

## Zourabichvili Condemns Odisharia's Justification of Georgian Citizens' Detention by Occupation Regime

By Liza Mchedlidze

Three Georgian citizens, residents of the village of Otobaia in the occupied Gali region, have been illegally arrested by representatives of the occupation regime, according to the State Security Service of Georgia.

The occupation regime confirmed the detentions through the hotline operated by the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, claiming that a so-called "criminal case" had been initiated against the two for allegedly organizing "illegal migration". The two citizens have been "sentenced" to two months of "pretrial detention" by the so-called "court" and are currently being held in the "Abkhazia State Security Service Isolator."

Beka Odisharia, a leader of the Georgian Dream party, commented on the detentions, controversially justifying the actions of the occupation regime. He implied that the detained citizens might have been involved in illegal activities, stating, "If a person was busy giving money in order for people to cross this artificial administrative-occupational border, naturally, unfortunately, this person also helped to arrest him." Despite this, he argued that the detained citizens should ultimately be handed over to the legitimate authorities of Georgia rather than facing the puppet regime's so-called justice.

Odisharia's comments sparked outrage, with Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili condemning his remarks as "shameful". She criticized Odisharia for appearing to accept the occupation regime's accusations without question and suggested that his statements reflect



a concerning vision for future relations with the occupiers.

"Disgraceful statement by Beka Odisharia about our citizens detained in occupied Abkhazia!

You don't know what the presumption of innocence means, and what's worse, you share the accusations of the so-called law enforcement officers without question.

This seems to be the vision of settling future relations with the occupiers as understood by Georgian Dream, for which it turns out they need a constitutional majority!" Zourabichvili stated.

## Ivanishvili Calls for Constitutional Changes to Address Territorial Integrity

By Liza Mchedlidze

**B**idzina Ivanishvili, Honorary Chairman of the Georgian Dream party, underscored the potential need for constitutional amendments to address issues related to Georgia's territorial integrity during an election campaign event in Mtskheta.

Ivanishvili suggested that the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity could necessitate changes to the Constitution. "At any time, the issue of restoring the territorial integrity of Georgia may be on the agenda, at which point it will be necessary to make appropriate changes to the Constitution of Georgia," Ivanishvili said.

He explained that such changes would be essential for revising the country's governance system and territorial arrangement. "In the conditions of restoration of territorial integrity, the country's governance system and territorial arrangement must be revised, which is impossible without changes in the constitution," Ivanishvili stated.

Ivanishvili accused the "collective" United National Movement of opposing these constitutional changes and creating obstacles. "The collective National Movement will definitely go against the national interests even in such a time and will create an obstacle to the restoration of territorial integrity, which cannot be allowed," he warned.

To ensure the effective implementation of any necessary amendments, Ivanishvili emphasized the importance of the Georgian Dream securing a constitutional majority in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"Accordingly, the Georgian Dream must have a constitutional majority in the parliament of the next convocation, so that, if necessary, the necessary constitutional changes for the restoration of territorial integrity can be implemented without hindrance," he said.

Ivanishvili also mentioned an additional issue concerning the protection of Georgia's identity and national values. He indicated that ongoing consultations are

CONTINUED ON Page 2



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7064; Euro - 3.0106; GBP - 3.5289; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.9449; Swiss Franc - 3.1650

# Ivanishvili Calls for Constitutional Changes to Address Territorial Integrity

CONTINUED FROM Page 1  
of which can be of great importance for the protection of Georgia's identity and national values. However, consultations on this issue continue and we will share our position on it in the near future," Ivanishvili said.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgian Citizen Illegally Detained by Occupation Forces Near Akhgori



სახელმწიფო უსაფრთხოების სამსახური / State Security Service Of Georgia  
49K likes • 60K followers

A Georgian citizen has been illegally detained by representatives of the occupation regime

near the occupied territory of Akhgori, according to a statement from the State Security Service of Georgia.

In response to the incident, the State Security Service immediately activated the hotline operated by the EU Monitoring

discussions in Geneva and to other international partners.

The State Security Service emphasized that all available mechanisms are being employed to secure the swift release of the detained Georgian citizen. The situation remains under close scrutiny, with ongoing efforts to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

### Mdinardze: External Actors Must Respect Georgia's Sovereignty and People's Choices

Mamuka Mdinardze, executive secretary of the Georgian Dream party, spoke at a regional election campaign event in Mtskheta, emphasizing the need for Georgia to maintain its independence and identity.

"We must survive physically, spiritually, and continue our progress toward Europe with



peace, dignity, and the preservation of our Georgian identity and faith," Mdinardze said.

He asserted that it is crucial for external actors to respect Georgia's sovereignty and the choices of its people. "We must show the whole world that it is impossible to rule a patriotic

Georgian from outside," he said.

Mdinardze also warned against those who betray their country for personal gain, suggesting they are likely to betray their allies as well. "A man who sells his country will also sell its master, and will do so at the first opportunity," he stated.

### Ukraine: on the way to EU border management standards

On 14 August, a European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine delegation, led by the Deputy Head of Mission Maura O'Sullivan, visited the Ukrainian Border Crossing Points at Krakovets and Shehyni on the Ukrainian-Polish border. The visit, joined by the Deputy Head of Lviv Customs and representatives from the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine's Western Directorate, aimed to strengthen cooperation and to support Ukraine's efforts to align with EU Integrated Border Management standards.

The delegation observed first-hand how Ukrainian authorities manage border control and customs clearance for both passengers and cargo. This direct insight is crucial for EUAM to tailor its support to its partners effectively.

During the detailed tour of the facilities, the delegation learnt from their counterparts about their operational challenges, particularly regarding the need for updated equipment and infrastructure.

The Mission's ongoing support for Ukraine in implementing European Integrated Border Management is vital not only for enhancing the efficiency of border operations but also for ensuring that the border remains secure, facilitating smoother trade and travel between Ukraine and the European Union.

Mission. The incident was also promptly reported to the co-chairs of the international dis-

**21 AUGUST**  
**BORJOMI** | Borjomi Likani Hotel

**23, 25 AUGUST**  
**BATUMI** | Batumi Drama Theater

**15, 17, 18, 20**  
**SEPTEMBER**  
**TBILISI** | Tbilisi State Conservatoire

Founder of the Festival  
**LIANA ISSAKADZE**

Artistic Director  
**GIORGI ISSAKADZE**

დაწინს  
სერენადები  
NIGHT SERENADES

ART  
არტ ალიანსი



## Weather

Thursday, August 22

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 34°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 23°C

published by  
**The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi,  
0108, Georgia  
Founded by Prof.  
**Zaza Gachechiladze**  
**Tamar Gachechiladze**  
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000  
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge  
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

**Nino Metreveli**  
Commercial Director

**Mariam Mchedlidze**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Khatuna Gogichaishvili**  
Layout Designer, Photographer

**The Messenger** welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact. All contributions should be submitted by e-mail. **The Messenger** Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements. **The Messenger** preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.