

## President Zourabichvili Urges Youth and Diaspora to Vote for Georgia's European Future

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

A year has passed since the protests against Russian legislation, and President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, emphasized that the achievement of candidate status is thanks to the efforts of the youth demonstrators.

In her speech, President Zourabichvili stressed the importance of the youth's active involvement, asserting that today, the direction of the country's future is determined not by street demonstrations but by participation in elections. Zourabichvili highlighted that their participation is crucial not only for shaping the country's future but also for their own personal aspirations.

"What I have to say to young people is that what they stood for on the street last year was very important, and actually, a large part of the decision that was made at the end of the year was thanks to them. They know this well; they felt their power, and the same should happen this year if we want to achieve a result, that is, the opening of negotiations. Their active participation is crucial. Today, our future is not decided on the street; it is decided in the elections, and their participation is crucial for them personally too," Zourabichvili stated.



Additionally, the Georgian President emphasized the significance of the diaspora's participation in the elections. Zourabichvili underscored that this election transcends individual preferences or party affiliations; rather, it represents a choice for Europe, similar to a referendum.

"I would also like to emphasize the importance of diaspora participation in the elections.

This election is not merely the choice of any individual or party; rather, it represents the choice of Europe, akin to a referendum.

I think that those who live in the diaspora and are beginning to have hope that this country

will become promising, that it will become part of Europe, and that the way back [home] will be opened for them, it is also their duty to participate in the elections, which I know is difficult, there are many restrictions on this path, and we are trying and working with non-governmental organizations in order to

facilitate participation in elections.

I will be involved with many organizations abroad next week. It's everyone's job to tell those we know abroad to get a ticket and come, or to mobilize on the ground as much as they can. The fate of your country is in the ballot box," the President stated.

## Chairman Papuashvili Criticizes Zurab Adeishvili's Presence in EU Institutions; German Embassy Responds

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Former Minister of Justice of Georgia and former Prosecutor General Zurab Adeishvili, who was convicted in absentia, attended the plenary session of the Bundestag together with the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andriy Kostin. The issue of supplying long-range weapons to Ukraine was discussed at the meeting.

In response to Adeishvili's presence in the German parliament, the Chairman of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, criticized the reception and called for an explanation from the German side.

"We observed a certain cynicism when Zurab Adeishvili, most likely to discuss issues of justice, was in the deliberative rooms of the European Union institutions in Brussels, specifically within the European Com-

mission' premises. This is no longer a parliament when we would discuss individual MEPs.

It is unfortunate, and I hope that the EU ambassador will clarify whether it was known whom the representatives of the European Commission were meeting, and after it became known, what they will say to the Georgian people. How they are going to make clarifications in this regard to the Georgian people in the future," Papuashvili stated.

According to Papuashvili, Zurab Adeishvili is the embodiment of everything that is anti-European and anti-human.

"I would like to emphasize that Zurab Adeishvili has been sentenced to a total of 18 years. He is not just a politically sanctioned individual from Georgia but a court-sanctioned individual whose sentence the Georgian people are awaiting," Papuashvili said.

The German Embassy in Georgia responded to the Chairman's criticism regarding Adeishvili's visit to the Bundestag, stating that during the debate on February 22,



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6576; Euro - 2.8949; GBP - 3.3884; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.9277; Swiss Franc - 3.0173

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Adeishvili was on the tribune reserved for guests of the German Bundestag as a member of the Ukrainian ambassador's delegation.

"In Germany, there was no reason based on the principles of the rule of law to prevent him from entering the parliament.

# Chairman Papuashvili Criticizes Zurab Adeishvili's Presence in EU Institutions; German Embassy Responds

This fact has nothing to do with the attitude towards the exist-

ing relations between Germany and Georgia. It is known to ev-

eryone that the relations between Germany and Georgia are

very good," stated the German Embassy.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Zurab Adeishvili Meets European Commissioner for Justice in Brussels



After the Bundestag session, Zurab Adeishvili, former Minister of Justice of Georgia and former Prosecutor General, who was convicted in absentia, and

Andriy Kostin, Prosecutor General of Ukraine, met with the European Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders, at the European Commission in Brussels.

