

Prime Minister Kobakhidze Accuses NGOs of Lack of Transparency and Spreading False Information



NGOs of spending a significant portion of their funds without providing any detailed information or transparency about how the money is used. He stated that out of a total of more than 85 million, at least 70 million have been spent by these NGOs in a non-transparent manner.

"It is reported that at least this amount has been spent by the respective NGOs, although we have no information on the purpose or specific sources of these funds. We have detailed information only about 18%, about 15 million 400 thousand GEL," Kobakhidze stated.

In this statement, Kobakhidze pointed out that a significant portion of NGOs' expenses is not reported to the Ministry of Finance. He specified examples such as travel expenses, major portions of office rent, and purchases made without electronic waybills.

"In addition, it is worth noting that a large part of their expenses is not shown at all to the Ministry of Finance. This includes travel expenses, the largest part of office rent, and purchases made without electronic waybills, which are quite significant. Therefore, it is safe to say that not 82%, but much more than 90% of the funds they spend are completely non-transparent to the public. Even the government has absolutely no information about who and what it was funded for," Kobakhidze said.

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

During a government meeting, Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze criticized the lack of transparency in the operations of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), highlighting the public's lack of access to infor-

mation regarding the recipients or purposes of the funds. He condemned the dissemination of false information and stressed the significance of society being fully informed about all matters.

"False information is being spread, as if information on the financing of non-governmental

organizations is still available to the government and government institutions. This is a lie. We extracted information about seven non-governmental organizations. These are the strongest in terms of resources, this time I will not say rich, and also non-governmental organizations dis-

tinguished by extremism. It turned out that since 2012, they have declared at most 18% of the funds they spend. In particular, the total amount that was shown, but without details, was 85 million 400 thousand GEL," Kobakhidze stated.

The Prime Minister accused

MEP Viola von Cramon Condemns Georgian Dream's Reintroduction of Russian Law

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

MEP Viola von Cramon sharply criticized the Georgian ruling party, Georgian Dream, for reintroducing the controversial 'Russian law', accusing them of lying about their intentions not to revive the scrapped legislation. She characterized this move as part of the party's anti-EU, pro-Russian stance aimed at derailing Georgia's path to EU integration to benefit Moscow-aligned oligarchs.

Von Cramon argued that the law targets pro-democracy NGOs by labeling them as foreign agents to damage their reputation and facilitate the ruling party's continued undermining of Georgian democracy and its European aspirations without consequence. She highlighted that, contrary to suppressing actual Russian agents posing threats to Georgia, the law would allow them to operate

freely.

The Georgian Dream has lied as usual - they promised not to reintroduce the law they had to scrap a year ago, but they did it anyway. This is a continuation of the anti-EU and pro-Russian policy of the ruling party in recent years. The bill intends to sabotage Georgia's EU path and please the oligarchs' handlers in Moscow.

The aim of the bill is to smear only pro-democracy NGOs as foreign agents, undermine their credibility in the eyes of the public and allow Georgian Dream to continue eroding Georgian democracy and European future with impunity. Needless to say that Russian agents, who are a real threat to Georgia and are widely present in the country, will be allowed to continue their covert operations without any hurdle," Von Cramon's statement reads.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6777; Euro - 2.9005; GBP - 3.3825; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.8950; Swiss Franc - 2.9568

MEP Viola von Cramon Condemns Georgian Dream's Reintroduction of 'Russian Law'

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The MEP stressed that Georgia's EU candidacy was achieved despite the government, thanks to the Georgian people's dedication to democracy

and European values. She warned that adopting the 'Russian law' would effectively close Georgia's door to European integration, as it would lead to the suspension of accession talks and any other forms of EU integra-

tion, urging the EU to make its position clear to both the Georgian government and its people. "The EU candidacy was granted to Georgia not because of its government, but in spite of it. The decision was a credit

to the courage of the Georgian people to stand up for democracy and European values. The EU needs to clarify unequivocally to the Georgian government and the People of Georgia that by adopting the 'Russian law', the

Georgian dream is deliberately shutting the doors to the country's European future, as there will be no opening of accession talks or any other form of the EU integration after this," Cramon wrote.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

President Salome Zourabichvili Plans to Veto 'Russian Law'



In response to the potential passage of the foreign agents law, commonly referred to as the 'Russian law', President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili has signaled her intention to veto the legislation. This announcement was made by the President's parliamentary secretary, Giorgi Mskhiladze, who emphasized the President's determination to exercise her constitutional authority in rejecting the proposed law.

