

Coalition for Change Alleges Widespread Election Manipulation in Georgia, Cites Flaws in Voter Registration

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Coalition for Change held a presentation titled "How the Elections Were Rigged," in which its members outlined alleged electoral manipulations and criticized the pre-election environment in Georgia. The coalition contended that violations marred not only election day but also the lead-up, fostering a polarized atmosphere.

According to the coalition, changes in Georgia's electoral legislation opened the door to potential fraud. Zurab Japaridze, one of the coalition leaders, claimed that on election day, the Georgian government requested airlines to provide lists of passengers arriving in Georgia. "We know this for sure: the government asked airlines for their passenger lists to cross-check if anyone might use someone else's personal information to vote," Japaridze stated.

Japaridze also pointed to discrepancies in voter registration. While the CEC's voter list included 1,495,789 individuals, the National Statistics Service reported that 2,852,881 citizens of voting age were registered in Georgia as of January 1, 2024. He claimed that out of 642,908 eligible Georgian immigrants, 546,998 had not registered to vote, leaving their personal numbers potentially vulnerable to misuse.

Nika Gvaramia, another coalition leader, argued that Georgian Dream artificially boosted votes by exploiting the unregistered immigrant data. "They didn't use passports, just personal numbers written on paper. For every vote gained this way by Georgian Dream, the opposition loses one, amplifying the gap by two," Gvaramia said, asserting that opposition votes were effectively transferred to the ruling party.



ing that opposition votes were effectively transferred to the ruling party.

The Coalition for Change also highlighted that Georgia's strategic partners expressed concerns about the elections, underscoring the alleged irregularities that could threaten the democratic process in the country.

tegit partners expressed concerns about the elections, underscoring the alleged irregularities that could threaten the democratic process in the country.

the Georgian Constitution, members of parliament may formally terminate their mandate by submitting a personal resignation request after the first parliamentary session, when the newly elected members are recognized.

Khazaradze Calls for United Opposition Action to Vacate Parliamentary Mandates and Reject Legitimacy of Georgian Dream-Led Parliament

By Liza Mchedlidze

Mamuka Khazaradze announced that the political council of Strong Georgia officially voted on November 14 to terminate its parliamentary candidate lists and vacate its mandates. According to Khazaradze, the decision was supported by the majority of the council.

"It is crucial that no political entity with a representative mandate grants legitimacy to the Georgian Dream parliament by accepting the mandates," he said. "All opposition entities are in agreement on this."

Khazaradze stated that in accordance with Article 120, Clause 2 of the Election Code, political parties can cancel candidate nominations after the newly elected parliament's authority is recognized. Additionally, he noted that according to Article 39, Clause 5, Sub-Clause "a" of

the Georgian Constitution, members of parliament may formally terminate their mandate by submitting a personal resignation request after the first parliamentary session, when the newly elected members are recognized.

Khazaradze emphasized that it is vital for opposition forces to collectively and simultaneously undertake this procedural step, thereby vacating their mandates and preventing any misinterpretations or speculations.

"Accordingly, we propose that all forces who have received mandates as defined by law jointly, on the same day and at the same time, carry out this procedural action and collectively request the termination of the lists and the vacating of mandates to the relevant agencies, thereby ending interpretations and preventing speculation on this topic."

Previously, Unity - National Movement and Coalition for Change announced that their elected members would individually request the Central Election Commission to exclude them from registration as MPs and not to issue them temporary parliamentary certificates.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

My Vote Reports Widespread Voting Issues for Georgian Emigrants at Polling Stations Abroad



The election observation coalition My Vote reported widespread issues at Georgian polling stations abroad, which they say restricted thousands of emigrants' voting rights.

My Vote detailed issues with overcrowding, insufficient infrastructure, and poor organization at polling stations. At some locations, such as New York, Madrid, and London, the coalition observed only one voting booth for 1,500 voters and one registrar for 1,000 voters—well below Georgian standards, which require one registrar for every 300 voters.

The coalition reported high risks to vote secrecy, as poor-quality voting booths often broke or failed to ensure privacy. Observers described chaotic and unsafe conditions for voters, observers, and commission members alike, especially in Ber-

lin, Frankfurt, and Paris. Polling stations in Milan, Berlin, Rome, and Vienna saw particular issues with electoral lists, where many registered voters found their names missing. Some Milan voters on consular lists were inexplicably absent from precinct lists,

barring them from voting. In Berlin and Stuttgart, similar issues prevented numerous eligible voters from casting ballots.

Additionally, unauthorized individuals, including local consuls, were seen at polling stations without official observer status in cities like Tallinn, Frankfurt, and Barcelona. At Frankfurt, Deputy Commission Chair Zurab Kalandadze reportedly verbally abused observers and voters. The coalition argued that the mishandling of the election process by Georgian election authorities and the lack of proper training for precinct staff compromised voters' rights and electoral integrity abroad.

Social Justice Center Criticizes Georgian Government's Silence on Abkhazia, Urges New Peace Policy

The Social Justice Center (SJC) criticized the Georgian Dream (GD)

government's "policy of silence and inaction" toward Abkhazia, arguing it lacks a peace strategy for the conflict regions and allows Russia's annexation efforts to go unchecked. The watchdog claims this approach ignores a historic chance to build trust and resolve the conflict, warning that GD's inaction "condones and normalizes" Russian expansion in the region.

Recent opposition arrests and protests against a legislative package in Abkhazia, set for ratification on November 15, would permit Russian "investments" and land ownership in the occupied region, but the Georgian government has remained silent. The SJC stressed

that GD's lack of response betrays Georgia's sovereign interests and human rights obligations.

The watchdog urged GD to prioritize Black Sea security by rallying international support and pursuing regional stability. It also condemned GD's anti-European stance, stating that such policies hinder peace efforts and undermine European integration, which could foster trust and dialogue with Abkhazia.

SJC concluded by calling for active discussion among civil society, political parties, and the media to form a new democratic and European-oriented peace policy reflecting the current geopolitical landscape.



დუმის და უმოქმედობის პოლიტიკა კონფლიქტების რეგონებთან დაკავშირებით შემაშფოთებელია



eCommerce in EU Marketplaces: online course now available in Georgian

The EU-funded EU4Digital Facility invites citizens and

small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Georgia to register for an online course avail-

able in the new EU4Digital Academy digital learning programme.

The user-friendly 'eCommerce in EU Marketplaces' online course is designed for those who

start selling, and how to navigate EU rules such as VAT and customs.

have no prior knowledge of e-commerce and want to start their journey, or those who are already selling online in their own country but want to expand their sales to the EU, providing all the tools to start selling on eMAG, Amazon or eBay.

The 10-hour self-paced course is free and available in English and Georgian.

The course is available on the atingi platform, where you need to create an atingi account to enrol on the course.

The EU4Digital Academy trainees will benefit from the opportunity to gain an EU-aligned micro-credential, called a badge. Each badge can then be displayed on social media or a CV to serve as verifiable proof of the new skills and knowledge gained.

(euneighbourseast.eu)



Weather

Friday, November 15

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 16°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 5°C

Saturday, November 16

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 16°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 6°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.