According to the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, the meeting

addressed issues regarding holding war criminals and those involved in corruption accountable.

"To achieve this goal, we are

enhancing our cooperation in terms of mutual legal assistance and extradition," Kostin remarked.

Additionally, the meeting addressed the tightening of sanctions against Russia and the ongoing reform of Ukraine's law enforcement system.

### Chairman of Georgian Parliament Criticizes Opposition's Lack of Initiative and Concrete Ideas

Shalva Papuashvili, Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, stated that the opposition lacks both initiative and concrete ideas to offer. Instead, their focus lies solely on determining direction from external sources.

According to Papuashvili, the ruling party consistently poses a question to the opposition, inquiring about their critiques of Georgian justice and requesting them to pinpoint specific issues within the system. Nevertheless, he observed that they were in-

capable of furnishing any concrete examples or specific instances of perceived injustice.

Additionally, Papuashvili mentioned that only four opposition MPs attended the discussion of draft laws in the Parlia-



ment on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

"We ask them what specific aspects of Georgian justice they dispute and dislike. Name the decision that is unfair. They could not name it. Why can't

they name it? Wherever they attempted to name it, fingers were burned. They cited the Rustavi 2 case as an example, attacking Georgian judges.

What happened after five years? Strasbourg ruled that the judges

were accurate and that NGOs, embassies, and the opposition were false. They should at least apologize before discussing Georgian justice," Papuashvili stated.

## Denmark and UN Women Champion Women's Leadership in Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine

**Tbilisi, Georgia** - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA), through its Department of European Neighborhood (EUN), in partnership with UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional office, proudly announces the launch of the "Women's Increased Leadership for Resilient and Peaceful Societies" programme.

The four-year initiative, set to unfold across Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, is a decisive step towards enhancing conflict prevention, mediation, and the fortifica-

tion of democratic resilience in three countries with a special focus on their EU accession journey.

The initiative in Georgia is designed to foster inclusive governance and public life, placing women at the forefront of decision-making processes. It emphasizes the urgency to elevate women's economic standing, particularly through the development of skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and entrepreneurial support. This approach not only contributes to women's economic empowerment but also bridges the gender gap in the labor market. Furthermore, the initiative pays special attention to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, recognizing the pivotal role women play in conflict pre-

vention, resolution, and sustainable peacebuilding processes.

In pursuit of these goals, the project in Georgia aims to enhance human rights and resilience in communities affected by conflict, targeting young women for inclusion in peace and rights activism, and improving economic opportunities for the most marginalized, such as IDP and conflict-affected women. Concurrently, the project aspires to cultivate a sustainable and inclusive economy that benefits all, with particular emphasis on women's employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

"UN Women, in partnership with The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, is excited to initiate first inaugural initiatives in Georgia. Emphasizing

the empowerment of women, particularly focusing on the upcoming generation, is crucial for creating inclusive, resilient, and peaceful societies. In these uncertain and difficult times, our goal is to provide a beacon of hope for women and girls, along with their families and communities," - noted Kaori Ishikawa, UN Women Country Representative in Georgia and Liaison for the South Caucasus.

Denmark is honoured to initiate a significant project together with UN Women in Georgia, aligning with the principles of the Danish Development Cooperation Strategy, 'The World We Share.' Focus in Georgia is on enhancement of women's economic empowerment (WEE) and support to women, peace and

security (WPS) and youth, peace, and security (YPS) agendas. The project will boost women's employment through ICT skills and entrepreneurship support, challenging the imbalance in unpaid care work. It will also tackle the exclusion of young women from peace activism and ensure economic rights for IDP and conflict affected women, we are proud to support impactful initiatives like this, said H.E. Anne Toft Sørensen.

