

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Peter Fischer: Germany is Reviewing Relations with Georgia

In a recent discussion with journalists, the German ambassador to Georgia, Peter Fischer, revealed that Germany is reassessing its relationship with Georgia. This comes after the European Council's decision on June 27 to halt Georgia's EU accession process.

"Today, we have an event organized by the German civil society, where the enlargement of the European Union is being discussed. Three members of the German parliament are present here, and this is a very important topic for Georgia," Fischer stated. He highlighted that Georgia, a candidate for EU membership, has reached a difficult moment in its accession journey. "Based on the actions of the Georgian government, the European Council, consisting of 27 heads of state and government, decided to suspend the accession process with Georgia. The accession process of Georgia has been halted. Now this is the policy of the European Union and it is very sad," he said.

Fischer emphasized Germany's significant role in development cooperation with Georgia, mentioning that, along with the United States, Germany is one of the largest donors. However, he announced that Germany has decided not to make new financial commitments to Georgia at the moment. "The German armed forces canceled their participation in the Noble Partner exercises. We canceled the big legal forum that was held in Tbilisi last year and was supposed to be held in Berlin this summer. We are consid-



ering further actions," Fischer added.

He urged Georgian citizens to consider the importance of EU membership for their future. "We want you to join the European Union, but you know the process. You must meet our standards,

and if you do not, then you will not be able to join. So, Georgian citizens and Georgian friends should think about how important the European Union is for you, your children, your grandchildren," Fischer said.

The ambassador's comments

came during an international conference titled "EU Enlargement - A Geopolitical Necessity and the Next Steps for the EU Candidate States," held in Tbilisi. The event, opened by Fischer, included representatives of the Associated Trio, the

civil society of the Western Balkans, and members of the German Bundestag. The conference aims to create a platform for EU candidate countries to effectively utilize their opportunities on their path to joining the European Union.

Georgia Remains NATO's Closest Partner, Says Ambassador Viktor Dolidze

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia continues to be NATO's closest partner and a valuable pillar both in the region and from the Euro-Atlantic perspective, according to Georgian Ambassador to NATO, Viktor Dolidze. He emphasized the strong and ongoing partnership during a recent meeting with Javier Colomina, NATO's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. This information was disseminated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Dolidze highlighted the importance of large-scale meetings like the NATO summit in Washington, stating, "We never miss such opportunities. Georgia is always at a high level on the agenda of the sum-

mits." During the summit, Georgian officials, including Foreign Minister Iliia Darchiashvili, engaged with NATO ministers and high-level representatives to discuss enhancing Georgia's defense capabilities and future NATO membership.

In his discussions with Colomina, Dolidze covered various topics, including the development of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP), which is tailored to Georgia's needs. They explored ways to increase defense capabilities and other political contexts related to Georgia's future membership in NATO.

"Georgia is and remains a fundamental partner of NATO, the closest partner and a valuable pillar both in the region and from

the Euro-Atlantic point of view. Both NATO and Georgians know this very well, and this process will continue in the future," Dolidze stated.

At this year's anniversary summit in Washington, the main issues include the threat from Russia, increasing NATO's defense capability, providing maximum assistance to Ukraine, and improving global partnerships.

"Georgia and the Minister are given the opportunity to discuss with partners and colleagues topics such as Georgia's involvement in the framework of common European and Euro-Atlantic security," Dolidze explained. He also highlighted Georgia's significant contributions and sacrifices, which are widely recognized and appreciated.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgia Reaffirms NATO Integration as Key Foreign Policy Priority, Says Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili



Georgia’s integration into NATO remains a top foreign policy priority, stated the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Ilia Darchiashvili, while assessing the Washington Summit of NATO.

According to Darchiashvili, Georgia is consistently working towards NATO integration alongside its partners. He highlighted that the main topic of the summit is the issue of Ukraine.

