

EU's Borrell: Georgia Diverging from EU Path, Ukraine Committed to Membership

By Liza Mchedlidze

In an interview with Ukrainian publication European Pravda, Josep Borrell, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, expressed concern over Georgia's EU integration progress, drawing a stark contrast with Ukraine's commitment.

When asked about the former 'trio' of Eastern Partnership countries—Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia—Borrell dismissed any parallels between Georgia and Ukraine. He praised Ukraine's government and society for their clear commitment to EU membership, stating, "There is no doubt that your country wants to be a member of the European Union." He added that Ukraine's EU membership would offer the strongest security guarantee for the country.

In contrast, Borrell criticized Georgia's recent actions, saying that the Georgian government is "diverging from the European track." He urged Georgian leaders to address electoral issues,



amend recently passed laws, and implement broader changes to align with EU standards. Borrell

warned that without such reforms, Georgia's candidacy for EU membership is at risk.

The EU official emphasized that Ukraine's dedication to European integration stands in

stark contrast to Georgia's recent trajectory.

Opposition Coalitions Reject Parliamentary Mandates, For Georgia Calls for Electoral Reforms

By Liza Mchedlidze

Coalition for Change and Unity National Movement have formally appealed to the Central Election Commission (CEC) to withdraw their candidates from the parliamentary list and prevent their registration as MPs. Nika Gvaramia, spokesperson for Coalition for Change, emphasized that all 82 candidates are prepared to sign a refusal if the CEC or Parliament

attempts to register them. Tina Bokuchava of Unity National Movement invoked the Georgian Constitution, which ensures the voluntary nature of holding public office, and requested that none of the candidates be granted a temporary mandate. Both coalitions have rejected the mandates as a protest against what they view as a flawed electoral process.

In contrast, Giorgi Gakharia's For Georgia party

has declined to join the appeal. Speaking on TV Pirveli, party representative Anna Buchukuri made it clear that For Georgia will only consider participating in parliament if significant reforms are made to the country's electoral and security institutions.

Buchukuri stated that, for For Georgia, any re-elections must occur under fair conditions. "If we achieve our goal of protecting the electoral will of

the Georgian people with the help of international partners, these re-elections must not be held under the same CEC administration, the same State Security Service, or the same Public Defender's Office," she said, underscoring that reforms to these agencies are essential to restoring credibility in the electoral process.

Buchukuri further expressed skepticism that promises of new elections would be enough with-

out meaningful institutional changes. She highlighted that For Georgia was one of the first to publicly refuse to legitimize the current parliament, which they consider "illegitimate". The party's primary goal, she said, is to protect the democratic process and ensure that elections are held fairly, with strong international support for the necessary reforms in Georgia's political landscape.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Russian Occupation Forces Detain Two Georgian Citizens Near Occupied Tsnelis



Two Georgian citizens have been detained by Russian occupation forces near the village of Tsnelis, located in Russian-occupied territory, according to a statement from the State Security Service of Georgia.

The agency reported that they promptly notified the co-chairs

cussions and other international partners about the incident. Efforts are underway, with all mechanisms activated to secure the swift release of the detained individuals.

The statement from the State Security Service emphasizes that the responsibility for this and other incidents along the occupation line lies with the occupying power.

Tensions Escalate in Abkhazia as 'Opposition' Figures Arrested, Military Presence Reported in Sokhumi

Tensions are mounting in the occupied region of Abkhazia after local security forces reportedly detained five "opposition" figures, sparking confrontations outside the security service headquarters in Sokhumi. Unconfirmed reports indicate the pres-

ence of military vehicles in the area, adding to the instability.

The arrests come amid heated debate over proposed legislation allowing Russian "investments" and land ownership in Abkhazia. This proposal, backed by de facto leader Aslan Bzhania, has drawn sharp opposition from those who see it as undermining Abkhazia's autonomy. Opposition groups are planning a large protest rally on

November 15.

