

## Three opposition parties agree on coordination

By Liza Mchedlidze

“Strategy Aghmashenebeli”, “Girchi - more freedom” and “Droa” talked about the necessity of opposition unity and the idea of primaries.

According to Zurab Japaridze, the only way to defeat the “Georgian Dream” is great unity around the European future of Georgia.

The leader of “Droa”, Elene Khoshtaria, said that the opposition must show the voters that there is an alternative to the government.

“The alternative is to show the power that we can make this change. Because I also expose [the government] separately, Giorgi doesn’t stop, Zura doesn’t stop, but that’s not enough. We want to unite political, humane, informational resources, but in no case deceive people that we have become one monolith.

This union should be based on a solid understanding, the entire opposition does not have this solid understanding, for example, that if we do not change this government, there is no perspective for this country”, said Khoshtaria.

When asked what this means, Elene Khoshtaria focused on the work of the opposition in the parliament. According to her, parliamentary activity still leaves the government with a chance.

Elene Khoshtaria said that the three parties worked all summer and checked each other’s positions.

“Zura and Giorgi and I have been working all summer on checking these positions, we don’t want to stand together and then it turns out that Giorgi believes that he should at least discuss the de-oligarchization law and some nonsense... I can say for this moment today that with me, Giorgi and Zura there is a complete convergence of positions, this strategic vision, but it is not enough, but it is the core that will allow us to move forward.

As for forms, I am not in favor of naming things. We must create the agenda together, this is our task. The agenda of



what this government is screwing up, let’s remind them, break the lies they’re feeding people, show people, help them not be manipulated, because it’s hard.... Let’s show people that this country has a perspective...”, Khoshtaria said.

To the question, does “Strategy Aghmashenebeli” intend to review parliamentary activities? Giorgi Vashadze answered that this needs concrete justification and it should be part of a big process. According to him, he does not think it is right to sit down and work with the “Georgian Dream”, because the government and the opposition have different goals.

“Georgia is still in the reality that it has to choose Europe or Russia, there is no other way. If anyone says there is, they are lying. Our vision is that a completely pro-Western, pro-European wing should be united. It is 80-85%. We need to end the facade of pro-Europeanism from the side of the “Georgian Dream” in the minds of people. Their biggest lie that exists is that they are pro-European. In my opinion, there are pro-Russians.

To be honest, the three of us are on the

same page. We want even greater unity. We do things together. We don’t want the three of us to stand at the banner and say, that’s it... we have to take steps together. We have coordination, we do not hide it. We are together in evaluation and how we see the way. The path to victory goes through unity”, Vashadze said.

According to Giorgi Vashadze, they are waiting for the formation of the positions of the big opposition parties, “Lelo” and “United National Movement”.

Zura Japaridze stated that he is constantly talking about his ideas with “Lelo”, “United National Movement”, and “European Georgia”, although the final agreement has not been reached yet.

“If there was an agreement, we would have said it publicly. There is nothing concrete yet. But, in my opinion, there are no counter arguments. If we agree that the country has a choice between Europe and Russia, we say that the only way is great unity, if there is no way of great unity, then it should be explained to me what the way is.

If we separate our parties and beat each

other, that’s what we are doing now. It is clear from there that it is in Ivanishvili’s interest to divide us. There are two ways to bind a union:

One is behind the scenes, we will sit down, decide what type of union it will be, divide it up, go on stage and say that we are crying for Ivanishvili’s mother. In my opinion, this is the wrong way.

The second way is primaries - a much more open and understandable way...

According to Salome Samadashvili, one of the leaders of “Lelo”, the goal of the opposition at this stage should be to jointly get more votes than the “dream”, for which the voters need an alternative. According to Samadashvili, at this stage the politicians talking about unification cannot offer this formula to the public. She said the task of “Lelo” today is to strengthen the party and offer an alternative to the voters.

According to the member of “European Georgia”, Gigi Tsereteli, the idea of unification is needed, but unity needs a vision and a model, as well as restoration of trust between opposition parties.

## Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Georgia issues a statement denying the use of Iranian drones in Ukraine

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Georgia issues a statement regarding the use of Iranian drones in the ongoing military operations in Ukraine. The embassy calls the information “baseless” and “unsubstantiated” and denies all the information.

