

'Tskhinvali Referendum' Rehearsal for What's Coming in Ukraine, Says Ukraine President of Adviser Arestovich



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Adviser to the President of Ukraine Oleks Arestovich made a statement regarding the so-called Tskhinvali referendum, noting that it may be a rehearsal for the upcoming referendums in Ukraine (Kherson Oblast, Donetsk, Luhansk).

According to Arestovich, by holding a referendum, the Kremlin will test how well it will be conducted and if they do not get the desired result, they will prob-

ably withdraw it in Ukraine as well.

"In my opinion, this may be a rehearsal of the big referendums they are planning on the territories of Ukraine. First they want to see [the Russians] whether they will win a small referendum. Secondly - this is a small victory. They have to declare something. They will have a victory in South Ossetia."

When asked if Georgia decides to take any military steps, whether it has a chance to enter the occupied Tskhinvali

territory, Arestovich answered briefly:

"I do not know the situation of the Georgian Armed Forces, so I can not assess, but I know the situation of the Georgian government well, and they do not seem to be capable. They may be capable, but in my perception they are not."

"I think the West will have a reaction, it will be a good test of their attitude towards this war and such actions of the Kremlin all over the world. Now let's see how they will react to the attempt to an-

nex the territories of a sovereign country, Georgia, even in the name of a referendum.

"I'm interested in how the West will react, I'm especially interested in the reaction of France and Germany," he said.

On May 13, the current de facto president of South Ossetia, Anatoly Bibilov, called the so-called has signed a 'referendum' on the republic's accession to Russia. The de-facto referendum is scheduled for July 17.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY
THE MESSENGER STAFF

Danish gov't provides National Guard of Georgia with fire rescue equipment

Within the framework of the NATO-Georgia Essential Package (SNGP), with the financial support of the Danish Government, fire rescue equipment was provided to the National Guard of Georgia, the Ministry of Defense says.

According to them, the National Guard reservists will use the new equipment to carry out support tasks during emergency response. The relevant document on the transfer of equipment was signed

by the Chief of the National Guard, Brigadier General Roman Jokhadze, and the Danish leader of the Crisis Management Initiative, Colonel Susan Christensen.

The ceremony was preceded by a one-week training conducted under the auspices of the Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA). Within the framework of the training, the reservists were trained by the instructors of the National Guard of Georgia and Emergency Management Service. The training was aimed at strengthening inter-agency and international cooperation.

"The National Guard has been involved in the SNGP Crisis Management Initiative since 2019," the statement reads.

South Ossetia de-facto president Gagloev supports 'joining' RF

The newly elected president of occupied Tskhinvali, Alan Gagloev, says he supports the so-called republic of South Ossetia joining the Russian Federation, but is not convinced that incumbent President Anatoly Bibilov has chosen the right time to hold a "referendum".

"As the son of my country and the president elected by the people of the Republic of South Ossetia, I fully support the unification of the divided Ossetian people into a united Russia. "Another question is whether the historic moment when it was necessary to issue a decree

calling for a referendum and speeding it up," Alan Gagloev said.

According to Gagloev, the annexation of occupied Tskhinvali to Russia is a long-standing dream of the Ossetian people, "which was embodied by the population giving up their lives." According to Gagloev, in the 1992 referendum, unification with Russia was supported by more than 98% of the population.

In addition, the so-called president of the Tskhinvali occupation regime stated that as a credible ally of Russia, the occupied Tskhinvali is obliged to abide by Article 1 of the Cooperation and Integration Agreement with Russia and to make

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.0129; Euro - 3.1286; GBP - 3.6730; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.6982; Swiss Franc - 3.0120

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

Russian Undertones of May 9

May 9 is not a straightforward, simple historical date. Russia has long used it as the basis and symbol of the ideology and actively uses it in its domestic and foreign policy.

May 9 became a historic date in 1945, when this day in the Soviet Union marked the victory over German fascism. It is also said that Stalin did not pay much attention to this date - at least it did not turn into a holiday during his time. The cult of May 9 was created by another leader of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, and thus celebrated in 1965 - the 20th anniversary of the victory over fascism. From this time on May 9 was given a special ideological dimension.

It must be said that the Soviet propagandists did the right thing - the Soviet main celebration date of November 7 was already far away and most of the people present were no longer alive. On May 9, almost all Soviet citizens saw and contributed to the victory over German fascism. This date was their victory. Soviet propaganda linked this victory to the "superiority of the socialist establishment" and the existence of a "great,

united country."

The collapse of the Soviet Union also wiped out a united country and the talk of the benefits of socialism. November 7 and October Revolution were forgotten in Moscow, but not May 9. On the contrary, they made it their main date and gave it a new lease of life.

This date became an indicator of Russia's strength and a means of propaganda for the restoration of a "united state". Russia has always tried to celebrate May 9 in all former Soviet republics, with Russian accents. Russia continues to fight against Nazism and declares as Nazis anyone who opposes the new Russian imperial policy.

