

Droa's Khoshtaria On Why She Declined President's Invitation to Her NY's Reception

By THE MESSENGER STAFF

Droa's leader Elene Khoshtaria didn't attend the president's New Year reception at the Orbeliani Palace.

Khoshtaria says it is pragmatically wrong to "take the process of overcoming polarization in this way," but notes that he is ready to listen to Salome Zurbashvili's views on the case in any format.

"I received an invitation from the president for a New Year party. First of all, thank you very much to the president. This gesture is understandable and appreciated.

I can not go to the New Year party (I have not even bought a Christmas tree for my house yet). First of all, emotionally and physically it is very difficult for me to be in the right mood for the New



Elene Khoshtaria

Year parties and to be there as if nothing happened. Unfortunately, we

do not have the reality that allows me to sip champagne with the rep-

resentatives of the GD. Impossible to do this against the background of

the arrest series.

Today, the whole day is taken by the court and I

just cannot go from there. Also, it is pragmatically wrong to think of the process of overcoming polarization in this way. This game will come out for me. And entering the wrong process, imitating 'normalcy' and not a normal situation actually.

I do not want this to be perceived as a rejection of the process itself. On the contrary, I am very much looking forward to the President's views on the content of the process and will attend a meeting in any format to talk about this topic.

Also, I am not going to attack those who will go "I'm sure they won't be there to celebrate and they believe it's right," Khoshtaria wrote on Facebook.

The President of Georgia invited members of the opposition to a New Year's reception at Orbeliani Palace.

Alasania Claims Saakashvili's Health Condition Keeps Worsening

By THE MESSENGER STAFF

After visiting her son in Gori hospital, Giuli Alasania says that Mikheil Saakashvili finds it difficult to walk in the right direction and also "one of his eyes cannot follow."

Giuli Alasania says he agrees with the council's conclusion and that Mikheil Saakashvili needs to be rehabilitated. Also, the mother of the third president says that it is too early to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili to a penitentiary institution.

"He cannot walk in the right line to spend on the right side, say the moment if someone is not there, can fall, it happens on the right side and even the gaze that is tested on the right side, the right eye can not follow, has weakness, these

are my impressions and conclusion Absolutely acceptable, the solution I consider to be normal and suitable rehabilitation is needed

I do not know how much this rehabilitation will

help, but in any case, without it, it would be very bad, it can be seen from this report, the council has

concluded, I heard their speeches and everyone unanimously repeated that it is too early to trans-

fer it and we can not talk about it at all," says Mikheil Saakashvili's mother Giuli Alasania.

Yesterday, the Empathy Center published part of a summary report on Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition.

According to the results of the monitoring of Saakashvili's medical condition, "ineffective treatment-rehabilitation will lead to aggravation of the condition, in particular, there is a high risk of developing Korsakoff syndrome, which will lead to the disability of the patient."

According to the ombudsman Nino Lomjaria, the council visited Mikheil Saakashvili in Gori on December 12, they thoroughly examined the patient and got acquainted with the medical records.



Giuli Alasania

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.0884; Euro - 3.4979; GBP - 4.1045; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.1827; Swiss Franc - 3.3628

PACE rapporteurs call upon all political forces to overcome extremely polarised political climate

Strasbourg, 17.12.2021 - Following their visit to the country from 8 to 10 December 2021, the rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for the Monitoring Procedure in respect of Georgia, Mr Titus Corlatean (Romania, SOC) and Mr Claude Kern (France, ALDE), expressed their serious concern about the extremely polarised political climate in the country which is foreclosing any political co-operation and dialogue. This is undermining the political stability and democratic consolidation of the country, putting at risk the considerable progress made by Georgia in this respect over the years. The rapporteurs emphasised that democratic consolidation and Euro-Atlantic integration are the shared responsibility of all political forces in the country and therefore urged them, in particular the two largest parties,

Georgian Dream and the United National Movement, to place the common good of the nation over any narrow party-political strategies.

The rapporteurs noted that the October 2021 local elections had, as they had feared, been a de facto plebiscite on the ruling majority, and had resulted in an increasingly harsh and contentious electoral environment. That said, they welcomed that, as a result of the consensual reform of the electoral code earlier this year, the legal framework for elections had considerably improved, which had benefited the organisation of the election process. At the same time they expressed their concern about the many reports of abuse of administrative resources and pressure on voters, as well as incidents of violence. They called upon the authorities to fully and transparently investigate, and

where necessary address, all allegations and reports of electoral misconduct.

