

## Kyiv Court approved the petition for the temporary transfer of Saakashvili to Ukraine

By Liza Mchedlidze

A trial is underway in Ukraine, where Saakashvili is to be questioned as a witness. The case concerns the possible inhumane treatment of him.

Today, Saakashvili's lawyer Vadim Zavorotny told "Mtavari" channel that they submitted a motion to the court to temporarily transfer Saakashvili to Ukraine for questioning, which the court approved.

According to Zavorotny, the court's decision will be handed over to the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, which in turn will notify the Ministry of Justice of Georgia. A decision on the temporary transfer of Saakashvili to Ukraine will be made in Tbilisi.

"I don't see a problem why the Georgian government should refuse us. However, if this happens, we are ready to go to the European Court of Human Rights. It doesn't matter if we are talking about the former president or an ordinary citizen, the court made this decision," said Vadim Zavorotny.

Mikheil Saakashvili himself responded to the court proceedings in Kyiv today. As his lawyer, Shalva Khachapuridze stated Saakashvili says that the ongoing process in Ukraine should not be given a political face and that it is simply about questioning as a witness.

"His request is to speak out so that the Ukrainian process is not given a false political appearance. The process is ongoing as to whether he will be questioned



as a witness or not. Such comments were heard on television that a decision will be made and Saakashvili will be transferred. Nothing like this happens, it is a normal court process to be questioned as a witness or not", said Shalva Khachapuridze.

The lawyer noted that several times the information was spread incorrectly, as if the Ukrainian court was considering the facts of Saakashvili's treatment after his arrest in Georgia, however, in fact, the Ukrainian court is considering

the case initiated in Ukraine itself.

According to Khachapuridze, the Ukrainian court will transfer the request to Georgia and then it will be decided whether Saakashvili will be sent to Ukraine as a witness for questioning.

"Incorrect information was spread several times as if the Ukrainian court was considering the facts of the inhumane treatment of Saakashvili in Georgia. The correct information is that the Ukrainian court is considering and has opened a case related to

the current events in Ukraine itself. Saakashvili is known as a victim, in this case, his lawyer filed a petition regarding the questioning of Saakashvili as a witness, and the Ukrainian court made a decision to transfer Saakashvili from Georgia to Ukraine, where he should be questioned as a victim" Khachapuridze told reporters.

Besides, according to Khachapuridze, Mikheil Saakashvili's health has been serious in recent days.

## 45,349 Russian citizens opened accounts in Georgian banks after February 24, IDFI publishes research

By Liza Mchedlidze



According to the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI), 45,349 citizens of Russia opened new accounts in commercial banks of Georgia in the period from Russia's invasion of Ukraine to August 31.

According to IDFI, in the period from February 24 to August 31, 2022, 19 legal entities registered in Russia opened accounts in Georgian banks.

According to the organization, after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, as a result of the active entry of Russian citizens into Georgia and the opening of bank accounts, the rate of deposits placed by them in commercial banks has increased significantly.

CONTINUED ON Page 2



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8043; Euro - 2.7712; GBP - 3.1565; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.6081; Swiss Franc - 2.8496

# 45,349 Russian citizens opened accounts in Georgian banks after February 24, IDFI publishes research

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

According to the published data of IDFI, as of August 2022, deposits placed by Russian citizens in commercial banks of Georgia amount to 1.88 billion GEL. The balance of funds placed on deposits by Russian citizens increased by 170%, by approximately 1.2 billion GEL, compared to the pre-war period (until February 24, 2022).

72% (1.36 billion) of the money on deposits by Russian citizens is placed in US dollar currency, while only 0.06% (1.2 million) is placed in Russian rubles.

“As of August 2022, 53% of the deposits placed by Russian citizens are demand deposits, 21%

are current accounts, and 26% are time deposits. It is noteworthy that the share of time deposits reached 60% in the period before the war.” IDFI wrote.

According to the organization, after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, the active influx of Russian citizens into the country did not have a significant impact on the volume of loans received by Russian citizens in Georgian financial organizations.

According to the data received from the National Bank, after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, the turnover rates of the Russian ruble at the currency exchange points in Georgia also increased significantly.

According to IDFI, in the second quarter of 2022, Georgian

currency exchange offices bought 949.8 million rubles (about 45 million GEL or 16 million USD equivalent at today’s exchange rate) and sold 929.4 million rubles. This data is three times more compared to the same period in 2021.

The organization wrote that the analysis of the data received from the National Bank of Georgia revealed that after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the activation of the entry of Russian citizens into Georgia significantly contributed to the growth of the funds at the disposal of Russian citizens in the commercial banks of Georgia.

As an example of this, IDFI cites the data discussed above: 45,349 citizens of Russia opened

new bank accounts, the balance of deposits increased by 170%, and the turnover rates of the Russian ruble increased three times. According to the data of the National Bank, the figures for remittances from Russia to Georgia have also increased significantly.

Based on data analysis, IDFI states that the inflow of financial resources from Russia to Georgia has had a short-term impact on Georgia’s economic indicators, including economic growth and currency exchange rate stabilization. However, according to the organization, the tendency of Russian citizens to stay in Georgia may create challenges in terms of security.

“Analysis of the data shows

that the circumstances created as a result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine contributed to the inflow of significant financial resources from Russia to Georgia, which in turn had an impact on various economic indicators of the country in the short term. Among them are economic growth, strengthening of the exchange rate, and others.

IDFI believes that, despite some positive economic effects obtained by the active entry of Russian citizens into the country in the short term, the growing tendency of them to stay in the country may represent a challenge from the point of view of state security, which requires appropriate measures in terms of risk reduction” IDFI wrote.

