

## US State Department Sanctions Dozens of Georgian Individuals Over 'Anti Democratic' Actions

By Liza Mchedlidze

The US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller announced at today's press briefing that the US has sanctioned "dozens" of Georgian individuals in its first tranche of sanctions.

Matthew Miller expressed deep concerns regarding the Georgian Dream party's anti-democratic actions, statements, and rhetoric. He indicated that these actions threaten to derail Georgia's European future and contradict both the Georgian Constitution and the desires of the Georgian people.

"The State Department implemented a new visa restriction policy under section 211 A 3C of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Today, under this policy, we are taking steps to impose visa restrictions on dozens of Georgian individuals. This includes individuals responsible for or complicit in, or immediate family members of those responsible for or complicit in, undermining democracy in Georgia, such as undermining the freedom of peaceful assembly and association, violently attacking peaceful protesters, intimidating civil society representatives, and deliberately spreading



disinformation at the direction of the Georgian government."

According to Miller, the first tranche of visa restrictions includes members of the Georgian Dream party, members of Parliament, law enforcement, and private citizens.

He emphasized, "It remains our hope that Georgia's leaders will reconsider their actions and

take steps to move forward with their nation's long-stated democratic and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. But if they do not, the US is prepared to take additional actions."

When asked about the number of sanctioned individuals, Miller clarified that it is between two to three dozen. He also mentioned that those with US visas

will be notified, while others will discover the sanctions if they attempt to enter the US.

Regarding the number of tranches expected, Miller stated he could not provide specifics but noted, "We are prepared to impose additional sanctions and will take all other steps as appropriate."

Asked about the message the

US intends to send by sanctioning in several tranches, Miller said, "There is still time for the Georgian government to reverse the trajectory it's on." He highlighted concerns about the recently adopted "transparency law" and the government's crackdown on dissent, concluding, "Our policy depends on the policy that Georgia undertakes."

## Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics Condemns Parliament's Use of 'Punitive Measures' Against Media

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics released

a statement condemning the Parliament's use of "punitive measures" against the media. In the past few days, four journal-

ists from TV Pirveli, Mtavari Arkhi, and Formula had their work accreditations suspended in Parliament at the request of

Georgian Dream MPs, following critical questions from these journalists.

The Charter noted that following the approval of the "Foreign Influence" law, Parliament has intensified its repressive actions with a new approach.

The Charter urged the Chairman of the Parliament to stop using the resolution as a tool of revenge against journalists. It also called on the Ethics Council of the Parliament to address the behavior of members who regularly exhibit aggression towards journalists. Additionally, the Charter appealed to the Public Defender to respond to this harmful practice, which restricts the freedom of critical media and deprives their audience of information about the activities of the legislative body.

"Upon adoption of the resolution, the media and civil society expressed doubts about its stated goal of regulating relations between members of parliament and journalists. Practice has confirmed this suspicion. The Parliament abuses the resolution to introduce self-censorship, intimidate journalists, and isolate them from parliamentary processes.

Because accreditation is given to journalists by name, media

outlets cannot replace sanctioned journalists with other employees. As a result, for a period of one to six months, these journalists are not given the opportunity to receive information firsthand from the legislative processes within the legislative body.

Journalists inform the charter that following the adoption of the resolution, the attitude towards them in Parliament and their working conditions have significantly deteriorated.

Rather than setting an example of openness and transparency for other agencies, Parliament is employing all means to deprive independent and critical media outlets of the opportunity to pose critical questions.

Members of Parliament from the ruling party and their affiliated political forces fail to grasp the essence of their mandate. Instead of fostering engagement with critical media, all their efforts are geared towards reducing contact with them," the statement reads.

According to the Charter, this practice deprives the public of access to the ongoing legislative processes in Parliament, which citizens have a legitimate interest in.

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The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

**Georgian Prime Minister Criticizes US Congress MEGOBARI Act, Calling It 'Dishonorable'**



The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze, criticized the United States, calling the MEGOBARI Act initiated in the US Congress “a dishonorable act” that will not help Georgia-US relations.

The MEGOBARI Act (Mobilizing and Enhancing Georgia’s Options for Building Accountability, Resilience, and Independence Act) was introduced by Republican Congressman Joe Wilson. The act proposes repercussions for individuals

responsible for adopting or potentially implementing the “Russian-style foreign agents” law in Georgia, while also promising increased financial assistance and an eased visa regime for Georgia if the country strengthens its democratic and Western alignment.

Kobakhidze also criticized a letter sent by opposition parties to Joe Wilson urging Congress and the Senate to expedite the MEGOBARI Act, calling it “a continuation of betrayal.”

Amid the ruling party’s anti-Western rhetoric, Kobakhidze further accused former US ambassador Kelly Degnan of “two attempts at revolution.”

“This is a continuation of treason. It is cynical when the law being discussed in

Congress, which is called the ‘friendly’ act, is directly hostile. I would call this law the ‘DAUDZINEBELI’ [unyielding] law; such a title would be more appropriate. It’s a pity, all this will not help the improvement of Georgia-US relations.

There were two coup attempts in 2020-2021, then in 2022 involving the previous US ambassador. Against this background, when people think not about healing and restarting the relationship, but about further ruining this broken one, it is sad. I call on everyone to act pragmatically and contribute to the improvement of Georgian-US relations,” said Kobakhidze.

**Minister of Culture Calls US Sanctioning Georgian Government ‘Another Mistake’**

The Minister of Culture, Thea

Tsulukiani, has called the visa restrictions imposed by the US State Department “another mistake.” Speaking on the air of Imedi TV, she expressed regret over the decision, describing it as detrimental to both countries’ strategic partnership.

“I can boldly say that this is another mistake that the United States of America makes in relations with its strategic partner, unfortunately, unfortunately for them, unfortunately for us.

From this, we must assume that after this next mistake, other mistakes will be made. This will further extend the time it takes in a mutual relationship to reach the day when the page begins to be turned, and the relationship resets.

Of course, the United States needs to rethink these relations first. We will wait for this day because we were and are committed to our strategic partnership. We have never refused the United States and friendship with them,” said Tsulukiani.



**Ukraine: EU provides food and household supplies to over 4,000 families in Dnipropetrovsk region**

With the support of the European Union, over 4,270 families in the Dnipropetrovsk region have received food and household supplies, the EU Delegation in Ukraine said on Facebook.

According to the Delegation, the aid is aimed at supporting the most vulnerable families: displaced persons, families in difficult life circumstances, low-income families, families with



children under guardianship, and children with disabilities.

As an example of such assistance, the Delegation cites a family of a mother and her two-year-old son who were resettled and now live in one of the 40 communities receiving assistance. They received a grocery kit, which includes long-lasting food items, and a household kit, which consists of essential home maintenance items.

“The kits meet immediate needs and help save money for other expenses,” says a Facebook post by the EU Delegation in Ukraine.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Friday, June 7

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 29°C

Night 🌧️ Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 16°C

Saturday, June 8

Day 🌧️ Mostly Cloudy  
High: 26°C

Night 🌧️ Showers  
Low: 17°C

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