

President of Poland met with Georgian officials, visited the occupation line



Official publication

► "Georgians, we are waiting for you in a united Europe, you are part of the EU," President of Poland said.

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The President of Georgia Salome Zurbishvili hosted the President of Poland Andrzej Duda at the Orbeliani Palace in Georgia. After the meeting, Zurbishvili said that Georgia has hopes for the future because it has a very old and very strong friend and partner in the EU in the form of Poland.

According to Zurbishvili, the meeting covered issues such as Poland's participation in the EU Monitoring Mission, the country's support in the EU and NATO integration process and more. She emphasized that Poland was the initiator of many stages such as Eastern Partnership. President underscored that Georgia went through association, visa liberalization, and free trade, but there is a need for more stages to reach the final plan.

Zurbishvili stated she shared the request to include the current situation in Georgia and Ukraine in the declaration of the upcoming NATO summit with the President of Poland.

The conversation also touched upon the fact that Poland will become the OSCE Chairman-in-Office next year. According to Zurbishvili, Poland is ready to provide assistance to Georgia to bring the issue of occupation to the forefront of OSCE political activities. The presidents also discussed the bilateral relations between countries, emphasizing the direction of tourism.



► Hosted by EUMM staff - with 17 Polish nationals of the mission - at the location, Duda received an assessment of the situation in the area that includes a crossing point over the boundary but has been closed for regular traffic since September 2019.

On May 26, the President of Poland Andrzej Duda took part in the celebration of the Independence Day of Georgia. In addition, on May 27, he also met with the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament. He also visited the occupation line, after which he said that the conditional border with the Tskhinvali region is something that politicians in all

NATO member states needed to know in order to see clearly the true face of Russian policy.

During his visit the President of Poland also met members of the community displaced in the 2008 war and the subsequent borderization process to hear about the challenges facing the internally displaced persons.

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19 April agreement questioned by part of the opposition, part of it remains hopeful for change

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

President of the Council of Europe Charles Michel mediated the conversation between the government and the opposition which resulted in reaching an agreement. The boycotted opposition, although part of it entered parliament, is more skeptical and considers the possibility of holding early parliamentary elections to be the main point of the April 19 agreement.

On May 19, Euronews published a joint article by Georgian President Salome Zurbishvili and European Council President Charles Michel on "Georgia's future is European."

The article shows how hopeful the European friends of Georgia have been about the April 19 agreement. The opposition's entering the parliament would make the establishment will diverse, the parties would shift from hostility to cooperation and jointly carry out institutional reforms, the election process will

meet the highest standards, an independent judiciary will be established. To sum up, Georgia could be transformed from a country of hybrid regimes into a truly democratic one.

Georgian Dream is satisfied with the agreement but blames the opposition bloc for being an obstacle in fulfilling the requirements agreed upon. However, even the opposition, which finally entered the parliament, has little hope for constructive cooperation and thinks that the most viable way of recovering justice is 'dismantling' the reforms that the government agreed to reach on April 19. The reason for the skepticism is understandable- why would the Georgian Dream voluntarily do what it had to and did not during the 8 years of its rule? The main hope, in this case, is again the constant supervising of the agreement reached by the EU. Part of the opposition, which considers the boycott of the parliament to be legit, says

that Michel's document did not really favor the opposition bloc. As Anzor Bitsadze noted, the winner in the end is Bidzina Ivanishvili who got what he wanted- a multi-party parliament who, from 'Russian oligarch' became the man 'striving to build a democratic country.'

The Labor Party remained in the boycott mode, which is also supported by European Georgia, however, the deputies who passed the list left the party and entered the parliament. It should be noted that some opposition members of parliament justify this move only by the fact that the parliament no longer consists of only GD members.

The main issue now is the decision of the National Movement, which, although left with a few seats in parliament and entered the parliament, remains the largest opposition force with 35 seats. Nika Melia, who was released from prison, noted the differences of opinion within the party and is taking time to reach

an agreement within the party.

This is understandable, some even suggested that the disagreement on this issue could have led to the split of the "National Movement" into two parts. Nika Melia also arrived in Ukraine to discuss the issue and met with Mikheil Saakashvili. This, on the one hand, showed that there is no confrontation between them, and, on the other hand, once again highlighted Mikheil Saakashvili's position, who is paying for the UNM's entry into the parliament.

According to the opposition members who entered parliament, the main task is to change the electoral legislation and ensure fair local elections where Georgian Dream is not able to get 43% of the votes. Many consider this to be an opportunity for preparing the ground for early parliamentary elections in 2022. However, it is clear that the Georgian Dream is doing everything in its power to prevent such an outcome.

Georgian Dream and the op-

position in the parliament are already working on the new election legislation provided for in the April 19 agreement. "Election regulations are fundamentally changing, which leave no excuse for anyone to talk about any kind of manipulation," stated Irakli Kobakhidze. Part of the opposition agrees to this and says that "fraud mechanisms will be completely eliminated - no party will be able to rig the elections and adjust the results to its own favor," said Giorgi Vashadze, the leader of Strategy Builder.

The boycotting opposition remains skeptical. According to Giga Bokeria, the chairman of European Georgia, the electoral reforms will not bring any pivotal changes. "The essence of the election fraud and manipulation by the Ivanishvili regime does not depend on what Law says," he stated. The main discussion on the election legislation is still to be held, especially if the National Movement enters the parliament.

