

President Zourabichvili Voices Concerns on Recent Legislative Developments During Meeting with Opposition Members

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili addressed opposition politicians during a meeting at the Atoneli residence, expressing concerns about recent legislative developments. She emphasized the challenges posed by the rapid adoption of laws, particularly the focus on "Russian law" to the neglect of other important matters. Zourabichvili highlighted the complete absence of transparency in the offshore law, noting its potential to expose the country to unknown capitals.

Additionally, she voiced concern over changes to the election code and the preparation of a law regarding the pension fund, cautioning against the transfer of control to the government.

Zourabichvili criticized the Chinese company's planned activities in Anaklia, suggesting it could strain relations with American and European partners.

"In this recent period, we have had little time and resources to devote attention to the other laws, which have been adopted at an urgent pace with accelerated procedures. Our entire focus has been on Russian law, and we have not paid as much attention as we should have to



other matters.

For example, the offshore law, which is anything but transparent. This term is often favored by them, but not always, and in this case, it is a completely non-transparent law that exposes the

country to various capitals unknown to everyone.

Also, changes were made that worsen the election code, but that's okay; we'll deal with that too.

A very harmful law on the

pension fund is being prepared. This is a bit more technical and complicated. What is happening now is the transfer of the pension fund into the hands of the government, and it is a very dangerous direction.

I won't say anything more about the fact that bringing the Chinese to Anaklia in such a quantity is also harming our relations with American or European partners," said Zourabichvili.

Parliament Chairman Signs 'Foreign Influence' Law, Effective Beginning Today

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Parliament Chairman Shalva Papuashvili has signed the

Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence. The law comes into effect today, June 4th.

The Ministry of Justice will

develop the relevant mechanisms within two months. Starting from the beginning of September, organizations will be

obliged to register.

"From tomorrow, it will be considered published, and within 60 days from then, the Ministry of Justice will develop all subordinate normative acts, as well as create an electronic portal. After 60 days, the obligation to register and declare the finances of 2023 will be imposed," Papuashvili stated yesterday.

Not registering or failing to submit the declaration within the established period will result in a fine of 25,000 GEL.

Failure to register or submit the declaration within the specified timeframe will result in a fine of 25,000 GEL.

Failing to submit the application to the agency or violating the deadline for correcting any defects in the application or declaration will result in a fine of 10,000 GEL.

Repeated violation within one month will incur a fine of 20,000 GEL.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice will have the authority to fine individuals 5,000 GEL for

not providing requested information, including secret, personal, commercial, or professional information.

Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze, stated that if non-governmental organizations do not comply with the "Foreign Agents" law, failure to pay the fines imposed as penalties will result in their confiscation and, ultimately, the termination of their operations.

"If they don't obey, there will be financial penalties, leading to confiscation and other consequences. They won't be able to function and won't be able to receive the funds they are currently getting. If you are doing a good job here and have no evil intentions, what is the problem with filling out the declaration and showing your finances, including your sources of income and the specific projects that are financed? However, there is a suspicion that this polarization and the financing of the revolution scenario were all happening because of this lack of transparency," Kaladze stated.

Despite all this, most of the organizations have stated that they do not intend to comply with the "Foreign Agents" law.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF
Opposition Signs Georgian Charter Initiated by President Salome Zourabichvili

added by representatives from United National Movement, European Georgia, Strategy Aghmashenebeli, Citizens party, For the People movement, Nika Machutadze - State for People as well as Tako Charkviani, Paata Davitaia,

ists," stated Mamuka Khazaradze. Elene Khoshtaria affirmed, "These reforms are in the interest of the people, which is why we attach great importance to this document. We sign it without reservations and commit to its meticulous implementation."

announced that fines for approximately 2,000 citizens incurred during the Covid pandemic will be dropped.

During the government meeting, Kobakhidze announced that fines for 1,855 individuals and 38 legal entities will be exempted, totaling 5.6 million GEL.