Putin started the war against Ukraine with the slogan of "denationalization", and for years before the war he persuaded his citizens that the "Nazis" in Ukraine had come to power and oppressed the Russians living there. It must be said that not a small part of the Russian population believes in this propaganda.

On May 9, Putin reiterated

that Russia was fighting in Ukraine to "free its native land of Nazi filth." According to Putin, he will win again "as in 1945."

Events in Ukraine did not turn out as Putin had planned. Ukraine has withstood the Russian onslaught, and the West is providing unprecedented economic and military assistance to Ukraine. Putin did not expect Ukraine to be resilient, nor did he expect such action from the West. However, he is not going to end the war. Acknowledging defeat will herald the end of the Putin regime.

In anticipation of May 9 this year, many expected Putin to take radical steps - to declare war on Ukraine and launch a general mobilization, which would significantly increase the number of troops invading Ukraine. Putin did not do that, and the parade in Moscow turned out to be mediocre, some even noted that it was more like a funeral than a ceremonial procession.

However, Russian propaganda is still talking about victories, while in Ukraine it is try-

ing to remove new occupied territories, such as the Kherson region, from Ukraine and join Russia. The war in Ukraine is taking on a protracted character. The created reality was symbolic of the "Land-Lease" act signed by President Biden on May 9, which in its time played a major role in the victory over German Nazism.

May 9, traditionally, was celebrated in Georgia as well, but somewhat blandly. Traditionally, part of the opposition has again demanded that the government celebrate the victory over Nazism on May 8, as is the case in the West, and not on May 9, leaving Georgia "in the camp of Russia."

The government again refused this request. "Russia on May 9, self-proclaimed Georgian mediocrities are manipulating May 8 - this is the day of victory of our veterans and we must celebrate their day of victory," - was the response of Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili.

There are about 1,800 living veterans in Georgia today who took part in the fight against

Nazism. According to the decision of the government, each of them will receive ₾ 1000 as a gift. On May 9, a small group of Communist-Stalinists marched in Gori under Soviet red flags, blaming Ukraine and the West for the war in Ukraine, and demanding the resumption of diplomatic relations with Russia.

On May 8, a rally was held on Rustaveli Avenue at the initiative of the Droa party, in which Ukrainians in Georgia also took part. According to Elene Khoshtaria, the day of the defeat of Nazism, which is May 8, "should be the day of the defeat of Russian racism."

According to a public opinion poll published by the International Republican Institute (IRI), Ukrainian respondents named Georgia among the top countries that supported Ukraine the most.

Georgia ranks 4th with 17%. It is preceded by Poland (67%), the United Kingdom (56%) and the United States (54%). Such a view of Georgia's role is not the merit of the Georgian government. This is the merit of the people who are holding rallies in support of Ukraine and up to 3,000 other Georgian volunteers who are fighting in Ukraine.

ENPARD: co-investment grants in rural development in Georgia

The EU and FAO have opened a new Agricultural grant programme under ENPARD, the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Individual grants in support of co-investments will be aimed

at improving the productivity, quality and marketability of agricultural products, as well as strengthening linkages in agricultural value chains.

The competition will provide funding to farmers, cooperatives and SMEs whose farms and businesses operate in Lagodekhi, Dedoplistskaro, Tetriskaro, Akhalkalaki, Borjomi, Kazbegi, Keda, and Khulo municipalities. Gori municipality is in a special grant category.

Under this programme, farmers can invest in equipment such as no-till planters (for cereals), drip irrigation system, tractors, and anti hail nets (for apples).

(euneighbourseast.eu)



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decisions in cooperation with the Russian Federation on issues of mutual interest.

Weather

Monday, May 16

Day Light Rain

High: 17°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 11°C

Tuesday, May 17

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 23°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 10°C

He says he will hold consultations with the Russian authorities before the so-called referendum and observe international legal norms.

The so-called occupied Tskhinvali President Anatoly Bibilov has signed a "referendum" on the Republic's accession to Russia. The information was published on Bibilov's official website.

Anatoly Bibilov was defeated by Alan Gagloev in the so-called presidential elections in occupied

Tskhinvali. He received 56.09% of the vote.

Sweden Starts Applying for NATO Membership

The Swedish government will fill out an application for NATO membership. The ruling Social Democrats decided at today's meeting that they would start working to get Sweden to apply for membership in the North Atlantic Alliance.

A statement issued by the Swedish ruling team also said that if NATO approved the application, the party would work to ensure that nuclear weapons and permanent bases were not deployed on Swedish territory.

According to various Swedish media, the country will submit the application on May 17.

It became known today that Finland will also apply for NATO membership.

Ukraine Wins Eurovision 2022

Ukraine became the winner of Eurovision 2022, scoring 631 points. Ukraine was represented by the group Kalush Orchestra with the song Stefania.

It should be noted that the Georgian audience gave Ukraine the highest score of 12 points, while the national jury gave only 6 points.

The United Kingdom took second place, followed by Spain.

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