

## Georgian Parliament Chairman Criticizes Venice Commission Report on Family Values and Protection of Minors

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Shalva Papuashvili, the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, strongly criticized the recent Venice Commission report "On Family Values and Protection of Minors." According to Papuashvili, the report overlooks the aspirations of Georgian society, particularly concerning the protection of minors and the prohibition of certain types of propaganda.

"It is unfortunate that we see certain assessments that miss the aspirations of Georgian society, including the insurance of risks, the prohibition of propaganda, which the bill is aimed at," Papuashvili stated. He highlighted what he perceives as dangerous trends in the Commission's recommendations.

"There are opposite recommendations, which imply the legalization of the issues that were intended to restrict. While Georgian society wants marriage or similar relationships to be allowed only between a man and a woman, the Venice Commission recommends that we allow same-sex marriage," Papuashvili noted.



შალვა პაპუაშვილი • Shalva Papuashvili

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Papuashvili also pointed to sections of the report that he believes undermine the protection of minors.

"In some cases, the document is not based on legal considerations but on a certain political conjuncture that may exist in a particular country. Therefore, such positions are regrettable,"

said Papuashvili.

Papuashvili stated that the report directly calls for the legal recognition of same-sex marriage or similar unions, which contrasts sharply with the views of the majority in Georgian society. He also noted the absence of most opposition members from the session, save for representa-

tives from the Girchi party, suggesting a lack of courage to discuss the issue.

"Constitutionally, including in the law, it is written that in all official documents it will be possible to refer only to a woman or a man according to their biological sex. The Venice Commission recommends

that, regardless of everything, any person should be able to choose whether he is a woman or a man on his ID card - that is, without any gender change or any intervention, any person should be able to choose their gender, express their will," Papuashvili explained.

## Georgian Dream Rejects Venice Commission's Recommendation to Halt Adoption of Anti-LGBTQ Law

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The leader of Georgia's parliamentary majority, Mamuka Mdinardze stated that Georgia will not comply with the Venice Commission's recommendation to "legalize same-sex marriage". This statement comes in response to a report from the Venice Commission, which urged the ruling party to halt the adoption of the proposed anti-LGBTQ propaganda law.

"Recently, the Venice Commission has been giving unacceptable recommendations to Georgia," Mdinardze told journalists. "When it comes to the banning of LGBTQ propaganda, the Commission not only disapproves of the changes we are planning but also suggests legalizing same-sex marriage."

Mdinardze criticized the opposition for announcing a boycott of parliamentary activities, sug-

gesting that they are avoiding debates on this issue due to fear of backlash from both international supporters and the Georgian public. "The opposition is afraid of its patrons outside and the Georgian people inside. They avoid participating in these debates because they know the Georgian people will punish them if they express support for LGBTQ rights."

He stated that the opposition's avoidance of the issue is a strategic move to maintain favor with international allies while not alienating Georgian constituents. "They don't dare to participate in these debates, to say they don't like it, to express their real mood. The Georgian people will punish them if they say they like it, and they are afraid of their bosses."

Mdinardze asserted that the Venice Commission's recommendation only strengthens the



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8221; Euro - 3.0151; GBP - 3.5733; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.2387; Swiss Franc - 3.1434

# Georgian Dream Rejects Venice Commission's Recommendation to Halt Adoption of Anti-LGBTQ Law

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opposition's covert support for LGBTQ rights, a stance that is unpopular among many Georgian voters.

"Everyone realizes that they avoid this topic on purpose because they are on the side of this topic. They are on the side of allowing, not banning, LGBTQ propaganda."

The Venice Commission, an advisory body of the Council of Europe, recently published an opinion on Georgia's constitutional law against "LGBTQ propaganda." The Commission recommended against the adoption of this law, arguing that it infringes on fundamental human rights and freedoms.

"Today, the recommendation of the Venice Commission was to reinforce their position. However, Georgia will never agree to the Venice Commission's call to allow same-sex marriages in Georgia," Mdinardze said.

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## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Russia Welcomes Initiative to Restore Diplomatic Relations with Georgia



Russia has expressed its support for the initiative to restore diplomatic relations with Georgia, as stated by Maria Zakharova, the official representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during a recent

briefing. "We still believe that this [normalization of relations] is in the interests of our two nations," Zakharova said. "We support any initiatives that help Russian-Georgian normalization. In this context, we welcome this

initiative. We are ready to follow this path." Zakharova emphasized that the normalization of relations is beneficial for both countries and reaffirmed Russia's readiness to proceed with efforts to improve bilateral ties.

### Mdinardze Criticizes Sanctions and Calls for Fair Treatment from Friendly Nations

Mamuka Mdinardze, the leader of Georgia's parliamentary majority criticized sanctions and called for fair treatment from friendly nations. Mdinardze compared current accusations against the Georgian Dream government to the actions of the United National Movement, a former ruling party in Georgia.

"What sanctions are you talking about? You have not sanctioned a single person during the National Movement, are you sanctioning me for passing a law that you also have in your country - for this?" Mdinardze questioned. He referenced the tragic case of Sandro Girgvliani, who was murdered during the National Movement's rule, suggesting that his government is being unfairly targeted in a similar manner.

Mdinardze argued that the Georgian government should not be punished for fighting for the country's independence.

"Just because I'm a friend and



not your agent, just because I'm fighting for the independence of my country, don't punish me for that," Mdinardze asserted. He expressed frustration that calls for fair treatment are often misinterpreted as attacks, particularly by media outlets affiliated

with the National Movement. Mdinardze warned against the changing trends in international relations, which he believes unfairly target small but proud countries like Georgia. He vowed that Georgia would resist being controlled by external agents.

**Total goals**  
UEFA Euro 2024

Georges Mikautadze	3
England	2
France	2
Belgium	2

**CNN International**  
4 hours ago

Georgia secured a 2-0 win over Portugal to book its place in the knockout stages of its first major international tournament.

**CNN.COM**  
Georgia stuns Portugal to reach Euro 2024 knockout stages in first major international tournament | CNN



## Weather

Thursday, June 27

Day ☀️ Clear  
High: 26°C

Night 🌧️ Partly Cloudy  
Low: 16°C

Friday, June 28

Day ☁️ Partly Cloudy  
High: 27°C

Night 🌧️ Partly Cloudy  
Low: 18°C

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On June 25, in anticipation of the 2024 Olympic Games, the French Embassy in Georgia, the French Institute of Georgia, and the Georgian National Olympic and Paralympic Committees collaborated to host a vibrant day of sports demonstrations. The event, held exactly one month before the Games, aimed to promote the Olympic games and generate excitement among the community.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from young people across various Georgian schools, including students from the French School of the Caucasus (EFC). Athletes and curious onlookers alike gathered to explore and experience a range of Olympic and Paralympic sports disciplines. The diverse sports offerings allowed attendees to discover games like basketball, boccia, taekwondo, archery, and rugby.





