Davit Usupashvili comments on Saakashvili possibly leaving the politics and MPs

By Liza Mchedlidze

Lelo MP Davit Usupashvili has responded to Mikheil Saakashvili's lawyers who state that Saakashvili is leaving Georgian politics, saying that whether he will stay in politics or not is up to him:

"Since Saakashvili was put in prison, I supported him as a person. I wish the members of his family to keep their beloved son, father, husband healthy and I wish him to think about other aspects of his life as well, the sooner the better,

According to Usupashvili, the former president should have been able to remain in the position of former president.

"As a politician, I advised Saakashvili from 2004-2005 that the role he played in transforming the country suited him and helped the country as well, because he set out on the path of destructive political leadership, especially in the second half of his presidency. In 2013, when the presidential term ended, I also said publicly, and not only publicly, that the former president should be able to remain in the role and position of the former president, which is a very serious position for the society if one wants to do good. I still don't remember the benefits of his being in politics starting from 2007-2008 and I don't expect it now. I do not think that Georgian politics will be negatively affected by Saakashvili's depar-



MP Davit Usupashvili

ture from politics. I understand that his supporters think otherwise, but all supporters must understand that nothing is permanent. Everything in politics is fleeting. Especially such officials should be able to come and go. Is the time right now? Did he do the right thing by arriving in Georgia? I think that he acted

catastrophically wrong, both personally for himself and for Georgian political life, but it is up to him now." said Davit Usupashvili

Davit Usupashvili also responded to some of the Georgian Dream party MPs leaving the party and creating their own 'People's Power' party. Usupashvili thinks that the 'People's Power' party appearing in the scene actually means the 'powerlessness' of Ivanishvili.

According to him, people should expect that Ivanishvili will 'soften the language to Europe' and people who say they want integration in the West will come forward in Georgian Dream.

He already needed this type of maneuver to somehow keep all segments of the electorate, because there is a catastrophic decline in the part of the supporters of the Georgian Dream, who imagine Georgia as a member of the free European family. Now Ivanishvili will try to soften language to Europe on the one hand. It seems that people who swear they want Europe will come forward, while the people he is actually going to rely on are sidelined by such maneuvers. This is a perfectly understandable tactical move, but it indicates powerlessness, not invincibility." said Lelo MP Usupashvili.



Mikheil Saakashvili

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7332;

Euro - 2.7835;

GBP - 3.3299; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.5084;

Swiss Franc - 2.8492

Georgia's Economic dependency on Russia is increasing, Transparency International Georgia says

By Liza Mchedlidze

ccording to the report pub Alished by Transparency International Georgia, compared to previous years, Georgia's economic dependence on Russia is increasing, which is mainly due to the increase in remittances.

Transparency International Georgia has published a new report titled "Georgia's economic dependence on Russia; the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war".

According to the report, in January-June 2022, Georgia received about 1.2 billion US dollars in income from Russia through remittances, tourism and export of goods. Which is 2.5 times more than the income received from the same sources from Russia in January June 2021

"Significantly increased imports of Russian goods, remittances and establishment of companies in Georgia by Russian citi-



zens increase the risk that Georgia will be used to circumvent the sanctions imposed on Russia. Transparency International Georgia studied the existing data of issues of Georgia's economic dependence on Russia, because it poses a threat to the country. In particular, it analyzed the trade between Georgia and Russia, tourists coming from Russia, remittances, foreign direct investments and registration of Russian companies in Georgia by the end of June 2022.

In January-June 2022, Georgia received about 1.2 billion USD in income from Russia through remittances, tourism and goods export, which is 2.5 times more than the income received from Russia in January-June 2021 from the same sources. Before the pandemic, it exceeded the income received from Russia in January-June 2019 by 36%.

This means that compared to

previous years, Georgia's economic dependence on Russia is increasing. This growth is mainly due to the jump-like increase in remittances.

Transparency Georgia has offered recommendations to help, saying that the goal of the Georgian government should be to minimize economic dependence on Russia.

With the participation of TI. in April of this year, we already made public the recommenda-

tions on what should be done to reduce economic dependence on Russia: in order to reduce trade with Russia, the Georgian government should start working more actively and quickly to sign free trade agreements with all strategic partners with which we do not yet have such an agreement. Although the real positive effect of such agreements is longterm, based on the current situation, Georgia can more actively request the acceleration of the free trade agreement from its strategic partners; subsidies from the state budget (grant, preferential credit and others) should not be given to such businesses that increase economic dependence on Russia."

According to TI, The implementation of the mentioned rule will play an important role in reducing the dependence of the Georgian economy on Russia, which will increase the economic and political security of Georgia.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

The annual inflation level in Georgia amounted to 11.5%, **National Statistics** Office of Georgia report says

According to the report published by the National Statistics Office of Georgia, in July 2022, compared to the previous month the inflation level increased by 0.2% and the annual inflation level in Georgia amounted to 11.5%.

The inflation level in Georgia has reached the record level of

country which results in an increase in the price of goods and services and a decrease in the purchasing power of the national currency. According to economists and international institutions, the main challenge facing the country is the high inflation

The Finance Minister Lasha

"According to the forecast at this stage, it is expected that, other things being equal, inflation will decrease from March, although it will remain above the target rate during the year" The National Bank's assessment

SEB notes that the sharp increase in fuel prices will have a significant impact on the inflation rate. The National Bank raised the refinancing rate to a record 12% and explained that monetary policy will remain "tending to tighten" until upside risks to inflation expectations are sufficiently mitigated.

'Lelo' demands tightening of the Visa policy for citizens of Russia and Belarus

Lelo demands complication of the Visa regime for citizens of the Russian Federation and Belarus, the party releases a statement regarding this mat-

As mentioned in the statement, Lelo has had this request since the first day of the war in Ukraine, although "this issue is particularly acute today, after the number of visitors from the Russian Federation has increased dramatically."

"The flow of visitors from the occupying country is beyond any control. The relevant structures do not and cannot control the citizens entering our territory from the occupying country, the country is vulnerable to the challenges and threats that have increased critically in the background of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and ongoing hostilities.

It is also important that the US Congress has directly named Russia as a sponsor of terrorism in Georgia," statement reads.

Lelo demands the implementation of temporary measures to control the flow of people entering the territory of Georgia.

The Lelo party has three recommendations to decrease the flow of people from Russia and Belarus: Introduction of a Visa regime for citizens of the Russian Federation and Belarus (citizens of countries involved in hostilities with Ukraine); Determining the validity of tourist Visas up to 30 days (Visas should be issued directly at the border and/or online). Also, For those who wish to stay more than 30 days, visas should be issued according to the procedures drawn up according to the best practices of the European Union.



Weather

Thursday, August 4

Day Partly Cloudy High: 35°C

Night) Clear Low: 23°C

Friday, August 5

Day Mostly Cloudy High: 31°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 21°C

the last ten years. An increased level of inflation implies an increase in consumer prices in the

Khutsishvili thinks inflation and prices will remain a challenge in the year of 2022 as well.

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Mob.:+995 599 565621; +995 577 760000 E-mail:messenger@messenger.com.ge http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli $Commercial\ Director$

Mariam Mchedlidze Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili Layout Designer, Photographer The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact.

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