“1. The Islamic Republic of Iran categorically denies and condemns the baseless and unsubstantiated statements about the sale of Iranian drones for use in the ongoing operations in Ukraine. Such baseless statements, which are based only on incorrect and false assumptions, are nothing more than a propaganda attack to continue anti-Iranian political processes. In



this regard, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with a constructive approach to the Ukraine crisis, expresses its goodwill and expresses readiness to engage in joint technical and expert cooperation in order to shed light on the baseless accusations against Iran.

2. From the beginning of the Ukraine crisis until now, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always stated its clear, firm and firm position and emphatically states that all UN member states must follow the principles defined by the UN Charter and respect international laws on the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of states.

However, the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a war-torn coun-

try, opposes any conflict and war anywhere in the world.

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran supports peace and an end to the conflict in Ukraine and, in order to prevent escalation of tensions, calls on the parties to exercise restraint and engage in processes that will explore the root causes of the current situation and resolve existing differences through peaceful means. Iran also calls on the parties to fulfill their obligations based on international law and humanitarian principles and hold appropriate consultations to protect civilians and vital infrastructure from military attacks.

4. The Islamic Republic of Iran also supports the ongoing efforts of the United Nations to resolve the conflict through peaceful means. The United Nations must maintain its objectivity and neutrality in order

# Changing procedure for electing prosecutor, one of 12 points given by EU fulfilled

By MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

On October 18, in the first reading, the Parliament of Georgia supported the constitutional amendment project regarding the new procedure for electing the Prosecutor General. The adopted changes are noteworthy in that they are one of the 12 recommendations that Georgia must implement in order to obtain the status of a candidate country for the European Union.

The opposition, while supporting this change, still declares that the Georgian Dream will not fulfill the recommendations of the European Union as a whole and only creates an imitation that it is working on the implementation of the recommendations.

According to the legislative project, the Parliament of the next two convocations will elect the Prosecutor General with a majority of 3/5 of the full composition, that is, 90 votes. If the Parliament fails to elect the Prosecutor General twice according to this rule, then the Prosecutor General will be elected by a majority of the full composition, i.e. 76 votes.

In this case, the term of office of the Prosecutor General will be one year instead of six years, as it is envisaged in the case of the election with 90 votes. In addition, during the election of the Prosecutor General at the plenary session of the Parliament, the second and third voting shall be held no earlier than the 28th

day after the corresponding previous voting, and the same candidate shall be voted for.

Constitutional changes were initiated by the Georgian Dream deputies. But at the same time, it should be noted that the ruling team criticizes the constitutional initiative initiated by it and considers it a "legal ugliness" and "unmanageable bill". The support is explained by the fact that this is one of the 12 recommendations of the European Union, and the fulfillment of these 12 points is a priority for them.

According to Irakli Kobakhidze, Chairman of Georgian Dream, if the opposition does not support the method of electing the Prosecutor General by a qualified majority, it will be obvious to everyone that they are against receiving the status of a candidate for the European Union.

The opposition did not give grounds for such an accusation to the ruling party, and the bill was supported by "National Movement", "Lelo", "Girchi", Gakharia's party for "Georgia" and "Strategy Agmashenebeli". In total, 126 parliamentarians supported the bill. The support of 113 parliamentarians was enough to pass the constitutional amendment.

According to the opposition forces who supported the constitutional amendments, the rule proposed by the draft law is better than the existing one, because the election of the General Prosecutor by consensus of the parliamentary parties will give

him high legitimacy.

Confidence in the prosecutor elected with the support of one party will be low. According to them, the issue is included in the "Michel Document" and the recommendations of the European Commission. Under current legislation, the prosecutor's office is used as a tool for political prosecution, and the general prosecutor is appointed based on party preferences rather than public trust. However, not all groups in the parliament supported the bill. The bill was not supported by "Citizens", Khatuna Samnidge, and "European Socialists".

Opponents of the draft law stated that this only creates facade changes, because according to the rule, it would not be possible to elect a prosecutor based on a qualified majority on the basis of consensus, and instead we will get a prosecutor elected by a simple majority, again by a nominal political force for one year, who will not be accountable to the parliament and society.

During the discussion of the draft law, the opposition MPs were interested, if along with the change in the procedure for electing the Prosecutor General, why another draft of the constitutional amendments, the issue of reducing the electoral threshold, is not considered.

Reducing the electoral threshold for a large number of opposition parties is very important because the existing 5% threshold simply eliminates the chance for many of them to enter the parliament and contributes to the polarization of the political spectrum. Previously, these two constitutional amendments were considered together, and then the Georgian Dream forgot the issue of lowering the electoral threshold.

