

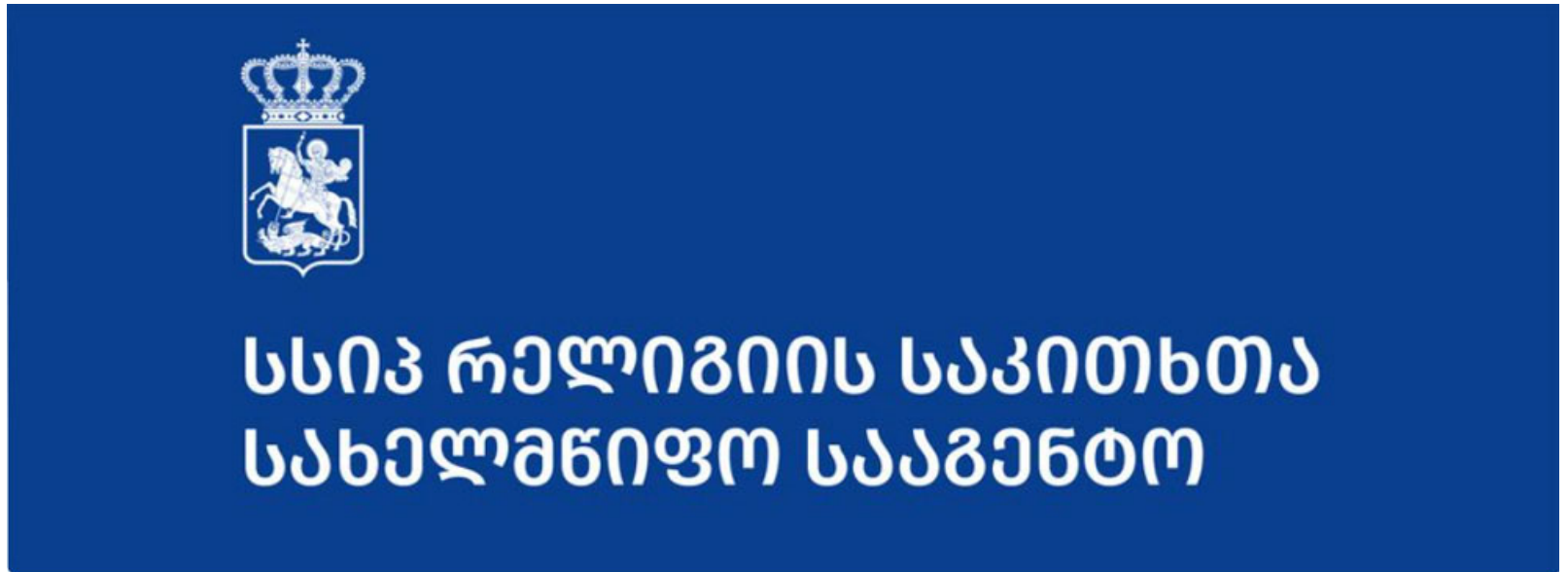
State Agency for Religious Issues Condemns Adigeni Incident

By Liza Mchedlidze

On March 8, a religious conflict erupted in Adigeni, Georgia. Dozens of people gathered in Adigeni township, preventing Muslims from praying. The Batumelebi publication released a video from the location, showing citizens, including clergymen, gathered near a house. In the video, they verbally abuse the resident and demand that he leave.

The State Agency for Religious Issues issued a statement regarding the developments in Adigeni. In the statement, the Agency condemns the use of religion and belief for narrow interests. It also calls on Muslim and Christian religious leaders not to follow the provocation and to work within their congregations to prevent the tension surrounding the incident from spreading further.

"For the Agency, any deliberate destruction is unacceptable, and it condemns the use of religion and belief for narrow interests. The agency does not welcome violence and hopes that the issue will be resolved as soon as possible. Freedom of religion and belief is protected in Georgia, and this has been repeatedly acknowledged by high-ranking individuals working on religious issues in Georgia's partner countries.



რელიგიის საკითხთა სახელმწიფო სააგენტო / State Agency For Religious Issues

The agency urges all parties to demonstrate common sense and act in accordance with Georgia's interests and legislation. Additionally, it calls on Muslim and Christian religious leaders not to be provoked and to work within their congregations to prevent the tension surrounding the incident from spreading further.

The State Agency for Religious Issues maintains systematic communication with the local government, and its regional coordinator is actively involved

in the mentioned issue. The agency calls on political entities to refrain from making provocative statements, to demonstrate high civic responsibility, and to act in accordance with the principles of secularism," the statement reads.

According to the State Agency for Religious Issues, they were actively involved in the case from the very beginning, and in the future, they are ready to act within their competence to protect the interests of all religious denominations.

EU Delegation in Georgia Issues Statement on Brussels Meetings with Zurab Adeishvili

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Delegation of the European Union to Georgia released a statement regarding the meetings held at the European Commission in Brussels with the participation of Zurab Adeishvili, the former Minister of Justice and Prosecutor General of Georgia, and the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andriy Kostin. Zurab Adeishvili has been accused of committing multiple crimes and has been found guilty of some of them in Georgia.