## The News in Brief

Prepared by Messenger Staff

### Attacks on Kelly Degnan are a part of a larger scheme, Bonnie Davis Jenkins says



During her visit to Georgia, the US Deputy Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, Bonnie Davis Jenkins, expressed her support for the US Ambassador to Georgia, Kelly Degnan.

Jenkins came to Georgia to attend the conference of the Biosafety Association in Central

Asia and the Caucasus region.

Jenkins said she will meet with government officials to discuss various issues and voice his support for Kelly Degnan and her team.

“During my visit, I will also meet with Georgian leaders to

Degnan are part of a larger disinformation scheme.

“The effort has not been easy, especially in recent times when we have been concerned about personal attacks on Ambassador Degnan and the embassy. Let’s be clear, this is part of a larger scheme of disinformation to cover up the truth and the reality of the current crisis in Europe created by one man.” said the US Deputy Secretary of State.

Nika Melia attacked the US ambassador, while the deputies who left “Georgian Dream” and formed “People’s Power” party, were asking questions, which is within the scope of freedom of expression.

According to Kobakhidze, if he believed that the members of “People’s Power” were attacking the ambassador and damaging relations with the states, he would have separated from them.

“I only remember two cases of the attack on the US ambassador, one from Gvaramia and the other from Melia. As for certain critical statements, any politician has the right to do so, including politicians in the majority. We are proud of freedom of expression, one of the constitutional, basic rights.

Asking a question when it is considered an attack, or then interpreting a non-answer as an

attack, is itself an attack on freedom of expression. When a person asks questions, cannot get answers, then tries to explain this situation, this is a component of freedom of expression”, said Kobakhidze.

According to Irakli Kobakhidze, there is a lot of information of interest to the public, which they do not intend to make public because they are careful about relations with the United States.

When asked whether such information can be made public by the members of “People’s Power”, Kobakhidze said that he does not know “what they will bring out and what they will not”.

“I can tell you that what they are talking about is not 100%, not even 50% of the information at their disposal. They know much more and I don’t know what they will say and what they won’t say,” Kobakhidze said.

### Irakli Kobakhidze responds to the US Deputy Secretary of State’s statement

Chairman of “Georgian Dream”, Irakli Kobakhidze, in response to the statement of the US Deputy Secretary of State, said that only Nika Gvaramia and



## Weather

Friday, October 7

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 23°C

Night Few Showers  
Low: 16°C

Saturday, October 8

Day Few Showers  
High: 21°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 15°C

published by

**The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia  
Founded by Prof.

**Zaza Gachechiladze**

**Tamar Gachechiladze**

Publisher

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.

All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

The Messenger Georgia’s English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.



By ANA DUMBADZE

# The rehabilitation works of the Khuluti Castle-hall have been completed

On October 5, the Movement for Cultural Heritage activists, together with architect-restorers, introduced the public to the results of the rehabilitation works of the Khuluti Castle-hall, a monument of Georgian architecture in Kvemo Kartli, Tetrtskaro Municipality, in the deep valley of the river Khrami.

The second phase of the rehabilitation works of the cultural heritage monument of national category importance started in May, and by this time the upper marks of the castle cellar have been cleaned and rebuilt. It is important that the conservation work of the cellar was carried out with authentic stone. Also, the damaged part of the fence south of the cellar was restored and a conservation layer was made.

As a result of the second stage of rehabilitation works, the complete restoration of the separate towers of the Castle-hall, the fence, the cellar and the secret tunnel of the castle was completed, and next year, at the final stage of the rehabilitation, the works will be resumed on the

main, eight-story tower of Khuluti.

“The rehabilitation process of the Castle-hall was preceded by large-scale preparatory works; after the scanning of the monument, a geological and wall stone survey was conducted, the Castle-hall was cleared of trees and plants, and a path leading to the monument was arranged, which will make visiting the castle hall even more comfortable and safe.

“The first stage of the Khuluti rehabilitation works started in September 2021, and by now the Castle-hall has been completely cleaned of bulk soil and garbage.

“Because the condition of Tower VIII was much more difficult, most of the work was carried out on this tower. The crack on the tower was “stitched” using a special method and the authentic steps discovered during the cleaning were pre-

served. Also, all the necessary flooring work has been completed. For the safe movement of visitors, a metal railing was installed on the access path to the tower. Treatment of the existing cracks - “stitching” was also done on the third tower of the castle hall.

It is also important to note that pitchers were found in the Castle-hall during the clearing works, as well as a store-room, which was supposed to be a dungeon, and iron slingshot balls used during a battle. Due to the fact that rehabilitation works have never been carried out on Khuluti, we may witness many interesting discoveries in the process,” - note the activists of the Movement of Cultural Heritage.

Built by a local noble Kaplan Orbelishvili, the eight-story Khuluti castle, consisting of five towers, belongs

to the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and it is one of the outstanding and steady castles in Georgia.

The cost of the project is 776,000 GEL. Since the monument is located near the production area of RMG company, as a result of the agreement reached between the activists and RMG, the rehabilitation works are being carried out with the financial support of the company.

The Movement for Cultural Heritage (Sakdrisi Committee) has been protecting the Khuluti Castle-hall since 2017, and it is the sixth monument where rehabilitation works are taking place under the initiative and monitoring of the Movement for Cultural Heritage.

The third stage of rehabilitation works on Khuluti Castle-hall will be resumed in the spring of 2023.

PHOTO COURTESY BY ©KAKHA GOGICHA