“The 75th anniversary summit is a good platform for discussing challenges,” Darchiashvili noted. “As expected, the main line of the summit is Ukraine, expressing solidarity for Ukraine. Yesterday was also very busy with this topic, because Ukraine needs strong support and solidarity. It is the anniversary summit that gives the opportunity for the USA

and its partners to show strong support once again towards Ukraine, and on the other hand, to look for additional mechanisms that will strengthen Ukraine, so that the country can protect itself. This is the main topic of the summit,” he said. During the Washington Summit,

Darchiashvili attended the anniversary reception hosted by US President Joe Biden. He will also participate in a roundtable meeting under the auspices of Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

“This is a very interactive gathering, where ministers have the opportunity to exchange views on various topics. Georgia is always ready to participate in similar discussions. I am sure that this platform will give us an additional opportunity to once again confirm to our partners our unequivocal position regarding our foreign political priorities,” Darchiashvili stated.

Additionally, Darchiashvili held bilateral meetings with his foreign counterparts within the framework of the summit.

Parliament Becomes More Inaccessible and Non-Transparent in 2023, Reports Transparency International Georgia



Transparency International Georgia pointed out a concerning trend of non-transparency and lack of accountability within the institution. Additionally, the Parliament has ceased releasing public information that could be used for criticism against MPs.

Performance Assessment of the Parliament 2023

10 July, 2024

In 2023, the Parliament became a closed institution. It transformed into an even more inaccessible and non-transparent institution for representatives of civil society and critical media. The denial of access to enter the Parliament and attend committee sessions was made without providing specific justification, citing only the general security regulations of the Parliament. The Parliament has ceased the release of public information that could potentially be used as grounds for criticism against MPs.



In 2023, Georgia’s Parliament transformed into a more closed and inaccessible institution, particularly for representatives of civil society and critical media, according to a report by Transparency International Georgia. The report highlights increased denials of access to parliamentary sessions and committee meetings without specific justifi-

transparency and lack of accountability within the institution.

According to TI’s report, when they requested public information, the Parliament failed to provide data routinely shared for the past decade. This included the number of speeches delivered by MPs, details on disciplinary actions against them, and comprehensive information on committee activities.

Perform Europe selects 42 partnership projects, including from Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine

The EU-funded Perform Europe programme, the Creative Europe action promoting sustainable touring in the performing arts sector, has awarded Euro 2.1 million in grants to 42 partnership projects.

The projects offered tours of 63 performing art works by 196 partners from Creative Europe programme countries, including Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. “The selected projects demon-



strate the power of performing arts to drive social change, promote diversity and inclusivity, ensure access to all audiences,

and address pressing global issues,” says a press release by Creative Europe.

In addition, 13% of the total

fund will be allocated to projects supporting the Ukrainian performing arts sector.

The selected projects include, for example, one project uniting Armenia, Ukraine, and Georgia. This project will receive a Euro 60,000 grant to showcase the participatory performance ‘Greenhouse’ in Georgia, Armenia, and Ukraine, as these countries’ historical contexts resonate deeply with each other.

“Greenhouse’ tackles the issue of displacement as a result of military conflicts, and invites the audience to construct a temporary protective structure on stage,” says the project explainer. “Shared experience of migration due to the Nagorno-

Karabakh, Russian-Georgian and Russian-Ukrainian wars open pathways for local audience engagement, and connect to the broader issues of climate migration and climate change.”

Another project will support “Alaska – the pursuit of happiness & the abusive world”, one of the last performances to take place in Mariupol, Ukraine. It was written four months before the Russian invasion. This work gives voice to the city’s youth after their theatre was completely demolished. The performance will tour in Poland, Hungary, and Bosnia where it will meet local young actors as well as Ukrainians who live in these countries.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Thursday, July 11

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 34°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 22°C

Friday, July 12

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 33°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 22°C

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The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.

The Ambassador of Hungary, H.E. Anna Mária Sikó held a Cocktail Party to celebrate the Start of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union on July 9.