The controversy follows Moscow's September decision to cut funding to Abkhazia, citing frustration with the region's slow progress on agreements with Russia. In response to the latest arrests, locals in Gudauta and Kodori are reportedly blocking bridges, demanding the immediate release of the detained opposition members.



Multilateral Development Banks to Boost Climate Finance

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN (12 November 2024) — Multilateral development banks (MDBs) today issued a joint statement at COP29 in Baku outlining financial support and other measures for countries to achieve ambitious climate outcomes.

MDBs estimate that by 2030, their annual collective climate financing for low- and middle-income countries will reach \$120 billion, including \$42 billion for adaptation, and MDBs aim to mobilize \$65 billion from the private sector.

For high-income countries, this annual collective climate financing is projected to reach \$50 billion, including \$7 billion for adaptation, and MDBs aim to mobilize \$65 billion from the private sector.

MDBs significantly exceeded their ambitious 2025 climate finance projections set in 2019, with a 25% increase in direct climate finance and mobilization for climate efforts doubling over the past year.

"While the scale of MDBs' financial commitments is essential, MDBs' most significant impact comes from our ability to drive transformative change," the statement said. "As emphasized by the Group of Heads of MDBs in the recent Viewpoint Note: MDBs Working as a System for Impact and Scale, we MDBs are focused on amplifying our catalytic effect by enhancing the results and impact of our financing, deepening engagement with countries through platforms, supporting clients' climate ambitions, and increasing private sector mobilization."

"Rallying to the call for urgent climate action, MDBs recognize the central importance of establishing a New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) at COP29 in Baku. A robust and ambitious NCQG is essential for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, and we urge Parties to reach a strong conclusion on this objective," the statement said.

Recognizing that quality and systemic impact must be informed by climate results, the MDBs released the Common Approach to Measuring Climate Results: Update on Indicators. The common approach, issued in April, is the first shared framework to define, measure, and link global progress on climate

mitigation and adaptation with the climate results of MDB activities.

The MDBs also published their Country Platforms for Climate Action - MDB Statement of Common Understanding and Way Forward, reaffirming their joint support for efforts to foster collaboration between host countries, MDBs, donors, and the private sector. Based on country demand, MDBs will build on successful examples to support the launch of new platforms, while deepening collaboration with partners including the International Monetary Fund.

The statement was issued by the African Development Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the New Development Bank, and the World Bank Group.

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 69 members—49 from the region.

COP29: EIB Group to strengthen international partnerships for global climate action

Together with fellow heads of multilateral development banks (MDBs) and government and business leaders, European Investment Bank (EIB) Group President Calviño will present new initiatives and projects to accelerate global climate action



at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11 to 22 November.

At COP29, MDBs are presenting strengthened country-level cooperation and co-financing and the first common approach to measuring climate results. In addition, MDBs plan to release a joint report on boosting a circular economy worldwide. In 2023, global climate finance by MDBs reached a record high of \$125 billion while mobilised worldwide private finance nearly doubled to \$101 billion compared with 2022.

The EIB Group, which also includes the European Investment Fund, will announce new initiatives at COP29 including additional support for sustain-

able transport, afforestation, and energy efficiency for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

"As the financial arm of the European Union, and one of the world's largest multilateral development banks, the EIB Group is stepping up to the plate with concrete solutions. Our investments are supplying clean and affordable energy to households and to power our industry and vehicles. They are supporting biodiversity and resilience to climate change. And we will finance the major breakthrough technologies that will make the difference in tackling climate change. It is not just the right thing to do but smart economics as well," said EIB President Nadia Calviño.

EIB Vice-President Teresa Czerwinska, responsible for net-zero and disruptive technologies and financing operations in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, said: "In line with the European Union's Economic and Investment Plan, the EIB stands ready to support Azerbaijan's green transition. We are prioritising clean energy and sustainable transport investments as well as digitalisation and access to finance for SMEs."

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Wednesday, November 13

Day Showers High: 11°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 5°C

Thursday, November 14

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 12°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 2°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.