński stated.

Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili Addresses UN Human Rights Council's 55th Session

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Ilia Darchiashvili, delivered a speech

during the 55th session of the high-level segment of the UN Human Rights Council.

According to information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

in his speech, Darchiashvili drew attention to the current global situation regarding the protection of human rights.

"The minister spoke about the

steps taken by the Georgian side in terms of human rights protection, noting the importance of approving the National Human Rights Protection Strategy for 2022-2030 and the Action Plan for 2024-2026.

Particular attention was paid to the facts of human rights violations in the occupied regions of Georgia. Against the backdrop of these existing challenges, there was emphasis on the necessity of allowing international monitoring mechanisms into the occupied territories," reads the statement.

According to the Ministry, Darchiashvili emphasized the importance of the international community's support and its role in both human rights protection and peaceful conflict resolution.

"We believe that a strong stance from the international community is crucial for Russia to fulfill its international obligations, including the 2008 ceasefire agreement brokered by the European Union, and to withdraw its military forces from

the territory of Georgia," Darchiashvili said.

The minister also noted the importance of the UN Human Rights Council resolution titled 'Cooperation with Georgia' and expressed hope for its continued strong support.

"During his speech, while addressing the challenges in the region, the minister once again reaffirmed Georgia's unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Darchiashvili noted that, in light of the challenges facing the world, the full utilization of the mandate of the UN Human Rights Council is critically important. As a member of the Council, Georgia is ready to contribute to this effort.

Darchiashvili once again confirmed Georgia's readiness, as a member country, to take concrete steps towards human rights protection, both at the national level and in international forums," reads the Ministry's statement.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Foreign Minister Iia Darchiashvili Meets with UN Refugee Commissioner Filippo Grandi



On February 27th, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iia Darchiashvili, met with Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iia Darchiashvili congratulated Filippo Grandi on the successful hosting of the Global Refugee Forum at the end

of 2023 and welcomed the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner in Georgia.

Darchiashvili spoke about the difficult humanitarian situation in the regions of Georgia occupied by Russia, emphasizing the rights of internally displaced persons

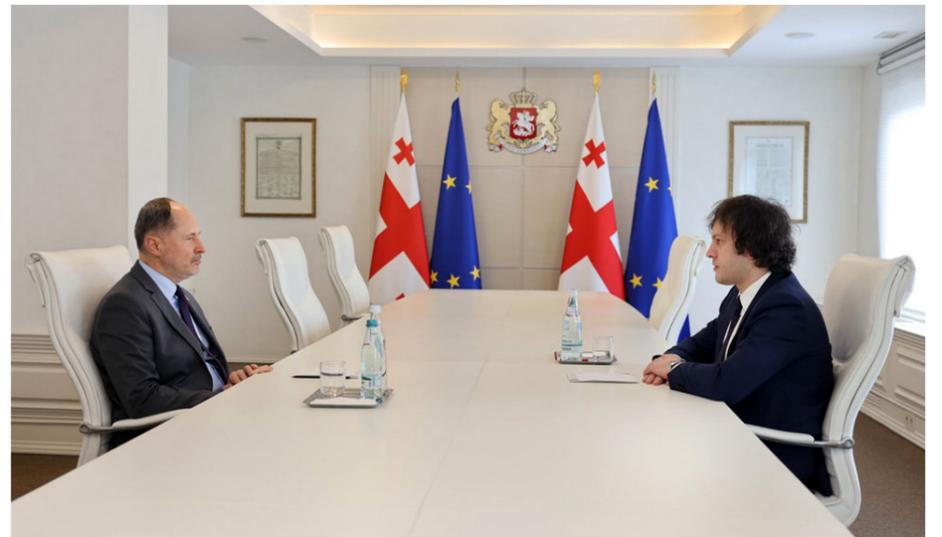
and refugees.

The minister emphasized the importance of the activities carried out by the Tbilisi office of the High Commissioner concerning the needs of citizens living in the occupied regions. The conversation also addressed the facts of human rights violations in these areas.

Darchiashvili emphasized the necessity of permitting international mechanisms in the occupied regions and underscored the importance of maintaining this issue at a high level on the agenda of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

The parties engaged in discussions concerning the Government of Georgia's policies and programs regarding internally displaced persons and refugees.

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze Meets EU Ambassador Pawel Herczyński



The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze, met with Pawel Herczyński,

the Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia.

According to the Prime Minister's press service, during the meeting, Kobakhidze emphasized Georgia's rightful place within the EU.

Kobakhidze and Herczyński also conducted a review of the Prime Minister's recent visit to Brussels and the series of high-level meetings held there.

As the Prime Minister noted, following the attainment of candidate status, Georgia's next priority is to open accession negotiations with the European Union. Irakli Kobakhidze and the EU ambassador discussed the dynamics of

implementing the priorities outlined in the enlargement report.

On 26 February, the Council of the European Union extended the restrictive measures linked to internal repression in Belarus and the regime's support for Russia's war against Ukraine for another year, until 28 February 2025.

Since August 2020, the EU has imposed several successive rounds of individual and sectoral sanctions against those responsible for internal repression and human rights abuses in Belarus, and in the context of Belarus' involvement in Russia's war against Ukraine.

"With these measures, the EU is signalling to the political and economic actors responsible that their actions and support for the regime and to Russia come at a cost," says a statement, released

Belarus: EU prolongs restrictive measures for another year



by the Council of the EU.

The individual restrictive measures include an asset freeze and prohibition to make funds available. Natural persons are additionally subject to a ban on travel. There are currently 233 individuals, including Alexandr Lukashenko, and 37 entities listed.

Belarus also remains subject to targeted economic sanctions, including restrictions in the financial sector, trade, dual-use goods, technology and telecommunication, energy, transport and others.

In its Conclusions of 19 February 2024, the Foreign Affairs Council strongly condemned the continuing persecution and intimidation campaigns against all segments of Belarusian society, the unprecedented level of repression, and restrictions on political participation. It also stated that the EU "stands ready to take further restrictive and targeted measures as long as the Belarusian authorities continue their actions".

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Wednesday, February 28

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 6°C

Night Clear
Low: -3°C

Thursday, February 29

Day Clear
High: 8°C

Night Clear
Low: -2°C

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