

## 'Regarding the visa regime, there are differences of opinion in Ukraine itself' says Georgian Dream chairman Mamuka Mdinardze

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Chairman of "Georgian Dream" Mamuka Mdinardze, when asked by a journalist what Georgia's position should be after the statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, said that there is a difference of opinion on the "visa regime" in Europe (where it is being discussed whether or not to completely ban the issuance of visas to Russian citizens) and Ukraine, where the visa regime has been in effect since July 1, and whatever decision they make, it should not become the basis of "shameful" campaigns.

Dmytro Kuleba urged EU countries that a visa ban for Russian tourists would be an appropriate response to Russia's war of aggression in the heart of Europe, which is supported by the majority of their citizens.

"This is an issue on which there are differences of opinion not only in Ukraine but also in Europe. There is an even greater conflict between these two opinions regarding the visa regime. Therefore, we should not judge their decisions and reasoning from here. In any case, we know that no one has made this decision yet, so whether they make this decision or not, whether the supporters of this opinion will win or the opponents, I don't know, but in any case, this

should not become the basis for conducting such campaigns in Georgia, such shameful campaigns are sometimes planned, which on the one hand, it can be baptized as a fascist, on the other hand, it can be an attempt to discredit something," Mdinardze said.

Speaking about Russian tourists, Mdinardze noted that "distinguishing people on the basis of ethnicity is not entirely good news in 2022", although "there may be some emotion prevailing with someone regarding the fact that they do not like a tourist representing an occupying country."

"It is understandable, on the one hand, that someone may have some emotion about not liking a tourist representing an occupying country, but distinguishing people on the basis of ethnicity is not entirely good news in 2022. Emotions are also understandable, it is also understandable that the occupier was called an occupier and you should definitely do so, and if someone asks you for a statement or comment regarding his government, you should give an appropriate answer, but reduce this story to a tourist and then single out and attack ethnic grounds, and these attacks are not emotional. To be really excited, [but] pragmatically (this is bad pragmatism), to want to interfere with the internal situ-



ation of your country, this is bad behavior, and let's not join the Nazis in this matter, please," said Mdinardze.

Citizens of Russia have a visa-free regime in Georgia, they can stay in the country for 1 year. For citizens of Georgia, Russia

has a visa regime. From January to June 2022, 247,156 citizens from Russia entered Georgia in 6 months.

## 'No sanctioned ship or cargo entered ports of Georgia', Ministry of Economy says

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

According to the Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Guram Guramishvili, no sanctioned ship or cargo has entered the ports of Georgia.

As mentioned in the statement issued by the Ministry of Economy, the deputy minister emphasized the spread of incorrect facts in the so-called marine waters of Georgia. The entry of "sanctioned" ships damages the country's international image and misleads the public.

"Based on the results of the screening, we unequivocally

state that the information spread by several news media outlets is false, the ship ATACAMA or its owner is not found in the list of sanctioned companies," said the Deputy Minister.

According to him, the ship ATACAMA sailing under the flag of St. Kitts and Nevis (IMO # 9248801, port of arrival Tuapse, Russia) has been inspected by the relevant services of the Georgian Maritime Transport Agency.

According to Guram Guramishvili, the purpose of the said ship's entry into the waters



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The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Kelly Degan talks the election process of Public Defender



US Ambassador to Georgia Kelly Degan talked about the importance of the process of selecting a public defender: "Choosing a public defender is extremely important. This is an opportunity for the Parliament of Georgia, for the country, to have a very inclusive process. Now it's time for as many relevant voices as possible to be heard in the pro-

cess so that it is not a closed, limited-access process"

According to her explanation, the last process of selecting the Public Defender was quite well evaluated by international organizations, and in order for the coun-

try to maintain this rating, it must follow the principles established by the best practices of the world.

"It is very important to know that the previous selection process was very well evaluated by international agencies that regulate how public defenders should be selected. In fact, Georgia received a high rating because the process was inclusive,

involving non-governmental organizations and many voices. If Georgia wants to maintain this high ranking, it must follow the principles established as the best international practice.

It is not really a secret how this process should go well, as it is all presented in the "Paris Principles", the recommendations of the Council of Europe. There are many roadmaps for Georgia to follow in order to manage this process well and select a public defender that will be the result of consensus by all parties. Remember that the main job of the public defender is to protect the human rights of every citizen of Georgia. This is an extremely important job and it needs to be done by someone who is impartial, qualified and acceptable to everyone," Kelly Degan said.

PM Garibashvili meets with Ambassador of Armenia to Georgia



Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Georgia, Ruben Sadoyan.

According to the press service of the Government of Georgia, the conversation at the farewell meeting touched on good neighborly relations between the two countries and prospects for future cooperation in various fields.

According to their reports, the current situation in the region was discussed at the meeting.

The emphasis was on the importance of resolving conflicts in a peaceful way. It was noted that Georgia is always ready to contribute and support the peace process.

The Prime Minister thanked the Armenian diplomat for his service in the development of relations between the countries and wished him success in his future activities.

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of Georgia was to supply drinking water and food products,

which was carried out on August 30, using a floating means at Saguze point. As for cargo, the ship did not apply for cargo operations and therefore did not carry out cargo operations. According to the current data, the ship has been removed from the Saguze point and is leaving the territorial waters of Georgia.

"The 6<sup>th</sup> package of EU sanc-

tions completely bans the import of crude oil from Russia to the EU from December 5, 2022, and light oil products from February 5, 2023. In addition, Bulgaria will be able to continue importing energy trains by sea until the end of 2024, and Croatia will be allowed to import light oil products from Russia until the end of 2023. EU sanctions do not

apply to the transportation of petroleum products through the pipeline, which is a form of alternative transportation of petroleum products," said Guram Guramishvili.

"The Maritime Transport Agency of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance coor-

dinate and constantly check both ships and shipowners in relation to international sanctions, and if the ship, shipowner, or cargo is on the sanctions list, it is not allowed to enter the ports of Georgia and The right to carry out customs procedures," said the deputy minister at the briefing.

Weather

Thursday, September 1

Day ☀️ Clear High: 37°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 22°C

Friday, September 2

Day ☀️ Clear High: 39°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 23°C

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*On the occasion of the Victory and Turkish Armed Forces Day, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye H.E. Mr. Ali Kaan Orbay and Military Attache Col. Burak Altiner held a reception on August 30.*