The EU Delegation has clarified that Gert Jan Koopman, Deputy Director-General of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, regularly engages in meetings with representatives from diverse regions, including Ukraine.

The statement highlighted that any misrepresentation of Koopman's recent meeting with the Prosecutor General of Ukraine would be classified as disinformation. Furthermore, the statement emphasized that combating disinformation aimed



European Union in Georgia

119K followers • 71 following

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6576; Euro - 2.8949; GBP - 3.3884; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.9277; Swiss Franc - 3.0173

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

at the European Union constitutes the inaugural step among nine crucial steps for commencing accession negotiations.

“In response to the information spread in the media, the EU Representation in Georgia explains that Gert Jan Koopman, the Deputy Director-General from the Directorate-General for

EU Delegation in Georgia Issues Statement on Brussels Meetings with Zurab Adeishvili

Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, has regular meetings with representatives of the Western Balkans, the Eastern and Southern Neighborhood, and other countries, including

Ukraine.

Last Tuesday, he met with the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, accompanied by several members of the Ukrainian delegation. To present this meeting in

a different way is disinformation (while correct information can be easily obtained on EU pages in social networks).

The fight against disinformation directed against

the European Union is the first step out of the nine steps that must be taken towards the opening of accession negotiations,” statement reads.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

President Salome Zourabichvili Awards Medals of Honor to Five Female Human Rights Defenders



Salome Zourabichvili, the President of Georgia, awarded medals of honor to five female human rights defenders on the occasion of International Women’s Day, according to the administration of the President of Georgia.

According to the President’s administration, Zourabichvili

Pataraiia, co-founder of the Safari organization; Ana Arganashvili, a human rights defender; Eliso Amirejibi and Nato Shavlakadze, founders of the National Network for Protection from Violence; and Tamar Museridze, founder of the Vedzeb organization.

The award ceremony took place at the Orbeliani Palace, where the president personally presented the state awards to the human rights defenders.

Shalva Papuashvili Reacts to Zurab Adeishvili’s Meetings in the Bundestag and European Commission

The Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Shalva Papuashvili, responded to Zurab Adeishvili’s participation in meetings held within the legislative and executive structures of Germany and the European



Union. In his response, Papuashvili stated that the heroic struggle of the Ukrainian people against aggression does not exempt its government from the responsibility of protecting criminals.

“Presenting political relations with criminals in a normal light

is against the common values of the Georgian people and the European Union. “The heroic struggle of the Ukrainian people against aggression does not release its government from the responsibility of protecting criminals,” Papuashvili wrote.

Invest in women. Accelerate progress.

Joint Statement on the International Women’s Day 2024

This joint statement is issued by the United Nations system in Georgia, the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Embassies to Georgia of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia,

Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.



On the International Women’s Day, we celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of women around the world, including in Georgia. We reaffirm our commitment to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

At a time when the world is facing many crises, achieving gender equality is more vital than ever. Despite progress over the last decades, full equality is clearly off track. Globally, at the current pace of progress, achieving full legal equality may take up to 300 years.¹

In Georgia, women spend five times more time on unpaid domestic and care work than men.² This prevents women from pursuing their own professional suc-

cess and from participating in political and public life. Women’s economic activity rate (41.5%) lags significantly behind men’s (64%).³ Nearly half of women aged 25-34 are not working. Thousands of women have

migrated to support their families through remittances. Violence against women and girls remains one of the most pervasive human rights violations. Women’s voices are often excluded from political participation and decision-making. Despite the implementation of mandatory electoral gender quotas, women in Georgia hold only one-fifth of parliamentary seats and one-fourth of local council seats. Fifty-four percent of women candidates in Georgia have experienced physical, psychological, economic, or sexual violence and harassment during their election campaigns or political careers.⁴

To build stronger, fairer societies, we must ensure that the rights of women are safeguarded and promoted, that women have

an equal seat at the table and an equal voice and agency in economic, political and social life. Public and private investments are needed to drive women’s inclusion across all sectors of the economy and to actively address all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. Ensuring decent work for all women, including by closing gender employment gaps, ensuring fair wages, and formalizing women’s informal work could significantly boost Georgia’s economy and lift women and their families from poverty. More support is needed for forcibly displaced women who have shown great resilience and taken on leadership roles in seeking solutions for their communities.

We hope to see strong, meaningful commitment by all political parties to gender equality and women’s political and economic empowerment. We especially emphasize the urgent need to take concrete steps to eliminate violence against women in politics and strengthen efforts in combatting sexist hate speech

against women politicians and women election officials. We must also support women’s rights organizations fighting against stereotypes and battling to make women’s and girls’ voices heard.

On this International Women’s Day, let us all join forces in building inclusive communities and societies with the full participation of women and girls of all backgrounds.

¹ Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2022. UN Women <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2022>

² Time Use Survey, 2020-21, UN Women: <https://rb.gy/oxenup>

³ Women’s Economic Inactivity in Georgia, UN Women: https://t.ly/1_jEI

⁴ Violence Against Women in Politics in Georgia, UN Women: <https://rb.gy/me1h23>

Weather

Monday, March 11

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 9°C

Night Clear
Low: -2°C

Tuesday, March 12

Day Clear
High: 9°C

Night Clear
Low: -1°C

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