According to Irakli Kobakhidze, the chairman of the Georgian Dream, the electoral changes are not part of the 12 points of the European Union and they have no obligation to accept such changes. According to Kobakhidze, the majority will

return to the issue of lowering the threshold in 2023 or even in 2024, even if the polarization on the part of the opposition decreases.

The opposition, along with supporting the constitutional changes regarding the election of the General Prosecutor, still notes that the Georgian Dream will not fulfill the 12-point recommendations of the European Union. According to Badri Japaridze, one of the leaders of "Lelo", the fulfillment of these points implies a change in the governance system in the country, that is, a change in oligarchic governance and distribution of power, while the Georgian Dream is not ready for such a change. Therefore, they resort to a trick, as if they want to fulfill these points, but in reality, they do not intend to solve the "most painful" issues for them. For example, the bill on delolarchization prepared by "Georgian Dream" completely excludes Bidzina Ivanishvili from the list of possible oligarchs.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgian Dream to create an anti-corruption bureau

According to Anri Okhanashvili, the chairman of the legal affairs committee, "in accordance with the 12-point plan of the European Commission, in order to fulfill the 4th point of this plan, the management team initiates a package of legislative changes for the institutional strengthening of anti-corruption activities.

Okhanashvili said that a public law legal entity - the anti-corruption bureau, whose main task will be to promote the fight against corruption will be created. The anti-corruption bureau will supervise the implementation of the document defining the general policy of the fight against corruption and the national anti-corruption strategy of Georgia.

"For this purpose, the said bureau will also coordinate the activities of the appropriate bodies, organizations and officials. The anti-corruption bureau will be accountable to the Parliament of Georgia and the Inter-agency Anti-Corruption Council.

In particular, the head of the bureau submits an annual report to the Parliament of Georgia, and

periodic reports to the Inter-agency Anti-Corruption Council.

Candidates for the head of the anti-corruption bureau will be selected on the basis of an open competition, following transparent procedures, by the competitive commission created with the participation of state agencies and civil society representatives, and will be presented to the Prime Minister of Georgia for appointment to the position, while the Prime Minister of Georgia will select and appoint the head of the anti-corruption bureau from the nominated candidates," Okhanashvili said.

### Former employee wins court case against Tea Tsulukiani

According to the Social Justice Center, another citizen, Guga Gogadze, who was fired as a result of the personnel purge conducted by the Minister of Culture Tea Tsulukiani, won a labor dispute in the Tbilisi Court of Appeal on October 26, 2022. His interests are protected by the Center for Social Justice.

According to the Center's information, the Court of Appeal annulled the decision of the City Court of May 23, 2022, by which the demands of Guga Gogadze were not met. According to the new decision made by the Court

of Appeal, the January 2022 order of the General Director of the National Agency for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Georgia regarding the dismissal of Guga Gogadze, the chief specialist of the procurement service, was invalidated. In addition, the court also ordered the agency to pay compensation to the dismissed employee - from the day of dismissal until the execution of the decision, in the form of a trial, in the amount of salary.

In addition, the organization explains that Gogadze asked for compensation for the fact that at this stage it is impossible to restore him to his position. The court partially satisfied this request and additionally ordered the agency to pay 3 thousand GEL.

Guga Gogadze is one of the 70 employees of the culture sector who became victims of the mass personnel purge after the appointment of Tea Tsulukiani as the Minister of Culture.

"This decision made by the court regarding the mentioned mass dismissal is the second precedent, which will be of special importance for the labor disputes of other dismissed workers in the field of culture. These cases will be considered by the Tbilisi City Court in the coming months," the statement issued by the organization reads.

## Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Georgia issues a statement denying the use of Iranian drones in Ukraine

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to play a responsible and constructive role in resolving the conflict in Ukraine by political means. All steps of this organization should be aimed at correcting the current situation, resolving the conflict and preventing further escalation of tensions.

5. At the same time, the Islamic Republic of Iran opposes any kind of sanctions, pressure or provocative actions against one of the parties to the conflict, which will further worsen the current situation and make it difficult to achieve peace. Therefore, the West's extensive military support and supply of modern weapons not only does not represent the desire to end the war, but its purpose is to continue the conflict and increase the damage and destruction.

6. The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue constructive work to resolve the crisis by peaceful means," said the statement issued by the Iranian Embassy in Georgia.

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## Weather

Thursday, October 27

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 20°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 11°C

Friday, October 28

Day Clear  
High: 18°C

Night Clear  
Low: 8°C

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