

## CEC Responds to My Vote's Call for Investigation into Alleged Election Fraud

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia has responded to a request from the monitoring group My Vote to initiate an investigation into allegations of official misconduct involving CEC Chairman Giorgi Kalandarishvili, Deputy Chairman Giorgi Sharabidze, and Secretary Giorgi Javakhishvili. My Vote claims that the election administration played "one of the important roles" in a large-scale scheme of election fraud orchestrated by the ruling party.

In its response, the CEC rejected these allegations as "unsubstantiated," stating that some parties involved in the election process, including local monitoring organizations, are making groundless accusations against the commission's leaders. "The campaign to discredit the October 26 elections and the election administration continues," the CEC stated. "These interested parties are attempting to create a false perception of legal violations by the election administration."

The CEC noted that it had proactively requested the prosecutor's office to investigate any possible criminal conduct related to the elections. It emphasized that it has addressed all accusations made since the election, yet certain parties are now focusing on blaming specific individuals



within the commission.

The commission criticized the monitoring organizations for limiting their claims to "oral, groundless accusations" and manipulating information. "We

call on all parties involved, especially those alleging any wrongdoing, to submit their evidence to the relevant investigative authorities," the CEC stated.

The CEC warned that without evidence, the motives behind these allegations may be questionable, suggesting they could mislead the public and undermine confidence in the electoral

process. It further cautioned that baseless accusations might serve political interests aimed at unfairly pressuring election officials.

## Lavrov Denies Russian Interference in Georgian Elections, Accuses West of Meddling

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE



In an interview with Russia Today on November 5, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov denied allegations of Russian interference in Georgia's October 26 parliamentary elections, calling the claims an "outright lie". Lavrov accused the United States of projecting its own actions onto Russia, stating, "The Americans are trying to attribute to us what they themselves are doing." He added that Washington exploits the myth of Russian interference whenever political outcomes in foreign elections do not align with U.S. interests, claiming, "If, as a result of the election results, forces undesirable to the United States win somewhere, Russia is immediately 'blamed' for the 'wrong' choice of voters."

Lavrov further criticized the West, particularly the U.S. and the European Union, for what he described as "unprecedented interference" in Georgia's internal affairs and for applying "unscrupulous pressure" on Georgian authorities and voters. He accused the West of framing Georgia's electoral process as a binary choice between Russia and the West, calling it a "false fork in the road." According to Lavrov, this narrative ignores Georgia's sovereignty and national interests, framing the election instead as a choice between "traditional values and neoliberal attitudes imposed from outside."

Lavrov said Russia respects the Georgian people's decision and remains ready to continue efforts to normalize bilateral relations with Georgia. "The people of Georgia have made their choice," he said, "We treat them with respect."

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Giorgi Rurua Summoned as Witness in Ongoing Investigation

the last name starts with the letter I...” Rurua also stressed that Georgia’s future belongs with Europe, not Russia, stating, “Georgia will be a European country, not a Russian one.” The SSG confirmed that Rurua had

Two Georgian Citizens Released from Russian Occupied Territories

possible through the active use of the “hotline” mechanism of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, as well as other tools available



Giorgi Rurua, shareholder of the Mtavari Arkhi TV company, has been summoned by the State Security Service of Georgia (SSG) as a witness in an ongoing investigation. The investigation is reportedly focused on two charges — coup and violent overthrow of the state.

In response to the summons, Rurua criticized the charges, claiming the SSG had “got the address wrong.” He pointed out, “The coup and overthrow of the state was carried out by the Russian Dream, led by one man. I sent him to Sololaki, will you remind me the address of this man? I think his name is Bidzina. And

been summoned as part of the ongoing investigation. However, the agency did not disclose specific details about the investigation. The case is being pursued under the first part of Article 315 and the first part of Article 323 of the Criminal Code, which relate to conspiracy and terrorism.

According to the SSG, Rurua refused to attend the interview and will likely be questioned in the presence of a judge. The agency also confirmed that multiple individuals have been questioned as part of the investigation.



On November 5, 2024, the State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG) announced that two Georgian citizens, Khajarat Akhvlediani and Giorgi Romelashvili, have been released and are now safe in territory controlled by the central government.

Akhvlediani had been illegally detained by Russian occupying forces near the village of Takhtisdziri in the Kareli municipality on February 28, 2024, while Romelashvili was allegedly detained near the occupied Tskhinvali region on May 25, 2024.

The SSSG stated that the release of Akhvlediani and Romelashvili was made

to the central government. The matter was discussed at meetings held within the framework of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) and during the Geneva International Discussions.

The SSSG emphasized that all responsibility for actions in the occupied regions of Georgia and along the occupation line rests with the occupying power. The agency also noted that the central government, in cooperation with international partners, continues to work toward the release of all Georgian citizens detained in the occupied territories.

EU and South Korea condemn North Korea’s military support to Russia in its war against Ukraine

The European Union and South Korea have condemned in the strongest possible terms the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s (DPRK) continued unlawful arms transfers to the Russian Federation for its use in attacking Ukraine and the deployment of DPRK special forces to Russia, supporting Russia’s war of aggression.

This joint statement was made by the EU High Representative Josep Borrell and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea Cho Tae-yul during Borrell’s visit to Seoul.

“This constitutes a serious breach of international law, including the most fundamental principles of the UN Charter,”

says the statement. “Such cooperation between the DPRK and Russia is not only in flagrant violation of multiple UNSC resolu-

tions, but it also prolongs the suffering of the Ukrainian people and threatens the security of the world, including that

of the Republic of Korea and Europe.”

The statement also says both sides are closely monitoring what Russia provides to the DPRK in return for its provision of arms and military personnel.

This also concerns Russia’s possible provision of materials and technology to the DPRK in support of Pyongyang’s military objectives, including nuclear or ballistic missile-related technology. Brussels and Seoul strongly called on the DPRK and Russia immediately to cease unlawful military cooperation and withdraw DPRK troops from Russia, and reiterated their call for the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. They also committed themselves to closely monitor the situation and actively pursue necessary measures together with the international community.

In his post on X after the meeting, Borrell said: “We are united in our support to Ukraine. I encouraged them [South Korea] to step it up.”

(euneighbourseast.eu)



Weather

Wednesday, November 6

Day Partly Cloudy High: 11°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 1°C

Thursday, November 7

Day Clear High: 13x°C

Night Clear Low: 1°C

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