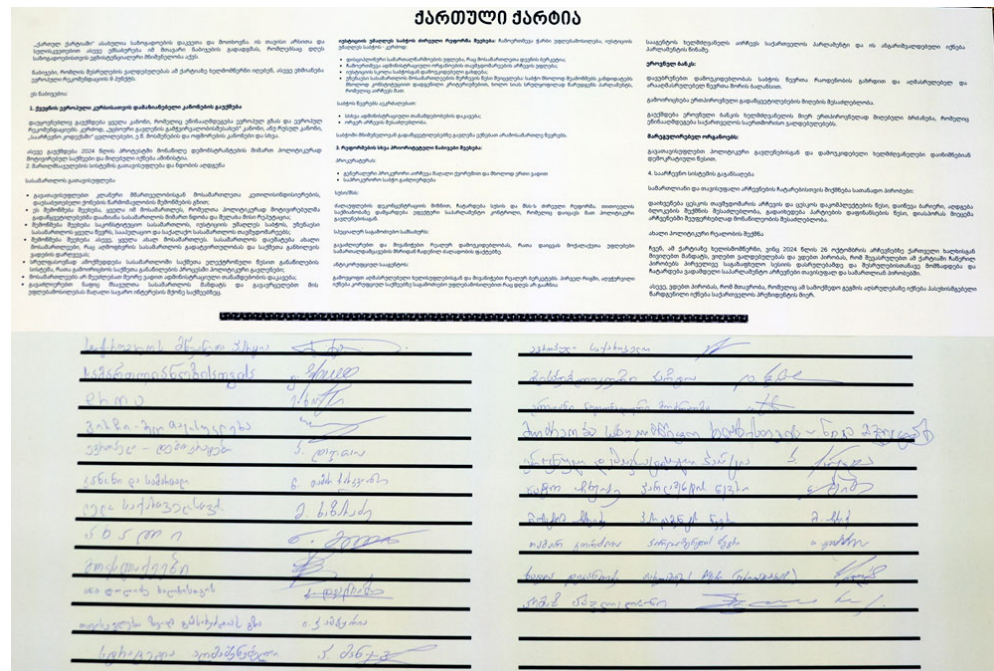
Two months ago, on April 8, the Government of Georgia announced another fine write-off campaign: it declared that all natural persons, including individual entrepreneurs, would have their recognized tax debts incurred and unpaid before January 1, 2021, fully written off.

However, it was revealed today that Giorgi Gakharia's party For Georgia, Girchi and Labor Party are not joining the president's initiative.

President Zourabichvili had proposed to political parties to sign the Georgian Charter and reach an agreement on May 26.

Fines for 2,000 Citizens During Covid Pandemic to Be Dropped

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze



Opposition members gathered at the Orbeliani Palace to sign the Georgian Charter initiated by the Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili.

The document has already been signed by opposition leaders such as Nika Melia, leader of the Ahali party, Mamuka Khazaradze, leader of Lelo, and members of Droa-Girchi more freedom - Elene Khoshtaria and Zura Japaridze.

Additionally, signatures have been

Bachuki Kardava, and Eka Beselia.

While acknowledging certain disagreements with the charter's contents, politicians emphasized the importance of unity in the current circumstances, motivating their decision to sign the document.

"This charter symbolizes the collective agreement among people and parties to rid our country of the Russian regime. Lelo will stand wherever such unity ex-



Eastern Partnership: third meeting of the Working Group for Gender Equality takes place in Brussels

The third meeting of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Working Group for Gender Equality took place on 30-31 May in Brussels.

The event, organised in collaboration with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission's Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), gathered representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, EU Member States, EU institutions and the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.



The meeting provided the opportunity to exchange information and discuss current developments in the Eastern Partnership on key topics such as the gender and pension pay gap, legislation and actions to counter violence and harassment in the workplace, and gender-based violence.

Discussions also focused on the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as "the Istanbul Convention", and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 190 on harassment and violence in the workplace.

The EaP Working Group on Gender Equality was launched in October 2023 to promote dialogue and cooperation in this field.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Tuesday, June 4

Day Clear High: 30°C
Night Clear Low: 18°C

Wednesday, June 5

Day Clear High: 31°C
Night Clear Low: 18°C

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