

Tbilisi Pride Demands from Georgian Government to Protect Safety of Pride Week Participants

By Liza Mchedlidze

"The week opens on June 28 and ends on July 2, however, there is no march of honor - all events are scheduled indoors. Yet pro-Russian, homophobic, hate groups threaten to disrupt these measures and repeat the July 5, 2021 violence," say Tbilisi Pride representatives.

Tbilisi Pride says that for 2 months, it has been actively working with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and provides the agency with complete and accurate information about the events of the week, as well as providing law enforcement agencies with facts about threats and violence.

"Meetings with the Ministry of Internal Affairs are being held with the participation of international organizations, the diplomatic corps, and the Public Defender's Office. We would like to emphasize that the Ministry of Internal Affairs guarantees the protection of all three measures. "An investigation has been launched into the allegations of incitement to violence," says Tbilisi Pride.

However, they are excited and frightened by the fact that high-ranking officials have been actively making discrediting and inciting violent statements against the Tbilisi Pride and LGBTQ community in recent days.



"In particular, Irakli Gharibashvili accuses us of anti-state activities and artificially tries to connect us with the activities of political parties.

We request: That the government states publicly and clearly that it will protect all three events of Tbilisi Pride Week and the safety of each

of its participants. Also, it ensures public order in the surrounding areas of the event and throughout the city. "We demand the punishment

of the organizers of July 5, who openly continue their violent activities this year and threaten the European future of the country," the organization stated.

Response to Russia must be Tightened Sanctions, says Minister of Defense of Ukraine Reznikov

By Liza Mchedlidze

Russian terrorists have once again committed war crimes - rocket attacks on peaceful cities in Ukraine, said Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov, regarding the recent attack on Kiev.

"The insidious nature of these attacks is underscored by the fact that they are carried out from the depths of the territory of the Russian Federation, the territory of Belarus or the waters of the Caspian and Black Seas," Reznikov said.

He stated that this is a strategic challenge for the security of the whole of Europe and a quick response to this challenge should consist of two parts.

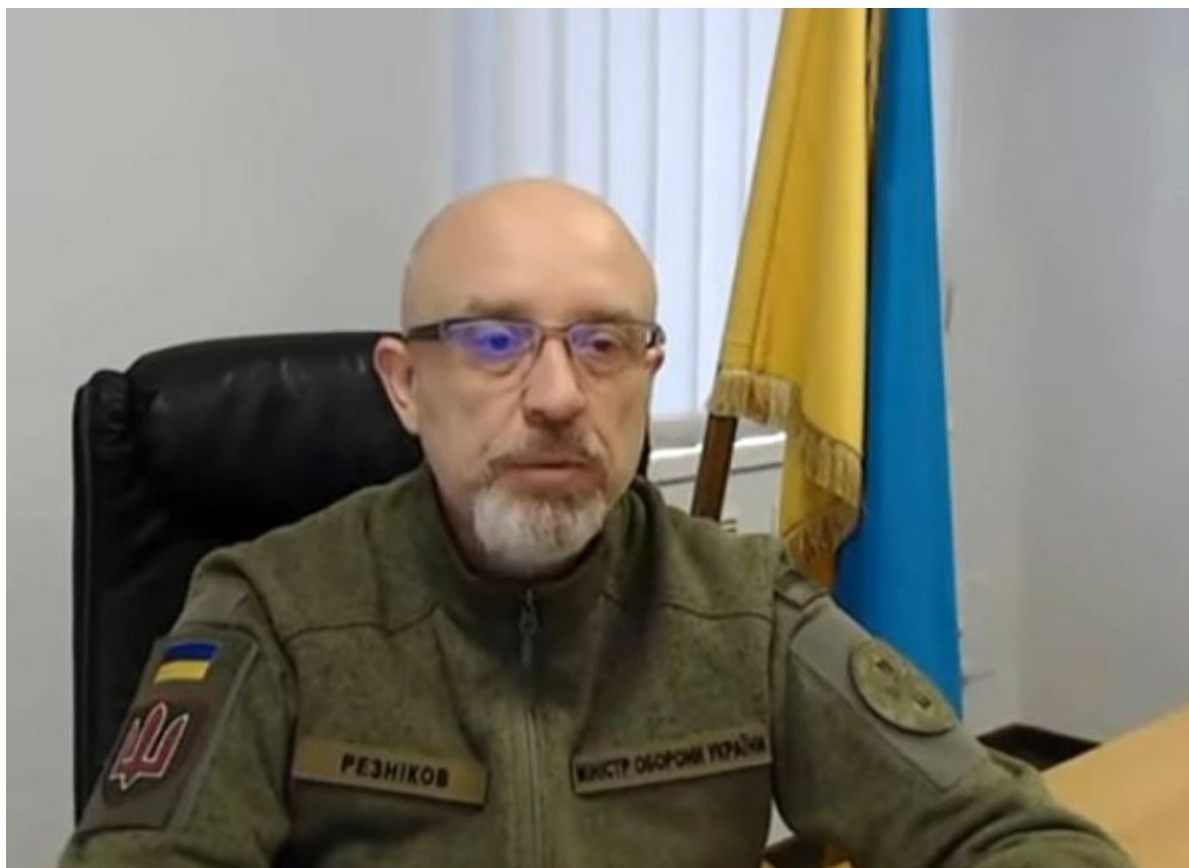
"The first part is the tightening of sanctions. This is necessary in order for Russia to be able to produce and maintain high-tech weapons that contain many of the components sup-

