

Ahead of Run-offs Tbilisi Mayoral Candidate Nika Melia Names shadow coalition cabinet



► "We stand together and give people a wide variety choice."

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Nika Melia, the opposition candidate from the United National Movement for October 30 Tbilisi mayoral runoff, presented a shadow cabinet in cooperation with 5 opposition parties, Lelo, Girchi – More Freedom, Droa, European Georgia, and Nino Burjanadze's United Georgia – Democratic Movement.

He nominated Mamuka Khazaradze, the leader of the Lelo party, and Zurab

Japaridze from Girchi, leader of Droa, Elene Khoshtaria, and Irakli Abesadze as candidates for deputy mayors. According to Khazaradze, all professionals who work in the City Hall during the rule of the Georgian Dream will keep their jobs.

According to Melia, the solution to all problems is diversity, whether it is large-scale or small. As he notes, for the first time in history, there will be a coalition team in the local government of Tbilisi

Nika Melia also nominated candidates

for the leadership of municipal services. They are from different parties, some of them are non-partisan.

"Nothing like this has happened under this government, the previous government, or even before. If a team came to the City Hall, it came one-party, including the competent, qualified, professionals, but after a certain period, the party interest always took precedence over the public interest, that has been proven by practice," Melia assessed, saying that

this notion has struck the opposition with the clear need for diversity that has existed in Tbilisi for centuries.

At the same time, as he noted, in case of winning the second round, he will resign from the position of the party chairman and remain a regular member of the party.

Before the nomination, the leaders of parties Droa and Lelo signed a memorandum of coalition cooperation. As Khazaradze said before the signing ceremony, this bipartisan union will be a guarantee that the country will be governed in a coalition in the future. Leaders emphasized that their parties' goals and objectives coincide in many issues and this partnership will be the platform that will guarantee the end of one-party rule and healthy coalition governance.

The parties are planning a joint action for the second round of municipal elections. According to the leader of Lelo, the October 30 elections will be a turning point.

According to Khoshtaria, the way to build a pro-Western, civilized state is through unity and coalition diversity. According to him, a system adapted to one person destroys the country even with good intentions.

Khoshtaria noted the efforts of the National Movement and Nika Melia to form a diverse unity and not to turn the National Movement 'into just a big, selfish force.' She emphasized the importance of upcoming runoffs schedules in 20 cities.



► In the October 2 local self-government elections throughout Georgia, the Lelo party received 2.71% of the vote (in Tbilisi - 3.62%), the Droa party - 0.61% (in Tbilisi - 2.14%).

EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.1411 | EURO - 3.6531 | GBP - 4.3234 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.4252 | SWISS FRANC - 3.4017 |

PM Garibashvili criticizes MEPs for calls about Saakashvili's release

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili has criticized MEP Raphael Glucksmann, a signatory of a joint letter stressing that the 'judiciary is biased' in Georgia and demanding ex-president Saakashvili's release.

According to Garibashvili, MEP Glucksmann is a close friend of Saakashvili and was also a husband of Ekaterine Zguladze, former deputy interior minister under Saakashvili's UNM government.

"MEP Glucksmann is giving us clever pieces of advice about Georgia every day, I would like to ask people – should I be interested in his advice?" stated the PM yesterday, adding that neither Saakashvili nor anyone from his close circle, will be able to regain power in the country.



► According to PM Irakli Garibashvili, Saakashvili will be forgotten after the second round of elections.

The PM also responded to another statement of MEPs calling for Saakashvili's release while the European Court of Human Rights is considering his case. MEPs Andrius Kubilius, Rasa Juknevičienė, Riho Terras, Miriam Lexmann, and Sandra Kalniete noted in the statement that the fact that the leader of the opposition and former Presi-

dent is in jail, 'raises the question about political nature of the persecution'. According to them, PM Garibashvili's comments "only confirm political motives" behind Saakashvili's case.

Garibashvili told the reporters that neither MEP Fotyga nor Kubilius can tell the government what to do, as they 'do not hold any value for the country'. The



► Law enforcers arrested Mikheil Saakashvili in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi on October 1.

PM underlined that no one can stand against the rule of law or justice in the country.

EU Ambassador to Georgia Carl Hartzell told reporters yesterday that MEPs who signed the letter play an important role in the work of the European Parliament and the EU's foreign policy, as well as in relation to Georgia and the

Eastern Partnership countries. The ambassador refused to assess the contents of the letter or the statements of the PM.

According to Hartzell, Saakashvili's case must be considered transparently within the framework of the rule of law. He also stressed that the EU is following the case closely and expects fair and due judicial process.

ECHR finds appeals against Georgia over August war inadmissible

TWO CASES WERE SUBMITTED BY RUSSIA

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Georgia has recently won another case in the European Court of Human Rights against Russia about the August war. This time, the cases submitted to the court were from Russia.

Both of the cases were assessed as inadmissible by the European court. The cases against Georgia were: 'Shavlokhova and others vs. Georgia' and 'Bekoyeva and others vs. Georgia'.

According to the Minister of Justice, Rati Bregadze, Georgia won another case in the European Court of Human Rights in the case of the August 2008 war. According to Bregadze, the European Court ruled inadmissible the complaints of the residents of the Tskhinvali region, accusing the Georgian side of violating their rights.



► Ministry of Justice said over 3,300 complaints were filed against Georgia by Russia in total.

According to Bregadze, the ECHR fully shared the arguments of the Georgian side that during the war the Tskhinvali region was bombed by the Russian Federation and the Georgian Armed Forces did not exercise control over this region and the surrounding area.

According to him, the court decided that due to this factor, it is impossible to find any violations made by Georgia. Both of the cases were reported by the ECHR on October 21.

"In order to protect state interests, in 2019-20 the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, together with the Prosecutor General's Office of Georgia, the Ministry of Defense of Georgia and the State Security Service of Georgia, found and presented to the European Court hundreds of pieces of evidence proving that Georgia did not violate international law in 2008," added Bregadze.

According to the Minister, this ruling reaffirms that the fight for de-occupation and justice



► Georgia had previously won a case against Russia, which was assessed as a 'historic win' in Georgia.

continues in a peaceful and just manner.

On January 21, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights upheld all of Georgia's main claims in the August 2008 war. In particular, the European Court of Human Rights shared Georgia's position and accused Russia of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of Georgian prisoners of war, and civilians. The verdict of the ECHR, Russia is obligated to pay Georgia 10 million Eu-

ros in non-pecuniary damages. The group that should be paid includes about 1,500 Georgian nationals.

According to the Ministry of Justice, in 2008-2009, under the coordination of Russia, more than 3,300 complaints were filed against Georgia in the European Court, however, based on the evidence and legal positions submitted by the Georgian government, up to 2,800 complaints have already been ruled out as unfounded.

FRIDAY		OCTOBER 22	
Day		Sunny skies	High: 18°C
Night		Clear	Low: 7°C
SATURDAY		OCTOBER 23	
Day		Sunny skies	High: 20°C
Night		Clear	Low: 8°C

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