

## 'Stand above party interests, start cooperation' Marina Kaljurand says

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The chairperson of the Georgia-EU Parliamentary Association Committee, Marina Kaljurand, calls on Georgian political parties to unite, stand above party interests and start cooperation.

"Maybe Georgia is disappointed, and I understand that disappointment, but that doesn't mean there isn't an opportunity. There is an opportunity, the door is open for Georgia's aspirations and everything is in your hands, in the hands of your politicians. I have been repeating this for the last few years, but I will say again that please unite, please stand above your party interests and please start cooperation based on the interests of the entire nation, since the Georgian nation wants to become a part of the European Union, it deserves to be a member of the European Union. So 'Georgian Dream', keep doing the work you are doing, keep working so that all interested sides feel that they are being heard, that their positions are being considered, and that they are part of the process. So that inclusiveness is not only on paper, but also in real life", said the MEP after the session of the Parliamentary Association Committee.

Marina Kaljurand called on the opposition and the civil sector to get involved in the activities of the working groups as much as possible.



"Please continue to work, a democratic society needs an opposition, a democratic society needs the voice of civil society, and this allows you to decide the future of the country."

I appeal to those members of the opposition who are not involved in the work of the working groups: please get involved, come to the working groups, express your position, because I am

sure that this is what the Georgian voters want", said Kaljurand.

Marina Kaljurand also called on her Georgian colleagues to prevent Georgia from being used as a tool for Russia to avoid internationally imposed sanctions:

"I am glad that Georgian society strongly supports Ukraine, and I also today call on my Georgian colleagues to continue tak-

ing all measures to prevent Georgia from being used as a back corridor during Russian sanctions."

According to her, the war has hurt both Ukraine and Georgia, since Georgians also fell victim to the occupation and the war.

She also confirmed that the European Union will never recognize Russia's occupation and that EU fully supports the ter-

ritorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders:

"The European Union will support the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders and will repeat this until the occupied territories are finally liberated and returned to the control of Georgia," said the European Parliamentarian.

## Irakli Kobakhidze talks Kelly Degnan's response to former 'Georgian Dream' deputies and de-oligarchization bill



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Irakli Kobakhidze responded to the US Ambassador to Georgia Kelly Degnan's statement in which the ambassador talked to the media regarding former 'Georgian Dream' deputies who issue statements that are 'disinformation'. Degnan has questioned the motives of the aforementioned politicians and said that US officials in Washington are asking questions regarding the reasoning behind why the ruling party is not distancing itself from such opinions coming from the people "who continue to repeat lies and conspiracy theories that are consistent with pro-Russian disinformation."

Irakli Kobakhidze, the chairman of "Georgian Dream" assessed US Ambassador Degnan's statement as 'rude' and 'insulting' towards their 'honorable col-

leagues' when she said that the four deputies who left the "Georgian Dream" party are spreading lies and Russian disinformation.

As Kobakhidze told the journalists, the government will neither share these insulting statements nor evaluate them loyally.

"Once again, I will explain our position. As for the details themselves, many statements, letters were circulated, there were many details in these statements. Of course, we refrained and still refrain from clarifying these details and stating our position. It's very simple here. We cannot enter into this, if we enter, it turns out that we have to take our responsibility for something and become co-authors of the statements that were published, we cannot do that. We cannot go into these details, we

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8426; Euro - 2.8218; GBP - 3.2252; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.6661; Swiss Franc - 2.9497

# Irakli Kobakhidze talks Kelly Dignan's response to former 'Georgian Dream' deputies and de-oligarchization bill

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cannot comment on any details, this is a general position.

The ambassador made a very rude and insulting statement. She said that four people, four of our honorable colleagues, are spreading lies and Russian disinformation. I have said, and I say the same thing now, if we thought these people were spreaders of lies and Russian disinformation, there would be a different separation. I repeat this one more time. Of course, we cannot share these insulting statements, nor can we evaluate them loyally in any way", said Kobakhidze.

According to him, Sozar Subari, Dimitri Khundadze, Mikheil Kavelashvili and Guram Macharashvili fought for the country in their time and are still acting with this belief.

"When they insult four of our colleagues, members of the parliament elected by the people, not only the election by the people is important here, besides, these people have their own honorable past. Sozar Subari with his past, his present, as well as Dimitri Khundadze, Mikheil Kavelashvili, Guram Macharashvili, these people fought for the country in their time and are still acting with this belief," said Kobakhidze.