plied by NATO countries. The second part is the rapid deployment of effective air / missile defense systems in Ukraine. This is an additional 500 - 1000 km of security for each European city.

"This is a very clear and logical step that should be taken into account in the NATO strategy," said the head of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.

Reznikov also noted that the condition for a dialogue on the resumption of relations between Russia and the civilized world should be the demilitarization of at least a European part of the terrorist state.

"The long-term answer is just as obvious. The demilitarization of at least part of the European part of the terrorist state should become a condition for dialogue on the resumption of relations between Russia and the civilized world," Reznikov said.



De-Oligarchization Interpreted, Misinterpreted

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

The European Commission has postponed granting Georgia EU membership status and gave it 6 months to meet 12 conditions. Among these conditions, the most highlighted one is the demand for de-oligarchization. Due to the fact that no specific oligarch was mentioned in the text of the resolution, the government and the opposition interpreted the commission's recommendation differently. The oligarch for the opposition is Bidzina Ivanishvili, while the Georgian Dream is looking for oligarchs in the opposition.

The recommendations made to Georgia by the European Commission on June 17 mention the commitment to de-oligarchization in the economic, political and social spheres. The recommendation is general but was preceded by a European Parliament resolution naming a specific oligarch, Bidzina Ivanishvili, and emphasizing his 'destructive role' in Georgia's politics and economy, and in exercising control over the government and its decisions. The European Parliament called on the

Council and its Democratic partners to consider imposing personal sanctions on Ivanishvili "because of the role he has played in worsening the political process in Georgia."

The European Parliament resolution strongly outraged the Georgian Dream and unanimously defended Bidzina Ivanishvili, who they said had "left politics for a long time" and was only involved in charity. However, the European Commission resolution did not provoke any outrage from the Georgian Dream.

The disappearance of Ivanishvili's mention of the European Commission's de-oligarchization recommendation allowed the Georgian Dream to maneuver and actively work on an anti-oligarchic law - the status of an oligarch was considered inappropriate for Bidzina Ivanishvili and the oligarchs were found in the ranks of the opposition.

Irakli Kobakhidze, the chairman of the Georgian Dream, said at the June 21 plenary session of the parliament that if the de-oligarchization law developed in Ukraine came into force in Georgia, the leaders of Lelo would be

recognized as oligarchs. "Oligarchs greet you and prepare for de-oligarchization," Irakli Kobakhidze told the opposition.

In a speech to parliament on June 22, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili thanked Bidzina Ivanishvili for his great contribution to Georgia's development and increased the list of government oligarchs - adding Mikheil Saakashvili's mother - Giuli Alasania - and his uncle to the four named by Irakli Kobakhidze.

It seems that the Georgian Dream liked the demand for de-oligarchization among the recommendations of the European Commission and will actively use it to fight against the 'radical opposition'. Saakashvili, who is in prison, is now also called an oligarch, and others of the above-mentioned opposition members have been jailed on this new charge.

Opposition groups called on the West to impose sanctions on Bidzina Ivanishvili, but now that the Georgian Dream is actively seeking de-oligarchization against the opposition, it may demand a clear statement from the European Union that it is incumbent on Bidzina

Ivanishvili and impose sanctions on him.

