

Georgia Joins Declaration at European Political Community Summit



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia has joined the Declaration of the European Political Community (EPC) Summit, which was adopted by leaders at Blenheim Palace. The declaration includes key directives on European security, energy security, and connectivity, as outlined by the Georgian governmental administration.

According to the administration, the document encompasses

several main areas of focus, particularly emphasizing European security. "The leaders of about 50 countries of the world supported the document, which is directed against the Russian 'shadow fleet' and the threats arising from it," the statement noted.

The final declaration also incorporated a proposal from France and Moldova to establish a network of European political union aimed at countering foreign interference and disinformation. The

document highlights that such interference poses a strategic challenge to EPC member states. It calls for enhanced and expedited operational coordination among European nations to protect democratic processes and strengthen societal resilience against these threats.

Additionally, the Georgian proposal to bolster regional ties between the Black and Caspian Seas was reflected in the summit declaration. Under this ini-

tiative, countries in the Northern and Baltic Sea regions of the European Union, alongside Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey, will engage in a series of technical dialogues. These dialogues aim to support regional energy connections between the Black and Caspian Seas, facilitating the sharing of experiences, resources, knowledge, and expertise. The objective is to address challenges related to regional

energy connections and harness the energy potential for clean energy production.

"The main objective of the dialogues will be to share the experience, resources, knowledge, and expertise of the countries in a practical way, so that the members of the Black and Caspian Sea can solve the challenges related to regional energy connections and use their energy potential in terms of clean energy production," the statement read.

Foreign Minister Highlights Georgian Prime Minister's Focus on European Unity at 4th EPC Summit



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili, speaking to journalists, said that at the 4th meeting of the European Political Community, the Georgian Prime Minister had the opportunity to engage with various leaders, emphasizing the importance of European unity and consolidation. Darchiashvili highlighted the significance of the summit and Georgia's efforts to integrate more closely with the European family.

Darchiashvili remarked on the summit's opening message, underscoring the emphasis on European unity. He stated, "Today a very important event is taking place in the United Kingdom. This platform, created at the initiative of President Macron, aims to bring together

countries aspiring to join the European Union and those already part of the European family. This is one of the mechanisms by which Georgia also tries to get closer to the European family, the European Union. We have a separate, individual, bilateral format with the European Union, which is the main line of our European integration. However, the European Political Community platform is one of the useful mechanisms for Georgia to continue its successful European integration."

The Prime Minister's discussions with various leaders at the summit included key topics such as Ukraine and regional security challenges. "One of the main topics at the opening event was

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6975; Euro - 2.9476; GBP - 3.5028; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0614; Swiss Franc - 3.0511

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Ukraine and the challenges we face in terms of security. There was a strong message about the importance of consolidation and unity within the European family," said Darchiashvili.

The Foreign Minister also highlighted the Prime Minister's

participation in a round table discussion on energy and connectivity. "The Prime Minister participated in the round table format along with various leaders. The discussion centered on energy and connectivity, and Georgia is a crucial participant in this process due to its geographical location and its role in connect-

ing the East and the West," Darchiashvili explained.

The discussions included significant energy projects, such as the Black Sea power transmission cable, which aims to diversify Europe's energy supply. Darchiashvili added, "Georgia presented concrete initiatives for the final document that the par-

ticipants of today's event will agree on. The issues that are important to us and on which we are actively working are being addressed here. Our initiatives and visions are expected to be reflected in the final documents."

He concluded by emphasizing the collective effort to consolidate

and diversify energy resources, reducing dependence on any single country. "The main message is that the countries try to consolidate as much as possible and also ensure the diversification of energy resources so that there is no dependence on any one country," Darchiashvili said.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze Attends European Political Community Summit



Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, alongside global leaders, participated in the opening plenary session of the European Political Community Summit at Blenheim Palace in

the United Kingdom, as reported by the Governmental Administration.

The summit was inaugurated by UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, with speeches also delivered by the President of Ukraine, the President of Switzerland, and the Prime Minis-

ter of Denmark, as reported by the Governmental Administration.

with all participating leaders, including EU officials such as Josep Borrell and Charles Michel. In a statement to journalists, Prime Minister Kobakhidze outlined the topics covered during the discussions, including Georgia-EU relations and expansion issues. He stated that improvements in regional stability could lead to a more favorable attitude towards Georgia. "The general impression I have is that as soon as the global situation in the region changes and calms down, the attitude towards Georgia will immediately change. This process will start even before that, but in the end, a lot will depend on the political situation in the region," said Kobakhidze.

Georgia Seen as Reliable Investment Partner, Says First Vice Prime Minister

First Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Economy Levan Davitashvili praised the US State Department's 2024 investment climate report, describing it as a clear indicator of Georgia's reliability as a long-term investment partner. "The report is quite objective," Davitashvili said. "It evaluates the invest-

ment environment of Georgia positively, highlighting the successful economic reforms we've implemented."

Davitashvili noted that the report underscores Georgia's impressive economic growth compared to other regional candidates and EU nations. "The high economic growth we've ex-

perienced is unprecedented in the region," he stated. "This trend is supported by international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund."

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and supporting business operations. "This report is a clear signal to investors that Georgia can be a reliable partner in the long term," Davitashvili said. "We will continue to uphold these policies to make doing business in Georgia even easier and more competitive."

IRI Announces Start of International Observation Mission Ahead of Georgia's Parliamentary Elections

"This election will serve as the litmus test for Georgia's democratic trajectory."

Tbilisi, Georgia — The International Republican Institute (IRI) today announced the start of its international observation mission

ahead of the October 26 parliamentary elections in Georgia. Leveraging long standing relationships with electoral institutions, political stakeholders, and the international community, IRI will deploy 20 long-term observers to cover municipalities and electoral districts across the country in the months leading up to the election. All stakeholders have been receptive to the

presence of international election observers. "Observers will be deployed in the field prior to the start of the election campaign period" said Stephen Nix, Senior Director for Eurasia at IRI. "This will enable the mission to analyze the context leading up to these elections, along with the efforts made by political and electoral stakeholders to support an inclusive and transparent electoral process," said Nix. This election marks a pivotal moment for democracy in Georgia. The need for a transparent and credible electoral process that affords citizens diverse choices was among nine condi-

tions laid out as part of Georgia's European Union candidacy status in late 2023.

"The government of Georgia has an opportunity to prioritize electoral transparency, in ensuring that Georgia administers credible elections free from any pressures or physical obstacles. As such, this election will serve as the litmus test for Georgia's democratic trajectory," said Nix. IRI's observation team will conduct its activities in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers. Findings and recommendations will be based on Georgia's laws, international

standards for elections, and the commitments to be made in the forthcoming Political Party Code of Conduct.

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About IRI in Georgia

For over 20 years, IRI has supported a range of programming in the political, electoral and civic space in Georgia, with the aim of supporting political parties to develop issue-based platforms and messaging, increasing inclusion of underrepresented groups in the political decision-making process, bolstering citizen access to accurate and methodologically sound research, and encouraging citizen-centered governance.

Weather

Friday, July 19

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 28°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 20°C

Saturday, July 20

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 27°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 20°C

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