The initiative supported by the Foreign Affairs of Denmark and implemented by the UN Women represents a significant commitment to advancing gender equality, reducing disparities, and fostering sustainable development in Georgia and the broader region.

### Weather

#### Friday, March 8

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 13°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 3°C

#### Saturday, March 9

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 13°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 4°C

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# Meeting supported by UN Women and the French Embassy on the economic rehabilitation of victims of violence held on the International Women's Day.

At the initiative of UN Women, the French Embassy in Georgia and business associations, the representatives of Anti-Violence Network of Georgia and the private sector held a meeting attended by the members of Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) signatory business organizations, the business federation Women for Tomorrow, the European Business Association and Chamber of Commerce and Industry France - Georgia (CCIFG).

The French Ambassador to Georgia, Sheraz Ghasri, UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia, Sabine Machl, and the UN Women Country Representative in Georgia, Kaori Ishikawa opened the meeting. During the next part of the event, the participants discussed the importance of involvement of business organizations in the process of social and economic rehabilitation of the victims/survivors of violence.

During the event, the participants discussed the current situation regarding the gender-based violence and victim support services in the country, the private sector representatives also shared successful initiatives implemented in their companies supporting social and economic capacities of the survivors of violence.

It was highlighted at the event that an effective fight against gender-based violence requires the engagement of vari-



ous sectors, including the government, non-governmental or donor organizations and businesses. It is the unified approach of this kind that leads to large-scale changes in social norms and behavior, and the private sector can play the role of utmost significance in this process, inter alia, by raising awareness and changing the stereotypical approaches, mobilizing resources, etc.

'The UN will continue to promote

greater gender equality, gender responsiveness and non-discrimination. The road to healing for survivors of violence requires not only justice, but also a path back to social and economic stability. The private sector can help with providing employment opportunities, skills training, and a supportive workplace' noted UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia, Sabine Machl

'Investing in women and girls benefits

the whole society. That's why French President Macron has made women's rights a priority of our national policy and our diplomacy. In Georgia we have partnered with UNWOMEN and civil society organisations to protect victims of violence. With TBC Bank, we facilitate women entrepreneurs access to financing. Business has an enormous transformative power, to fight discriminations, end prejudices, advance equality. We are looking forward to working with every company and everyone in Georgia to advance the global cause of gender equality #FeministDiplomacy' said Sheraz Ghasri, The French Ambassador to Georgia.

The meeting was dedicated to the celebration of International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>. It is noteworthy that this year the key message of the International Women's Day "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress" highlights the importance of investing in women's potential and capacities, and calls upon everyone to join their efforts for achieving gender equality, building democratic communities and fair economies.

The meeting was held within the framework of the UN Women's project *Strengthening Specialized Services for the Victims of Gender-Based Violence*, generously funded by the French Embassy.

# UNFPA opens the 22<sup>nd</sup> "Equality Corner" in Georgia

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has opened its 22<sup>nd</sup> "Equality Corner" in Georgia.

The UNFPA Georgia Country Office has gifted over 200 books on equality, empowerment of girls and woman, tolerance, and human rights to the local li-

brary of Daba Naruja, in Ozurgeti municipality in cooperation with Palitra L publishing.

The Georgian team visited Daba Naruja on March 5 with writer, TV presenter and Friend of UNFPA Georgia Alexandre Lortkipanidze, who spoke with

adolescent girls and boys about gender equality and literature.

UNFPA Georgia Country Office has been opening "Equality Corners" in various regions of Georgia together with its partners since 2018.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> "Equality Corner" has opened

in the framework of the "EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence" programme, funded by the European Union, implemented jointly by UN Women and UNFPA.



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*On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian Armed Forces Day, the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Georgia H.E. Mr. Vesselin Valkanov held a Reception on March 5.*









