

Parliament Speaker Papuashvili Visits the UK, Meets Officials



► Georgian Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili and the Speaker of the UK House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Within the framework of the visit to the United Kingdom, Georgian Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili has met with the Speaker of the UK House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, and discussed the cooperation between the countries in various directions as well as security challenges in Ukraine.

Sir Hoyle described the meeting as 'important', pointing out that the sides overviewed the issues in common, including threats and the ways to help each other.

"I used this window of opportunity to openly and sincerely express my position about the current situation in Europe," said Sir Hoyle.

Papuashvili announced after the meeting that the UK remains a firm supporter of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, noting that the two countries are committed to shared values for democracy and peace.

Papuashvili also met with the Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee of the British House of Commons, Tom Tugendhat to discuss the foreign-political priorities of Georgia. As Papuashvili noted, Georgia has achieved great progress on the path to Euro-Atlantic integration, stressing that now it is important to make a political decision on Georgia's membership. He underlined the destructive actions of Russia in Georgia and the wider region and expressed hope that the United Kingdom would keep the international support of consolidation with Georgia-related issues. As part of the visit, Speaker Papuashvili also met with

the representatives of the British Research Center - The Royal United Services Institute. At the meeting, he focused on gross human rights violations that are taking place in the occupied territories of Georgia, such as kidnappings and illegal deprivation of liberty as well as the prohibition of receiving education in the mother tongue. Also, Georgian Speaker discussed the UK's

involvement in developing Georgia's capacities and national strategy in cybersecurity with the Chair of the House of Commons Defense Committee, Tobias Ellwood, and other members.

Papuashvili will also meet with Chris Heaton-Harris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, Richard Burge, Head of the London Chamber of Commerce, and

Anthony Smith, Chief Executive of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

Papuashvili is accompanied by Chair and Vice-Chair of Foreign Relations Committee Nikoloz Samkharadze and Giorgi Khelashvili, as well as the Chair of Agrarian Issues Committee Nino Tsilosani, and MP Teona Akubardia of opposition Strategy Aghmashenebeli.



► Parliament Speaker Papuashvili and the representatives of the Royal United Services Institute.

EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 2.9331 | EURO - 3.3546 | GBP - 3.9840 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 3.9253 | SWISS FRANC - 3.1750 |

Ministry of Defense Opens Admissions to Military Contract Service

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Ministry of Defense of Georgia announces admission to the military contract service. The Deputy Commander of the Defense Forces, Chief of the General Staff, Brigadier General Joni Tatumashvili, and the Commander of the National Guard, Brigadier General Roman Jokhadze spoke about it.

The representatives of the Ministry of Defense noted that Georgian citizens aged 18 to 36 will be admitted to the 4-year contract military service. According to them, the military will be provided with the highest quality uniforms of NATO standards, military equipment, food, free medical services, social and legal protection. The agency pledges to create the best conditions for raising



The Ministry of Defense of Georgia invites citizens aged 18 to 35 and offers 4 years of contract military service.

motivation, improving education opportunities and improving the career advancement system, increasing salaries, and developing social protection guarantees.

At this stage, the Ministry of Defense is offering potential recruits the initial salary of the lowest rank serviceman €1177 (€922 after taxes), which will gradually

increase to €1275 (€1000) by the end of 2022. After the completion of the second and each subsequent contract, they will receive €7000 as a one-time military bonus. The

military will have the opportunity to learn a foreign language, master the profession and improve their qualifications for various courses abroad.

According to the representatives of the agency, registration procedures for military contract service have been simplified as much as possible. Registration will be available online throughout the year as well as in the houses of justice and at the mobile recruitment vehicle - in different cities (Tbilisi, Gori, Kutaisi, Senaki, Batumi, and Telavi). Recruits will undergo a two-month Basic Combat Training (BCT) course after psychological testing and medical examination. Their salary during the course is €500 per month. Upon completion of the BCT course, they will be divided into different subdivisions according to the territorial principle.

Salome Zourabichvili: I, as a representative of the state, am ready to create a joint document, which will be one of the main results of the national consent process

BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

The first public hearing of the national consent process was held today at the Orbeliani Palace with the participation of women from various fields. The administration of the President of Georgia spreads information about it.

The President of Georgia thanked the guests for their involvement in the process and readiness to participate in the discussion. According to the President, 30 years after independence, the country is in a very difficult situation and it is practically immersed in controversy.

"I am grateful that you came from different fields and with different political views. It is a sign that everyone can sit down with anyone, everyone can listen, and if we could not and could not bring it out into society, we would neither be a society nor a country! 30 years have passed since our independence. This country is in a very

difficult situation. Practically this country is sunk in controversy, stagnant, and split in two. Where are we, where are we going, how are we going to build this country, what are we going to leave and prepare for the next generation? We need to think about why what is happening to us today is happening and to do that we need to look at our past.

It is not a process that starts and ends with a conversation. This process has the role of catharsis, to tell the truth, and we look at our mistakes or crimes and admit some of them. Society is the one that orders the political sphere. The public must remove the voice and take the process into its own hands. Nowadays he does not have a space where he can talk, there is no real debate in the media.

Without society, the president has no leverage to resolve a political crisis unless you empower yourself and work with you to create the order that is then passed on to the political parties. If society knows what it wants, it



is a huge force. We may not feel it today, but we will feel it tomorrow. I'm offering a new space. Discovering communities will be the first process and will be spread over many groups in different formats, going through regions, universities, villages. For the process to be impressive and expansive, you need to be very free.

That is, whoever has the opinion and initiative, be it any university, any village, or any group can discuss these issues freely. There is no monopoly here.

By no means will I be the organizer, initiator, or manager of every group. There will be key principles and criteria that will be signed by all groups involved

in the process. It should not turn into a political debate and swearing is forbidden. People will also be able to express their opinions freely through internet platforms.

Will different thematic groups will start talking for example about those who have been affected in different periods, what is their vision? What is expected from the state? And to see what and to what extent the state can respond, is also very important. No one should be left with a sense of injustice as this is also one of the very big causes of polarization.

Also, the role of the diaspora in this process is very important, as about a quarter of the population is outside our country. When you look at the situation in this country from there, it probably affects you differently and that is why it is necessary to involve them to feel that the present pain of this country and the future of tomorrow are theirs.

"This relationship with them can not be broken and you need your great help in this," stated the President.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 11

Day Sunny High: 9°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: -1°C

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 12

Day Mainly sunny High: 13°C

Night Clear Low: 5°C

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