

Georgian Dream Takes Oath in New Parliament Amid Protests Over Legitimacy

By Liza Mchedlidze

On November 25, the Georgian Parliament's XI convocation formally recognized the authority of all 150 members, a controversial step that came despite ongoing protests and disputes over the legitimacy of the elections. The parliament session was marked by the presence of only members of the ruling Georgian Dream party, with no foreign diplomats attending.

Of the 89 Georgian Dream MPs who had registered, 88 voted to recognize the authority of the parliament, while one MP was absent due to health reasons. After the approval of the parliament's composition, the MPs took an oath of loyalty to the country, followed by the performance of the national anthem of Georgia.

The session was attended by several prominent Georgian officials. These included Orthodox clerics, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission Giorgi Kalandarishvili, Public Defender Levan Ioseliani, the Head of the National Bank Natia Turnava, State Security Service Head Grigol Liluashvili, State Protection Special Service Head Anzor Chubinidze, and the Head of the State Audit Service Tsotne Kavelashvili.

Despite the internal recognition of parliamentary authority, President Salome Zourabichvili did not attend and has refused to acknowledge the election results, instead appealing to the Constitutional Court.

The recognition of the parliament's authority was followed by the election of key parliamentary positions. Shalva Papuashvili was elected as Chairman of



Parliament, with 88 votes in favor. Giorgi Volski was chosen as the first vice-speaker, while Thea Tsulukiani and Nino Tsilosani were selected as deputy speakers. The Georgian Dream faction now holds a majority in parliament with 89 MPs.

Outside the parliament, a rally was held by protesters who gathered to voice their dissatisfaction with the elections. The protesters condemned the legitimacy of the parliamentary session and the election results, calling for the dissolution of

the current government.

As the new parliament begins its work, the legitimacy of its authority remains a central issue, with significant opposition from both the public and political leaders.



Coalition for Change Revokes Party Lists, Rejects Parliamentary Elections

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Coalition for Change formally announced their rejection of the October 26 parliamentary elections and initiated the process to revoke their party lists with the Central Election Commission (CEC). The Coalition, comprising Ahali, Girchi – More Freedom, and Droa, had achieved the highest support among opposition groups with 11.03% of the vote but declared the elections illegitimate.

Coalition leader Zurab Japaridze outlined the procedural steps, explaining that proportional party lists must be revoked first, followed by individual resignations from parliamentary mandates. "This is a formal step to ensure none of us participate in what we consider an illegitimate process," he said.

Elene Khoshtaria, another Coalition leader, condemned the elections and the parliamentary session held on November

25, describing them as violations of the Constitution and contrary to the will of the Georgian people. She asserted that the Parliament lacked legitimacy. "No matter how many sessions are held, this Parliament cannot represent a legitimate source of power," Khoshtaria declared.

Khoshtaria further criticized the elections as conducted under conditions that undermined democratic norms, adding that the Coalition's stance was shared by the international community and Georgian citizens alike. "The Coalition for Change will not engage with this Parliament in any capacity," she emphasized.

The Coalition announced that a representative had formally addressed the CEC to revoke their party list, in accordance with Article 120 of the Electoral Code. "This is a clear declaration: we do not recognize these elections, we do not recognize this Parliament, and none of us will enter it," Khoshtaria concluded.

The News in Brief

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Zourabichvili Condemns Parliament, Urges Youth to Lead



On November 25, Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili declared in a video address that the Georgian parliament had effectively ceased to exist after violating the Constitution. She criticized ruling party MPs, including Irakli Kobakhidze, a co-author of the Constitution, describing their roles as temporary. Zourabichvili expressed faith in

Georgia's youth, asserting that the country's future lies in their hands. She called for preparation for imminent free and fair elections and emphasized the need for new political forces to take shape. She advised Georgians to focus on readi-

ness rather than daily protests, relying on themselves and the support of international partners, who she assured would not abandon Georgia.

Addressing talks about her travels abroad, Zourabichvili promised transparency about any trips and reaffirmed her commitment to staying in Georgia, preparing alongside the public for upcoming elections.

Lawyer Alleges Police Brutality During Rustaveli Avenue Protest Arrest



Anatoli Gigauri, arrested during a rally on Rustaveli Avenue on November 24, was allegedly beaten by police, according to his lawyer, Lasha Tsutskiridze. The lawyer stated that Gigauri sustained visible injuries, including bruises

and damage around his eye socket. "As he explained, the injuries were inflicted by several policemen before his arrest," Tsutskiridze said. The incident report-

edly occurred just as Gigauri was being taken into custody.

Tsutskiridze announced plans to formally request an investigation from the Special Investigation Service.

EU calls for increased efforts to protect women and girls from violence

On November 25 was the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Ahead of this day the European Commission and the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell said in a statement that "all forms of violence against women are despicable. They are a violation of human rights and undermine our core values".

The EU says women across all corners of the world continue to endure "unspeakable violence – physical, sexual, psychological and economic – offline and online".

"Women and girls also bear the brunt of both immediate violent and lasting effects of war and conflict, resulting in disproportionality in economic hardship. The situation is especially dramatic in the context of

humanitarian crises, where instances of conflict-related sexual violence and human trafficking often go unreported," the statement says.

This year, following the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention, the comprehensive standards to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, the EU has adopted the first ever law to effectively fight violence against women and domestic violence,

which complements existing legislation in EU Member States.

The commitment to end violence against women around the world is a key priority for the EU external action, the statement says: "We reaffirm our steadfast dedication to the immediate eradication of violence against women and girls in collaboration with partner countries, civil society, women's rights groups, and human rights defenders." (eunighbourseast.eu)



First Summit of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum takes place in Vienna

The 1st Summit of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) was held in Vienna from 19 to 21 November.

The EaP CSF Civil Society Summit brings together EU and EaP civil society organisations and decision makers to discuss the future shape of the Eastern Partnership multilateral cooperation, the role of civil society and how to ensure its future resilience.

"We will continue to support civil society in Eastern partner countries as part of our unwavering commitment to human rights and democracy, peace and reconciliation," said EU High Representative Josep Borrell, addressing the summit via a video message.

Recognising the role of civil society as a driving force for the reforms in the Eastern Partnership countries, the General Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum adopted its resolution, which will inform the 7th Eastern Partnership Summit of 2025 under the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The resolution calls on the

international community to strengthen the support of Ukraine and to redouble efforts and step up their commitment to the build-up of democracy in Belarus and Azerbaijan. It also "strongly" recommends that the Georgian authorities revise the adopted law on transparency of foreign influence.

"We urge the European Union to prioritise democratic governance, human rights, and the rule of law over short-term interests, including energy agreements and supplies, when engaging with EaP countries' governments," the resolution says.

The document also calls on the EU, its Member States and EaP countries to continue the Eastern Partnership policy and promote the role of civil society therein, including the EaP CSF.

Among the 107 delegates in presence, 90 voted in favour, 11 against and 6 abstained.

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum also welcomed the exhibition from the Gay Alliance Ukraine – "Those Tempered at Daybreak". This exhibition highlights the story of Ukrainian LGBTQIA+ people, and the difficulties they have faced since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

(eunighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Tuesday, November 26

Day Rain High: 9°C

Night Rain Low: 5°C

Wednesday, November 27

Day Rain High: 7°C

Night Cloudy Low: 4°C

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