

Zourabichvili Says Government Has Two Options: Organize New Elections or Face Collapse



not just a principle but a reality in any country facing such a deep crisis. You cannot emerge from this kind of crisis without elections, and no one can govern a country against its people for long.

The government is already disintegrating. There are serious questions within its vertical structure. The police are struggling to accept that they must obey a criminal hierarchy rather than a regular institutional one. No institution or individual who isn't entirely compromised can endure being controlled in this way, subjected to direct instructions.

Today, the ruling party has two options: first, to recognize reality, understand what the Georgian people want, and move towards organizing new elections together with the forces within the country and in line with the existing recommendations. A document is being prepared on this matter and will be practically ready in the coming days.

The second option is much more difficult and damaging for the country if anyone in the ruling party truly cares about the nation. It would involve waiting for the complete collapse of the ruling party, which would require a different type of responsibility-sharing. However, this will happen if the ruling party does not acknowledge the joint demands of our people and our partners that nothing in this country can be resolved without new elections.

We are prepared for both alternatives, and we will remain ready. This struggle continues, with its main component being the people who are standing on the streets, whom I support as much as I can. These people are not only in Tbilisi but also outside the capital," Zourabichvili stated.

By MESSENGER STAFF

The Fifth President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili emphasized the urgent need for new elections to resolve the ongoing political crisis.

As the ruling party faces internal disintegration and public unrest, Zourabichvili outlined two potential paths for the country: either the government acknowledges the people's demands for elections or faces further collapse.

Calling the current political climate unsustainable, the president voiced unwavering support for the public protests, stressing the necessity of free and fair elections to move forward.

"Elections have no alternative. This is

Opposition Coalitions Urge PACE to Reject Parliamentary Delegation Over Flawed Elections

By MESSENGER STAFF

Three Georgian opposition coalitions have called on the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to withhold confirmation of Georgia's parliamentary delegation, citing the country's recent elections as deeply flawed. In a letter addressed to the PACE president, the opposition described the October 26, 2024, parliamentary elections as riddled with violations and against international standards as well as the will of the Georgian people.

The opposition claims that the resulting parliament and president are illegitimate and argue that any delegation submitted by the ruling Georgian Dream party represents a self-declared regime. The letter also highlights the role of Georgian Dream's leader, Bidzina Ivanishvili, who is under international sanctions, in the country's democratic backsliding and human rights abuses. Opposition leaders



5 January 2025

To: Theodoros Rousopoulos, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Cc: Frank Schwabe, Chairperson of the Socialists, Democrats, and Greens Group
Pablo Hispán, Chairperson of the Group of the European People's Party
Zsolt Németh, Chairperson of the European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance
Iulian Bulai, Chairperson of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Andrei Hunko, Chairperson of the Group of the Unified European Left

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8367; Euro - 2.9232; GBP - 3.4801; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7527; Swiss Franc - 3.1101

Opposition Coalitions Urge PACE to Reject Parliamentary Delegation Over Flawed Elections

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

are demanding the immediate release of political prisoners and the organization of new, free, and fair elections to address Georgia's deepening political crisis.

"Dear President, We, representatives of Georgian political parties, request that you refrain from confirming the credentials of Georgia's parliamentary delegation in the Parliamentary Assembly of

the Council of Europe. The parliamentary elections held on October 26, 2024, were conducted with serious violations, contrary to international standards and the will of the Georgian people.

The 'parliament' formed as a result of these fraudulent elections, along with the 'president' elected by it, lack legitimacy. Any delegation presented to the Assembly by the ruling Georgian Dream party consists solely of representatives of a self-

declared regime.

It is also important to note that Georgian Dream's leaders, including Bidzina Ivanishvili, are under international sanctions and bear responsibility for the country's democratic backsliding and widespread human rights abuses. Peaceful protestors in Georgia face repression, arrests, and violence, further deepening the crisis.

Our demands are as follows: - The

immediate release of all political prisoners. - The holding of new, free, and fair elections.

The principled stance of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is crucial to safeguarding democratic values in Georgia.

Sincerely, Representatives of Georgian Political Parties," reads the statement by three opposition coalition parties to PACE.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Latvian MEP Rihards Kols: Legislative Measures in Georgia Mirror Kremlin's Playbook

Rihards Kols, alongside other international allies, met with Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili today to discuss the alarming political situation in Georgia.

"Today, alongside other friends of Georgia, I spoke with President Salome Zourabichvili. She detailed the alarming

situation in Georgia, where the regime is consolidating power and steering toward authoritarian rule. Legislative measures—including weakening the civil service to stack it with loyalists and targeting the families of protest participants—mirror tactics straight from the Kremlin's playbook.

This is a dangerous course, one that leads to repressive governance and is exceedingly difficult to reverse once entrenched. I urged the President and parliamentarians to actively coordinate and engage meaningfully to counter this trajectory," wrote Kols on X.

Kols has been outspoken in his criticism of Russia's political and military ac-

Salome Zourabichvili Confirms to Attend Trump's Inauguration

The fifth president of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, confirmed that she is attending Donald Trump's inauguration.

"I am going to President Donald Trump's inauguration, I will be in Washington at the invitation of Joe Wilson," Zourabichvili stated.

The inauguration of the newly elected US President, Donald Trump, will take place on January 20.

None of the representatives from Bidzina Ivanishvili's party were invited to attend Trump's inauguration. This was confirmed by the press service of the



tions, especially regarding its aggression towards Ukraine and its role in undermining democratic values in Eastern Europe.

government administration to Formulanews.

EU High Representative Kaja Kallas to participate in Ukraine Defence Contact Group

Weather

Friday, January 10

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 12°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 1°C

Saturday, January 11

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 12°C

Night 🌧️ Partly 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

On 9 January, EU High Representative Kaja Kallas traveled to Ramstein (Germany) where she will participate in the ministerial-level meeting of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group (UDCG).

According to a press release by the European External Action Service, the meeting will be an opportunity to discuss and coordinate further military support to Ukraine.

"Continued coordination with

partners, including NATO, is crucial," the press release says. "The EU and Member States have provided 48 billion worth of military support to Ukraine and have trained 70,000 Ukrainian troops."

In Ramstein, the EU High Representative will reiterate the EU's determination to mobilise all necessary support to ensure Ukraine's victory, EEAS said.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

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.