

## Georgian Government Expresses Deep Concern Over Ukrainian Authorities' Attitude Towards Georgia

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Government of Georgia has released another statement condemning the presence of Zurab Adeishvili, former Minister of Justice and Prosecutor General of Georgia, in Ukraine's official delegation during their visit to the European Union and the Republic of Germany. They have expressed deep concern regarding the Ukrainian authorities' attitude towards Georgia.

"We would like to express deep worry and concern over the attitude of the Ukrainian government towards the friendly country of Ukraine – Georgia and the Georgian people.

Due to the fact that Ukraine is involved in a war and is defending itself from Russian military aggression, we refrained from taking a position on this attitude of the Ukrainian authorities for a long time. However, after the visit of Zurab Adeishvili as part of the Ukrainian delegation to Brussels and Berlin, we are forced to express our position clearly," the statement reads.

The government asserted that over the past 2 years, Georgia has consistently shown solidarity with the Ukrainian state and its people, condemning Russia's military aggression in the country.

According to the statement, the government finds the series of decisions made by the Ukrainian authorities regrettable and deeply troubling, as they directly oppose the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

The government of Georgia regards it as crucial for Ukraine to extradite individuals currently holding high-ranking



positions within its government, who are wanted for criminal offenses in Georgia. They deem this step necessary to mend relations between the two countries, and they expressed hope that the Ukrainian government would reconsider its deci-

sions.

"It is important and necessary for the Ukrainian authorities to hand over to Georgia the criminals who currently hold high positions in the Ukrainian government.

We deeply believe that regardless of the decisions made by politicians, nothing can shake the historical friendship between our countries and peoples," the statement reads.

## 2025 US Budget: Aid to Georgia Reduced by \$8 Million

By Liza Mchedlidze

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the U.S Department of State published the draft budget for 2025, allocating \$80 million for aid to Georgia.

The document reads that this allocation will assist the country in democratic and economic development, as well as in progressing towards Euro-Atlantic integration, thereby strengthening Georgia's resilience against harmful influences.

According to the proposed project, this monetary assistance will support institutional checks and balances, uphold the rule of law, and aid Georgian civil society in advancing democratic and economic development. Additionally, it will strengthen access to independent, reliable, balanced media and promote political pluralism.

It should be noted that in 2024, 88 million US dollars were allocated for Georgia. If the 2025 project is approved, the aid to Georgia will be reduced by 8 million US dollars.

The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze, addressed the reduction of US funding, claiming that a large part of US aid goes to non-governmental organizations. He stated that these NGOs had "disappointed" the American government in the past years, which may have



CONTINUED ON Page 2

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6570; Euro - 2.9052; GBP - 3.3999; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.9162; Swiss Franc - 3.0314

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

## 2025 US Budget: Aid to Georgia Reduced by \$8 Million

led to the reduction in funding.

"I cannot tell you, the United States of America is the one making decisions on these issues. You know that a significant portion of this funding goes to non-governmental organizations. NGOs disappointed the American state last year and the year before. Maybe this was the rea-

son for the decrease in funding," Kobakhidze said.

Tamar Khidasheli, the Director of the Democratic Research Institute (DRI), said that Kobakhidze's statement is an at-

tempt to shift blame and avoid taking responsibility for the reduction of US aid.

According to Khidasheli, Instead of acknowledging any mistakes made by the government, Kobakhidze is blaming

NGOs for the decrease in funding. The DRI Director sees this as an effort by Kobakhidze to deflect accountability away from their government.

### The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

#### Davyd Arakhamia Labels Georgian Government as Pro-Kremlin



Davyd Arakhamia, the chairman of the ruling party's Servant of the People faction in Ukraine, referred to the Georgian government as pro-Kremlin.

Arakhamia responded to the

March 11 statement from Georgian Dream, in which the government expressed concern about the Ukrainian government's 'attitude' towards Georgia.

The case pertains to the presence of Zurab Adeishvili, former Minister of Justice and former Prosecutor General of Georgia, in Ukraine's official delegation during visits to the European Union and Germany.

"The pro-Kremlinist government of Georgia is making certain demands regarding the extradition of our citizens 'in order to normalize relations'.

If we are truly discussing 'normalization', then the plan is as follows: Release our citizen, Mikheil Saakashvili, from prison and return him to Ukraine; Stop direct flights with the Russian Federation, as demanded by the Georgian people themselves; Stop assisting the aggressor in evading sanctions. Then relations will be easily normalized," Arakhamia wrote.

#### Mamuka Mdinardze Addresses Davyd Arakhamia's Statements

Mamuka Mdinardze responded to Davyd Arakhamia, one of the leaders of Ukraine's ruling party, alleging that Arakhamia's attitudes towards Georgia are hostile.

"It is very good that flights to Russia have been restored because it helps a lot of people to move and also promotes the ar-

rival of tourists. That they want to impose sanctions, stop air traffic, and destroy Georgia's economy is nothing new.

One request is very speculative, very bad, and pertains to

georgian citizens, and the third demand is a blatant lie. There is no need to comment further. Arakhamia's attitude is a continuation of this unfriendly stance, which indicates not only



the criminal Saakashvili. The second concerns harming Geor-

unfriendliness but also hostility," Mdinardze stated.

## EBRD, EU and Sweden back ProCredit Bank financing for Georgian female entrepreneurs

Women-led micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Georgia are to benefit from fresh funds, thanks to a loan by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), supported by the European Union and Sweden and announced today.

A credit line of Euro 8 million to ProCredit Bank, one of Georgia's leading banks and a longstanding EBRD partner, will be made available to women-led firms to finance investments to boost growth and



development.

This is the first time ProCredit Bank has extended gender-focused financing. It is joining the EBRD's Women in Business (WiB) programme, which, with the support of the EU and Sweden, enables women's access to finance and know-how through advisory services, mentoring and training.

The EU is supporting the loan for women entrepreneurs under its European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+) guarantee programme.

Women-led firms are often seen as a riskier segment in the economies where the EBRD invests due to their small size and lack of hard collateral, the EBRD explained in a press release. Under the new credit line, women entrepreneurs will benefit from risk sharing, allowing more women entrepreneurs who would not be able to provide hard collateral to qualify for and secure finance.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

### Weather

Wednesday, March 13

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 14°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 5°C

Thursday, March 14

Day Showers  
High: 9°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 4°C

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