The establishment of a genuinely independent and impartial judiciary that has the full trust of Georgian citizens is an essential condition for the further democratic consolidation of the country. Recognising the progress made in this respect, the rapporteurs urged the authorities to conduct the comprehensive and independent evaluation of the third and fourth wave that was agreed upon in the Michel agreement. Such an comprehensive evaluation, which needs to be conducted independently to ensure public trust, should identify areas of success as well as remaining shortcomings and should guide future reforms. The rapporteurs felt that the Venice Commission should play an important role in such an independent evaluation.

In this respect the rapporteurs deeply regretted that the parliament had continued to appoint new Supreme Court judges, despite the calls from the international community not to. For the rapporteurs this also underscores the need for further reform of the High Council of Justice, whose functioning remains an obstacle for the establishment of a genuinely independent and trusted judiciary.

On the occasion of their visit the rapporteurs also focussed on developments with regard to minorities in Georgia. In this respect they welcomed that the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on National Minorities had noted the greatly improved legal framework for national minority and anti-discrimination issues. However, the rapporteurs underscored the need, expressed by the Advisory Committee to further

strengthen the quality of education for minorities as well as minority language education, and urged the authorities to do this as a priority. With regard to LGBTI issues, the rapporteurs expressed their concern about the increasing public expressions of homophobia and intolerance towards the LGBTI community. In this context they condemned the violent attacks and counter demonstrations that had occurred during Gay Pride Week in July 2021. The rapporteurs urged the authorities to fully investigate these violent actions, and bring perpetrators to justice, including with regard to the organisers of these violent actions and those forces enticing them.

The rapporteurs will present their report on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Georgia to the Assembly in the first half of 2022.

Responding to economic and social challenges faced by Georgia's regions

Supporting women in politics – UNDP Head visits the Mayor of Dusheti

Tbilisi, 17 December 2021 – In the aftermath of the local elections in Georgia, UNDP opens a new chapter of cooperation with municipal authorities and local communities. Its multi-sectorial support covers technical assistance to local administrations, fosters good governance and economic development, and promotes initiatives that boost citizen participation and civic activism, create equal opportunities for women and youth and reduce the threats posed by climate-induced disasters.

UNDP support for Georgia's regions draws on the resources provided by a range of donors, including Austria, Denmark, the European Union, the Green Climate Fund, Sweden and Switzerland.

On 16 December, UNDP Head **Nick Beresford** and Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure **Mzia Giorgobiani** visited the Dusheti Municipality to discuss local needs with Mayor **Manana Narimanidze**, one of three women mayors who took office in 2021. Beresford and Giorgobiani met with the authorities and citizens and attended a vaccination session organised by UNDP and the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health as part of the ongoing 'Vaccines4Life' campaign.

"Public opinion surveys show that increasing the number of women in political positions has overwhelming popular support. Mayor Narimanidze is one of three women who won mayoral positions this year. UNDP is offering support, including the ICT equipment and training and education to local youth, in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, the European Union



and other partners. We also took the opportunity to help prevent COVID with a local vaccination drive," Beresford said.

Dusheti is one of 48 Georgian municipalities that joined the EU-supported regional network 'Mayors for Economic Growth' (M4EG). Drawing on the resources of this joint EU-UNDP initiative, UNDP will help local authorities and communities to discover and explore innovative

approaches to local governance and benefit from funding opportunities available for municipalities of the Eastern Partnership countries.

To enhance digitalization at the local level, UNDP donated the ICT equipment to the Dusheti Mayor's office, including laptops, portable scanners and multifunctional printers. UNDP will also pilot a new initiative to promote digital services for local

communities and increase the engagement of women and youth in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). UNDP support will focus on advancing gender equality in governance, education and other areas, and on closing the digital gap faced by rural girls living in highlands.

The Dusheti Municipality, where 95 percent of settlements are located in high-mountainous areas, will continue benefitting from UNDP's regional and local development programme funded by the governments of Austria and Switzerland, and from the decentralization initiatives funded by Denmark.

In the coming months, UNDP Head will visit municipalities across Georgia to meet with local authorities and communities and discuss UNDP support for addressing socio-economic challenges and discovering new development prospects.

Weather

Monday, December 20

Day Cloudy

High: 10°C

Night Clear

Low: 3°C

Tuesday, December 21

Day Clear

High: 15°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 4°C

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