

Mykhailo Podolyak on official Ukraine's request to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili abroad for treatment

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Mykhailo Podolyak, the adviser to the president of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, spoke about Georgia's former president Mikheil Saakashvili in a television interview with Yulia Latynina. He spoke about official Ukraine's position as well as his personal opinions regarding Mikheil Saakashvili.

Podolyak said that the Government of Ukraine has officially requested the Georgian side to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili.

According to him, the 'optimal' decision is for the Georgian Government to transfer the ex-president to any country for treatment, whether it's Ukraine or any European country.

The adviser to the president of Ukraine also said in an interview that he himself is ready to arrive in Georgia and 'take' Saakashvili abroad.

"The optimal decision is to hand over the person [Saakashvili] to any country. If you want, I will come and take him, this is not a problem at all," Podolyak said in Yulia Latynina's program.

As Podolyak noted, Ukraine



officially requests the Georgian government to transfer Saakashvili to Ukraine for treatment, and if they do not do this, then transfer him to a third country, any European country, to receive the necessary treatment.

As for his personal opinion, he assessed it as 'more radical' and

said that the Georgian government, which, according to him, likes Russia 'for some reason', is doing it purposefully, so that Georgia is written in history as a country who tortured their president in prison and called on Georgia's authorities to refrain from doing so:

"This is the official position.

As for my personal position, it is more radical. I believe that the government of Georgia deliberately wants to put Georgia in history as a black spot, as a state that deliberately tortured its president in prison. This is how it all looks to me personally.

I give a piece of simple advice, without interference, I tell them

directly - look, representatives of the current government, the state in general, deputies of the ruling party, of the party, which for some reason likes Russia so much, do not do so that you write yourself in black letters in the history of Georgia," Podolyak said.



Bill Browder @Billbrowder · 3h
Mikheil Saakashvili to Browder: I'm being killed in a prison exactly the same way as Magnitsky, but much more explicitly and publicly - my request is to help local Georgian groups with drafting a new Magnitsky list in advance not waiting for lethal outcome



Mikheil Saakashvili to William Browder: I am being killed in...
interpressnews.ge

26,1K 10 162 447



Bill Browder @Billbrowder · 3h
Mikheil, please have your team document who is withholding medical treatment, who is responsible for the poisoning, who is responsible for the torture and I will do whatever I can to bring this to the attention of Western governments for Magnitsky sanctions.

20,2K 6 88 446

Mikheil Saakashvili asks Bill Browder to draft a new Magnitsky List in an open letter

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The ex-president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, addressed the famous British financier and critic of the Putin regime, the author of the Magnitsky Act, Bill Browder with an open letter, asking him to draft a new 'Magnitsky List' before the lethal outcome.

Saakashvili's letter to Browder was published on the Facebook page of the third president of Georgia.

"To Bill Browder
CEO of Heritage foundation
from Mikheil Saakashvili
Dear Bill,

Thank you for your very famous tweet. I am being killed in a prison exactly the same way as Magnitsky, but much more explicitly and publicly. My request is to help local Georgian groups with drafting a new Magnitsky list in advance not waiting for lethal outcome. All the names are quite public, and what whites them is their sense of impurity, connected to their feeling on Putin's invincibility.

But you and I know that Putin's days are counted, and my greatest hope is to live till his demise. Meanwhile, my health is getting worse with each day and local oligarchic crappies are just making fun of my deteriorating condition.

Please help us with all your intellectual ability, fighting spirit and wide contacts," the letter reads.

Saakashvili is thanking Bill Browder for the supportive message he published towards him on Twitter on December 22, 2022, demanding the urgent medical evacuation of the ex-president to Europe, assessing the whole situation as 'monstrous'. He also added that if Saakashvili is not transferred to Europe, 'this can only be called murder'.

"This is monstrous. The former president of Georgia, Mikhail Saakashvili is a political prisoner in Georgia, dying in front of our eyes. He is the responsibility of the government of Georgia. He needs an urgent medical evacuation to Europe. If not, this can only be called murder," Browder wrote.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

25 high power generators sent from Georgia are in Kyiv



According to the information of the Ministry of Economy, 25 units of high-power generators bought by the Government of Georgia for Ukraine were brought to Kyiv. The press service of the ministry released the information.

“The generators are part of the aid that the Government of Georgia provides to support the Ukrainian people... The company “Georgian State Electric System”,

which is part of the system of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, purchased industrial generators for Ukraine with a total value of 1.5 million GEL, with the help of which hospitals, catering facilities and other critical purpose facilities will work in an emergency mode,” it is noted in the information.

Generators were sent from Georgia to Ukraine at the end of December. According to the information released by the Ministry of Economy of Georgia, the generators brought to Kyiv were distributed to different regions of Ukraine according to need.

President Zourabichvili is less likely to pardon Saakashvili, Shalva Papuashvili says

According to the chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Shalva Papuashvili, he does not expect that the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, will pardon the

third president, Mikheil Saakashvili.

According to the Speaker of the Parliament, he knows Zourabichvili’s position on this matter and does not see any



reason to change his position.

As Papuashvili mentioned, everyone who is now trying to free Mikheil Saakashvili from prison in any way is trying to hinder the execution of justice in Girgvliani’s case.