3 new deputies in Parliament as a result of reshuffle

IRAKLI SESIASHVILI, MARIAM KVRIVISHVILI, AND SALOME MUJIRI WERE REPLACED

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The Parliament today recognized the authority of the deputies to replace the excluded MPs. Irakli Sesiashvili will be replaced by Gela Samkharauli from Georgian Dream, while Mariam Kvrivishvili will be replaced by Khatuna Kvitsiani. As for Girchi, its previous deputy member Salome Mujiri will be replaced by Alexander Rakviashvili.

MPs Irakli Sesiashvili, Mariam Kvrivishvili, and Salome Mujiri were terminated prematurely. The issue was voted on by the parliament on May 25.

Georgian Dream MPs have moved to the executive branch. Sesiashvili has been appointed Adviser to the Prime Minister on Defense and Security, and Kvrivishvili has been appointed Deputy Minister of Economy.

As for Salome Mujiri, she became a member of the Parliament with Girchi's proportional list. Girchi disagreed with gender quotas and the party said that they would include women in the



▶ Irakli Sesiashvili and Mariam Kvrivishvili were moved to the executive branch

list only for formality. After entering the parliament, Mujiri refused the mandate, which was followed by Alexander Rakviashvili taking her spot.

According to the party leader, Iago Khvichia, Salome Mujiri is their friend who helped them achieve the goal of bypassing the 'idiotic' regulation.

The adopted gender quota was supported by the parliament of Georgia to increase the number of women members of the Georgian parliament. While the women's rights advocates praised the new gender quotas as a 'victory against Georgia's male-dominated power structure', others, among them Girchi, said that there was the

new regulation is of no good use.

One of the reasons for the adoption of the new law was the fact that the EU-Georgia Association Agreement called for the country to take active steps towards increasing the representation of women in the political life of the decision-making process in the country.

The same regulation was attempted to be adopted in the country previously as well. The changes in the Georgian law will go into effect in 2028, envisaging at least 50 seats in parliament for women.



▶ Iago Khvichia said that Mujiri is a close friend of Girchi who helped them achieve their goal and bypass the regulation.

FRIDAY	MAY 28
Day	Partly cloudy High: 27°C
Night	Partly cloudy Low: 17°C
SATURDAY	MAY 29
Day	Clouds High: 30°C
Night	Rain Low: 15°C

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EXCHANGE RATES:

US DOLLAR - 3.2993 | EURO - 4.0420 | GBP - 4.6735 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.4922 | SWISS FRANC - 3.6868 |

Guardians of Rioni Gorge leave Tbilisi, continue protesting at Namakhvani HPP construction site

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

One of the protestors against the construction of Namakhvani HPP, Varlam Goletiani announced yesterday that the activists have completed their actions in the capital and will continue to protest at the construction of the Namakhvani hydroelectric power plant:

“Our struggle will continue in Namakhvani, and it will not be a violent one. We have been participating in this peaceful struggle and will continue to do so this way. We are fighting against the government and others who criticize us and try to marginalize our movement. We will put an end to this, and we will continue to do our job in peace and in a spirit of unity, regardless of the government’s attempts to stop us, divide us and involve us in a confrontation. They won’t succeed. And every single one of us, who is standing here today is a guarantee of that,” Goletiani said.

Protesters have left the capital, returned to Gumati and continued to protest near one of the offices of Enka – a Turkish company in charge of the construction of the HPP. It has been reported that prior to the arrival of the protestors, law enforcement agents have put up metal barricades on the road connecting Rioni to the village of Gumati. Zviad Palavandishvili, one of the local residents, told Netgazeti that police were checking documents of the people who tried to pass through the barricades:

“Some guys from the neighbouring villages were trying to get to the memorial service, the police stopped them, kept them at the checkpoint for an hour, and, after eventually letting them through, told them not to leave their car near Namakhvani or else they would not be allowed to pass back,” Palavandishvili told Netgazeti. Right now, protesters have blocked the passage route near the village of Gumati, although they claim that the passage will only be closed for the cars of the Enka company, and everyone else will be free to move.

“Gorge will only be completely closed for the company, local residents will be free to travel freely,” Goletiani explained.



NEWS IN BRIEF

PREPARED
BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Police in Gumati detains 8 anti- HPP activists

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 8 people have been detained during a rally against Namakhvani HPP in the village of Gumati yesterday.

According to the Formula One agency, their arrest was caused by a violation of the Code of Administrative Offenses.

The situation has become tense in the village of Gumati, where the action of the opponents of Namakhvani HPP

continues, and an iron dam is erected. Rioni Valley guards were hitting the iron dam with their hands, trying to cross the closed area, but the police do not allow them to do so.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs called on the citizens gathered in Gumati to respect the law and keep calm.

Levan Vasadze dines with Russian politician on Georgia’s Independence Day

According to Mtavari Arkhi TV channel, pro-Russian businessman Levan Vasadze met with Alexander Dugin,

the Kremlin ideologue and leader of the International Eurasian Movement, in Moscow.

The channel obtained a video showing Dugin and Vasadze having dinner at one of the restaurants. According to the channel, the meeting took place today, on May 26, Georgia’s Independence Day.

Alexander Dugin is the leader of the International Eurasian Movement. The essence of his political activity was to create a Eurasian super-country at the expense of the integration of the former republics with Russia. Dugin seeks to rectify the consequences of the “greatest

geopolitical tragedy of the 20th century” - the collapse of the Soviet Union.

During the 2008 war, Dugin advised the Russian government to conquer Tbilisi and form a pro-Russian government there. Otherwise, he predicted a new war, as the Georgian government, in his estimation, was a puppet of the United States.

Levan Vasadze, a pro-Russian businessman who has been making discriminatory and aggressive statements for years, announced his coming into politics on May 6, 2021, with his newly founded country “Nation - Unity, Identity, Hope.”