"The president, of course, will use her constitutional right and veto the said law," Mskhiladze affirmed. At the session of the Bureau, Mskhiladze demanded that the mentioned law should not be registered at all, as it would hinder Georgia's progress towards European integration. Moreover, he emphasized that the law is severely criticized by Western partners. Despite Mskhiladze's demand, the ruling party did not consider it.

"We all witnessed the reaction to the initiation of the aforementioned bill by the majority. Both the European Union and the Secretary General of NATO, along with our international and strategic partners, the USA, re-

sponded to this, noting that the adoption of this law would hinder Georgia's path to European integration. Accordingly, we demanded the bureau not to register it at all, in order to avoid initiating discussions on the said law in the committees. In general, discussion of this law, which was promised last year, should have been halted," said Mskhiladze.

President Salome Zourabichvili's Administration Confirms Discussions on 'Russian Law' with Diplomatic Corps

President Salome Zourabichvili's administration has confirmed her discussions with diplomatic corps representatives regarding the anticipated impacts of the second proposed 'Russian law' and the current situation within the country.



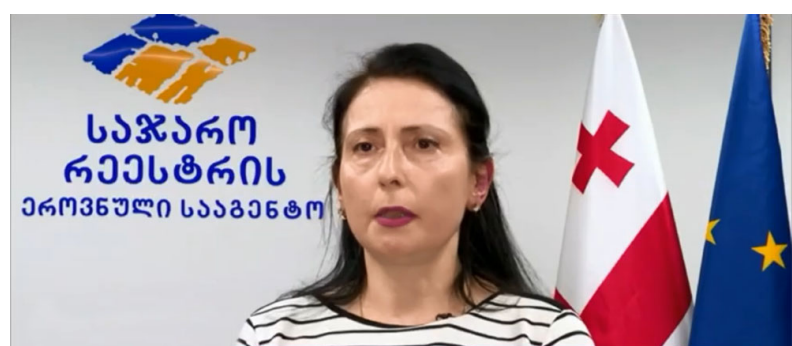
At the meeting, attended by ambassadors and embassy representatives from EU member states, the European Union, the United States, and Great Britain, discussions focused on the bill regarding the transparency of foreign influence. The President of Georgia emphasized that the Georgian people had already rejected the Russian law once, and now the only course of action is to express our European opinion through elections!

According to the president, there is no alternative to Georgia's European path and integration into the European Union. This represents the unshakable decision of the Georgian people, and nothing can divert them from this path," the statement reads.

The administration conveyed that diplomatic corps representatives have expressed concerns about the initiated draft law, highlighting its potential threat to Georgia's European integration.

Alt Info-Linked Party Conservative Movement Registration Revoked by NAPR

The National Agency of Public Registry has canceled the registration of the Conservative Movement, the political party associated with Alt Info, known for its violent and pro-Russian stance. This decision has already been implemented in the



registry. NAPR cited the non-submission of the congress's charter as the legal justification for the cancellation of the registration of the Conservative Movement: "On December 6, 2021, a new charter signed by Konstantine Morgoshia was submitted to the National Agency of Public Registry. According to current legislation, the charter was re-

quired to be approved by the congress.

Thus, in accordance with the requirements of Article 17, Clause 5 of the Organic Law of Georgia 'On Political Unions of Citizens,' the applicant was expected to submit the charter adopted by the party members' congress to the National Public Registry Agency, which did not occur," the statement reads.



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Wednesday, April 10

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Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 9°C

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