According to the opposition, it is already clear that the Georgian Dream will not meet the requirements of the European Commission. De-oligarchization means de-ethnicization" and without fulfilling it, in fact, no other requirements of the European Commission will be fulfilled.

For example, Sergo Chikhladze, a representative of Strategy Builder, says that the 12 recommendations of the European Commission are possible to be implemented by the end of the year, but the Georgian Dream will not implement these reforms. Therefore, the first task is de-oligarchization, removing Bidzina Ivanishvili and the Georgian Dream from power.

It is possible to change the government in Georgia through early elections.

"We were directly told to achieve de-oligarchization in 6 months, translated into the political language, it is snap parliamentary elections that will legitimately lead to the new government," said former Georgian President Giorgi Margvelashvili. It is also clear that the Georgian

Dream does not feel responsible for the separation of Georgia from Ukraine and Moldova, nor does Prime Minister Gharibashvili intend to resign, and therefore does not intend to hold snap elections.

Georgia has the next parliamentary elections scheduled no earlier than 2024. The elections should be held in a proportional system, but the electoral threshold should be reduced, which is in the interests of small parties.

Holding single, even numerous, rallies is not an accountable thing for the Georgian Dream. "They will gather but soon give up", - this is the attitude of the government. The Prime Minister's parliamentary speech once again showed the "high degree of polarization." The opposition's sole way remains organizing rallies, which is not an easy task.

As a number of experts point out, the opposition is weaker than the government in this regard, and the Georgian Dream will be ready to use force if it deems it necessary. However, predicting the development of events is a reluctant task, especially in the Georgian reality.

The News in Brief

Goal is to Stop Supplying Oxygen to Russian War Machine, Says Charles Michel

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

During his speech at the G7 summit in Bavaria, the President of the European Council, Charles Michel said that the G7 countries share the same goal, which is to "stop supplying oxygen to the Russian war machine."

He said 'Russia's war has put the world in danger' and that this has affected food and fuel supplies, prices and security.

According to Michel, the G7 and the EU have an 'unshakable unity' to support Ukraine, and the EU will continue to provide financial, humanitarian and political support to Ukraine. At the same time, Michel stressed that he is ready to provide and strongly support the reconstruc-

tion of Ukraine.

According to the President of the European Council, the war is also shaping the EU by granting candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova.

"War means the world has changed since last year's G7

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Charles Michel Says EU Ready to Grant Georgia Candidate Status When Reforms Implemented

According to the President of the European Council, Charles



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summit in Cornwall. The world is watching us - let us make the right decisions and uphold international law," said Charles Michel.

Michel, as soon as these countries implement the necessary reforms, the European Union is ready to grant Georgia and

Bosnia, and Herzegovina the status of EU candidates.

"This war is also reshaping the European Union. Just a few days ago, at our latest European Council meeting, we agreed to give Ukraine and Moldova candidate status. And we are ready to grant candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to Georgia, once reforms have been addressed. This is a historic moment for Ukraine. And for the future of Europe", he said before the G7 summit.

Droa's Leader Elene Khoshtaria Supports Says Forming Interim Government Must Follow Government's Resignation

Droa party founder Elene Khoshtaria stated that she supports the society's demand for Gharibashvili's resignation, but added that forming an interim government is a must.

"De-oligarchization needs a concrete plan, which we heard

from the people's movement yesterday and we declare full support for it. This is the first step - to demand the resignation of the Government, the government as a whole - Gharibashvili and the team that brought our government and country to a standstill. No one has the illusion that only the resignation of the Government will be the end of de-oligarchization - the resignation of the Government should lead to the formation of an interim Government of national consent, which will be a tool for fulfilling the requirements that the EU made very clear to us. Part of these 12 points is to create a fair election environment in order to establish fair elections in our country. External pressure for democracy, external pressure for the support of our people, as well as the sanctioning of Bidzina Ivanishvili and his entourage, and such an orderly united movement from within will inevitably lead to de-oligarchization and a European future," Khoshtaria said.

Weather

Monday, June 27

Day ☀ Clear
High: 30°C

Night 🌧 Scattered T-storm
Low: 18°C

Tuesday, June 28

Day ☀ Mostly Clear
High: 31°C

Night 🌧 Scattered T-storm
Low: 19°C

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