

US Acting Assistant Secretary Reeker visits Tbilisi

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

The United States Acting Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker is paying a visit to Georgia. According to him, his official visit aims to ensure the further development of Georgia as a safe and democratic country.

Reeker met with the Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili. The sides discussed the post-Covid 19 support of the US, where it was underlined that Georgia will be given a priority in the Vaccine Sharing Plan as designed and developed by the White House. Officials focused on regional challenges and the role to be played by Georgia in the context of regional security. Reeker affirmed the USA's total support to Georgia in this regard. The past and current democracy reforms of the country were reviewed as well.

Reeker praised Georgia's progress towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The meeting underlined the importance of maintaining Georgia at leading positions in the agenda of US relations with Russia. It was noted that support towards sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia would be in focus at the upcoming meeting between US and Russian presidents. As the government of Georgia press office reports, the significance of the April 19 EU-mediated agreement and its implementation was reviewed as well.

"We had a great meeting with Assistant Secretary Reeker. This visit is a clear demonstration of the US increasing interest and engagement in the South Caucasus region," Georgian PM wrote on Twitter after the meeting.

Reeker announced at a joint press conference with PM Garibashvili that Georgia



"Under Biden-Harris administration Georgia remains a key strategic partner of the US in South Caucasus and an important partner in the Black Sea region," said Philip Reeker, Acting Assistant US Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

remains the key strategic partner to the US in the South Caucasus and a crucial partner in the Black Sea region. Acting Assistance Secretary also stressed that Georgia is a very strong partner of NATO and one of the biggest contributors as an aspirant country. He stressed that the April 19 agreement provides opportunities to further strengthen institutions, which would be another step taken towards NATO integration. In ad-

dition, Reeker noted that implementing the reforms envisaged by the agreement will help Georgia become more attractive to international trade and investors.

It was also noted that Georgia, Ukraine, and Kosovo are the first three European countries to receive vaccines from the United States, based on regional priorities and partnerships. According to the US Embassy in Georgia, President Biden announced this week that the

United States would share COVID-19 vaccines with Georgia.

Earlier yesterday, Reeker held a meeting with Georgian NGOs and discussed the issues related to the EU-mediated agreement.

Within the framework of his visit, Reeker will meet with civic society representatives and opposition party members.

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Georgia is among the first three European countries to receive Covid-19 vaccines from the United States.

Latvian FM meets Georgian officials, Latvia to allocate 15,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine to Georgia

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics is paying a two-day official visit to Georgia. During his stay, Latvian FM is holding meetings with Georgian top officials to discuss the bilateral relations, current challenges, COVID-19, and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration.

Yesterday, Latvian FM met with his Georgian counterpart David Zalkaliani. The parties discussed Georgia's integration into NATO and the preparations for the next NATO summit. As Zalkaliani noted, now that the relations between Georgia and the European Union are at a high level, Latvia is one of the most supportive partners of Georgia on the path to European integration. He noted that the visit of the Latvian Foreign Minister is an excellent opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues in both bilateral and multilateral formats. Zalkaliani stressed that the cooperation between the two countries in the field of defense and security, trade, tourism and economy is deepening more and more every year.

Following the meeting with Zalkaliani, the Latvian Foreign Minister announced Georgia would receive 15,000 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine from Latvia. He underscored the importance of joint efforts in the fight against the pandemic. Latvian FM also spoke about the resumption of direct flights, expressed hope that air traffic would soon return to the pre-pandemic levels.

Rinkevics also met with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli



"Latvia is Georgia's closest ally. Together with Latvian partners we will be able to do our best," said Georgian Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani



Georgia is planning to apply for EU membership in 2024.

Garibashvili. They discussed the economic cooperation between Georgia and Latvia, underlining the importance of further deepening the relationship, especially in the post-pandemic period. According to the official statement, Georgia's steps toward EU integration were in focus. The sides discussed the political and economic reforms implemented in this process and the country's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

Latvian FM and Georgian Prime Minister emphasized the importance of the updated Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP) which offers new avenues for cooperation. Georgian PM thanked Latvia for supporting Georgia's path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Garibashvili and Rinkevics talked about the dire humanitarian situation in Georgia's occupied territories. Within the framework of his visit to Georgia, Rinkevics will visit Odzisi, a village at the occupation line. The Foreign Minister of Latvia reaffirmed Latvia's strong support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Parliament Speaker Kakha Kuchava also held a meeting with Latvian FM to discuss the partnership between the countries, as well as future cooperation in bilateral and multilateral formats in political and economic directions. The parties touched upon the NATO Open Door Policy and stressed the necessity of Georgia's accession to NATO for security in the region.

Ivanishvili on Gakharia's new party: Political cooperation with Giorgi Gakharia is unacceptable

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

Former Prime Minister of Georgia and founder of the ruling Georgian Dream party has reacted to ex-PM Gakharia's

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Weather

Tuesday, June 8

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 26°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 13°C

Wednesday, June 9

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 26°C

Night Showers
Low: 16°C

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Culture & Lifestyle

Alexi Matchavariani's "Hamlet's" Worldwide Recognition



"...Matchavariani - "Othello" is both a Georgian and universal work, very tense, intensely dramatic." (Journal Musical Francais, №152. Decembre, 1966. Page: 48.)