“I have no expectation of this [Saakashvili’s pardon by Zourabichvili],

because I know her position, which she has voiced many times, and I don’t see any reason to change that position. She herself was, as she noted, a participant of the protest that was related to the Girgvliani case, and today the enforcement of justice is going to Girgvliani’s case. Everyone who is now trying to free Mikheil Saakashvili from prison is trying to prevent justice in this case. As for [Saakashvili’s] diagnosis, neither I, nor the president, nor anyone can decide that. This is the competence of the doctors and the court to discuss this matter, and you know that the court is going to discuss it and there will be an appropriate decision,” Shalva Papuashvili said.

In addition, when asked by the journalist if the government intends to release the director of the Mtavari channel Nika Gvaramia and the third president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, Shalva Papuashvili responded by saying that “no one can interfere in the justice process.”

Opinion & Analysis

Georgia and the World in the year 2022

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

The year 2022 was probably the most difficult of the past two decades of the 21st century. The reason for this was Putin’s Russian attack on Ukraine, which began on February 24. After this war, the world, and especially Georgia, found itself in a new reality, and the nature of the new world order will depend on its final results.

We should hope that 2023 will turn out to be a turning point in the course of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Putin’s attack on Ukraine was considered by many as an irrational action, although it was the policy that Russia consistently pursued during Putin’s rule - it increased the degree of confrontation with the West and became aggressive in the ‘post-Soviet space’.

The manifestation of this policy was the attack on Ukraine in 2008, and the attack on Ukraine in 2014, and since these actions of his went virtually unpunished, he decided to finally

destroy Ukraine in 2022. This is not an ‘irrational’ action. This is the logic of the aggressor. This is how Hitler acted. The absorption of Austria and Czechoslovakia with impunity further encouraged his aggressive plans.

In the early 1990s, many were happy that the Soviet Union had collapsed ‘peacefully’ and compared it to the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia. Although Georgia did not feel this ‘peacefulness’ and blood was shed in the country, the particular case of Georgia did not change the perception of the general picture for the rest of the world.

But now it can be said that the inevitable “collapse” of the Soviet Union was simply postponed. The political elite of Russia and the Russian society did not give up on the empire, they did not consider the neighboring former Soviet republics as full-fledged sovereign states, sometimes they called them ‘near abroad’ and sometimes they called them ‘post-Soviet space’, they talked about restoring the ‘fraternal union’.

And in 2022, it turned out that Putin was not trying to restore the Soviet Union (the collapse of which he previously called a ‘geopolitical disaster’), but began to restore ‘historical Russia’, that is, the Russian

Empire. If Putin’s assumption about the rapid destruction of Ukraine was justified, the same fate awaited other ‘post-Soviet’ countries.

Fortunately, Putin’s imperial calculations did not work out, Ukraine has withstood the Russian attack, and Western support for it is growing. War makes everything black and white and leaves little room for maneuver. The war in Ukraine put the Georgian government in a difficult situation. On the one hand, they claim to be on Ukraine’s side and support it in the fight against Russia, as the Prime Minister noted, Georgia has supported Ukraine on practically all platforms since the beginning of the war, joining more than 400 resolutions and statements.

But at the same time, the government of the Georgian Dream has a tense relationship with the government of Ukraine, and many times critical statements have been made to the government of the country at war. Many critical statements were made towards the West as well, which creates certain doubts regarding the real position of the Georgian government.

As for the main event of 2022 for Georgia, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili directly mentioned that it is June 23,

2022 - giving Georgia a European perspective. That’s great, but Ukraine and Moldova have already received EU candidate status, and Georgia has been tasked with implementing a 12-point plan to get that status. Initially, the government of Georgia was given a deadline until the end of 2022 to fulfill these points, then this deadline was extended until the end of 2023. The European Union seems to believe that the Georgian authorities have not yet implemented the necessary changes and has given them another year to do so.

The Prime Minister of Georgia said that Georgia has already fulfilled the 12 points, and is ahead of Ukraine and Moldova in terms of reforms, but could not get the candidate status because it is not in a ‘state of war’ with Russia.

It must be said that the government’s main propaganda message in 2022 - “Do you want war” worked well and was convincing for a certain part of society. Probably everyone agrees that the main event for Georgia in foreign policy was the opening of the European perspective and failure to accept the EU membership candidacy. However, the explanation for this failure is different. According to the opposition, the Georgian Dream

is to blame for this, while the government blames it on the opposition and the ‘unfair’ decision of the European Union.

As for domestic politics, its character in 2022 was largely determined by Mikheil Saakashvili’s return to Georgia and his stay in prison. This event dramatically increased the degree of polarization in Georgian politics, and at the end of the year, it takes the form of a large-scale confrontation.

According to the opposition, Saakashvili is seriously ill and it is necessary to take him abroad for treatment. The Georgian Dream is not going to do this, and according to its leaders, there is no danger to Saakashvili’s life. European parliamentarians, presidents of Ukraine and Moldova, and ambassadors of European countries also demand Saakashvili be transferred abroad for treatment.

The pressure on the leaders of the Georgian Dream in this regard is clearly increasing. Now the final word in this matter belongs either to the judge, who can decide to transfer Saakashvili for treatment or to President Salome Zurabishvili, who can pardon Saakashvili. However, the question is whether they will dare to take such a step without the consent of the Georgian Dream (and Bidzina Ivanishvili).

Weather

Monday, January 9

Day Light Snow High: 1°C

Night Snow Showers Low: -3°C

Tuesday, January 10

Day Light Snow High: 0°C

Night Light Snow Low: -3°C

published by

The Messenger

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