Kobakhidze has also discussed the possibility of "Georgian Dream" not initiating the de-oligarchization bill.

The leader of the ruling team in a conversation with the media, stated that if the European Union, the opposition and non-governmental organizations agree that this law is not necessary, the majority will not accept this law.

"If there is a consensus around a certain bill, we will pass the law." If there is a consensus around not passing the law, then we will not pass the law.

NGOs came out and said that the law is not acceptable, then this was followed by the statement of the relevant radical parties that the law is not acceptable, before that Karl Hartzel said that the law is not acceptable, the radical opposition says the same and radical NGOs say the same.

If the three subjects – the radical opposition, the European Union and NGOs agree that the law in the field of de-oligarchization is not acceptable, we will not accept this law. Do we fulfill the requirements of the European Union? - If the European Union is also of the opinion that we should not adopt the

law, we will not adopt it. They say that we may not pass the law, but the condition should be fulfilled," Kobakhidze said.

According to Irakli Kobakhidze, "Some people were afraid of this law."

"Yesterday they also had attempts. They say that if we pass the de-oligarchization law, then it will pose a threat to specific opposition leaders. They admitted that they have oligarchic leaders in the opposition and everyone knows it. Kezerashvili, Khazaradze are oligarchs. They naturally do not want their leaders to be in danger.

I don't know if we all agree that Kezerashvili should be fully involved in politics and no restrictions should be imposed on him, of course we can share this, let's see. I don't know how to limit the financing from Kezerashvili on the television or

the party, I don't know, we can't do it without the law, if he doesn't give up politics," said Kobakhidze.

The legislative package of the parliamentary opposition on 12 points of the European Commission has already been prepared.

Irakli Kobakhidze said that the ruling team is not going to return to the "Agreement of April 19".

"The April 19 agreement has been canceled and they know it well. As for reducing the electoral threshold, we will not consider this initiative this year. We can consider it in 2024, maybe in 2024.

As for de-oligarchization, they are afraid. As for anti-corruption, we will prepare a draft law, which will create an independent agency, and we will have our own initiatives in all these directions and we will follow the relevant draft laws," he said.

## The News in Brief

Prepared by Messenger Staff

### Georgia-EU Parliamentary Association Committee held in the Parliament of Georgia

The eleventh session of the Georgia-EU Parliamentary Association Committee was held in the Parliament of Georgia.

The co-chair of the meeting, Marina Kaljurand, addressed the audience with a welcoming speech:

overcome polarization and concentrate on the main priority with joint efforts, Georgia's candidate status will be guaranteed," said the MEP.

After the welcoming speeches, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Teimuraz

session was the consolidation of democratic reforms in Georgia and the protection of fundamental freedoms.

At the meeting of the Georgia-EU Association Parliamentary Committee, they discussed the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Georgia and the impact of Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine on Georgia; Georgia's reconciliation policy towards the occupied regions; International negotiations of Geneva, and activities of the EU monitoring mission.

### "Lelo" comes up with the initiative of legislative changes on a visa regime for Russian citizens

"Lelo for Georgia" came up

with the initiative of legislative changes on the establishment of a visa regime for Russian citizens.

The political secretary of the party, Salome Samadashvili, said at a briefing in the parliament that changes should be made to the law "On the legal status of foreigners and non-citizen persons". According to the changes, a strict and short-term visa regime should be established for Russian citizens. According to her, the law will take into account exceptions.

"Lelo" party appealed to other opposition parties for support.

On September 21, the chairman of "Georgian Dream", Irakli Kobakhidze, said that the establishment of a visa regime for Russian citizens is not considered in any way.



## Weather

Thursday, September 22

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 30°C

Night T-storm  
Low: 18°C

Friday, September 23

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 29°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 14°C

"The European Union has officially recognized the European perspective of Georgia. This decision was a historic moment in our relationship. "If the political forces put aside their differences,

Janjalia, and the Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski, spoke at the session regarding Georgia-EU relations.

The topic of discussion at the

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*On the occasion of the National Day of the Czech Republic  
“The Day of Czech Statehood”, Ambassador of the Czech Republic  
H. E. Mr. Petr Mikyska held a Reception on September 21.*



Ambassador of the Czech Republic H. E. Mr. Petr Mikyska

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Teimuraz Janjalia