BY MARIAM CHANISHVILI

Famous Georgian composer, Alexi Matchavariani, born on 23 September 1913 in Gori, is a pioneer of modern music in Georgia. His creative production comprises a broad spectrum, including chamber music, romances, seven symphonies, operas, and ballets. He has received the Golden Medal of Braidense Cultural Center in Milan for the music of 'Othello' (the prize, which has also been received by Prokofiev and Shostakovich). Othello has been described as Shakespeare with electricity by New York Times and as a universal work by Journal Musical Francais: ...'Othello' and Alexi Matchavariani's score is a stunning dramatic pulse – sinuous, barbed, bombastic, and tender in turn. ...it's Shakespeare with electricity.

In 1960, Matchavariani started working on another important piece- Hamlet- an opera in two acts. Opera Hamlet, which has, unfortunately, never been staged in Georgia, has received remarkable reviews worldwide.

Vakhtang Matchavariani has decided to present the opera through the suites, created from the orchestral episodes, which he has performed worldwide; the performance has created the urge to see the music score and study the piece more thoroughly.

Shakespearean International Yearbook in London published an extensive article by Michelle Assay, Professor, Ph.D., at the Sorbonne University in Paris and Doctor of London Royal Music Academy: "Hamlet in Soviet / post-Soviet Operatic Afterlife. Between Individuality and Political Allegory."

"Matchavariani considered Othello to be "full of human emotions and the power of love," whereas "Hamlet is a problem of existence, and a feast of life and mind over the mediators of death and darkness"; in other words, he saw Hamlet as a more philosophical statement... Matchavariani's task, then, was to balance three ideals: his personal understanding of the drama, the contemporaneity of his musical language, and the integrity of Shakespeare's text..."

In December 2020, an online conference was organized by the Universities of Manchester and Huddersfield with the support and patronage of the Royal Academy of Music of England, called "Shakespeare in Music" New Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Inaugural Online Conference of the Shakespeare and Music Study Group. Alexi Matchavariani's opera Hamlet was highlighted and the conference was attended by Ms. Michel Assay; Founder and Chair of Shakespeare and Music International Study Group (RMA).

"Hamlet" is the opera finished by A. Matchavariani in 1979, which has not been performed anywhere for 41 years, despite the fact that offers for staging were made by Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and others. After considering the offers, the author firmly stated that he had created this opera in Georgian and that it had to be performed in Georgian for the first time.

"In the 80s and 90s of the last century, it was difficult for theater leaders to grasp the essence of the first Georgian musical drama, which was unusual for them, and which can be compared to the opera of the genius Alban Berg Wozzeck (but in the Georgian spirit) through musical and

technological language. I am glad that this time the management of our theater has expressed a desire for Hamlet to be performed, especially since the director Andrei Konchalovsky admires the music of the opera and happily agreed to stage an opera in Tbilisi in Georgian," said conductor and composer Vakhtang Matchavariani.

Alexi Matchavariani's works have been published in a full format by Sikorski Music Publishing Group, which is an international music publishing company from Hamburg.

The publishing group has only published works of two Georgian composers in a full format – Alexi Matchavariani and Giya Kancheli.



Conductor and composer, Vakhtang Matchavariani

Ivanishvili on Gakharia's new party: Political cooperation with Giorgi Gakharia is unacceptable

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launching of his new political party For Georgia. In his first public statement since his offi-

cial resignation five months ago, Bidzina Ivanishvili described Gakharia's resignation in February and the consequent creation of a new political party as

"traitorous" towards his own party and the state:

"One of the leaders of the ruling party and a government official with the most power resigned at a completely incomprehensible time, for a completely unknown reason - he resigned because he did not want the rule of law and law enforcement to be fulfilled by the political team. A similar case of such an incident can hardly be found in the history of world politics," Ivanishvili said.

He also said that the reason why he broke his silence and issued a public statement is because of the rumors of his involvement in Gakharia's new party:

"I see it as an attempt to continue to link my name to Geor-

gian politics by spreading false information, and, despite my resignation, I feel obliged to give a small explanation to the public on this matter. It is no secret that the creation of pseudo-parties has been a vicious practice widely introduced in Georgia over the years. On top of such practice in itself being wrong, any political cooperation with Giorgi Gakharia would be completely unacceptable to me."

"One of the main results that the Georgian Dream has achieved with me and my departure from politics is the end of the vicious tradition of personality cult and messianism in Georgia. I am deeply convinced that the party I founded will continue to successfully ensure the strength of the state, the protec-

tion of democratic institutions, and the rule of law which is a necessary condition for the country's further development", the statement concluded.

Ex-Pm Gakharia who resigned from his post in February amidst the "disagreements with other team members" on the subject of the arrest of the leader of the opposition United National Movement party Nika Melia, has already responded to Ivanishvili's statement. On his Twitter Gakharia posted:

"The events are developing in an interesting and faster way than expected... No one and nothing can stop the truth. Eventually, everyone will understand this. Again without gossiping, we unite for Georgia, against no one!"