

## Georgia bought Buk missile systems at a minimal price with the help of President Yushchenko, Mikheil Saakashvili says

By Liza Mchedlidze

The third president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, stated that Georgia bought BUK systems from Ukraine at a minimal price with the help of President Victor Yushchenko, adding that refusing to transfer Buk systems to Ukraine is a shame.

According to Saakashvili, the government of Georgia, in addition to Ukraine, also refused to hand over javelins to Ukraine, which he said is a 'betrayal' that will remain a heavy stain in the history of Georgian-Ukrainian relations.

"It is a shame to refuse to give Buk systems to Ukraine!"

With the help of President Yushchenko, we bought them at the minimum price at the time. When Yanukovich came to Ukraine, they even opened a case against Yushchenko for handing over the Buk to Georgia, and they did it at the behest of Russia. Moreover, the instructor - Colonel Mamchur, who taught us how to use the Buk, was killed by Russian agents in Rovno in 2017. Now the Americans have



**Mikheil Saakashvili** ✓

1.3M followers • 0 following

given Ukraine a large number of missiles for Buk. Most importantly, with this step, we refused not only the Ukrainians, but also the Americans, to lend their javelins to Ukraine.

This is a betrayal, and episodes

of such betrayal will remain a heavy stain in the history of Georgia-Ukraine relations," Mikheil Saakashvili wrote.

On January 9, Acting Ambassador of Ukraine Andrey Kasyanov said that Ukraine

asked Georgia to return the anti-aircraft missile systems Buk which was supplied by Ukraine during the 2008 war.

Kasyanov's article was criticized by Georgian Dream members. MP Gia Volsky said that

"billions have been paid" for this military equipment, and called Andriy Kasyanov "inadequate in his actions". The Ministry of Defense of Georgia released a statement saying that Buk missile systems were purchased.

## Bill Browder says behind Mikheil Saakashvili's 'torture' is Vladimir Putin

By Liza Mchedlidze



**Bill Browder** ✓

@Billbrowder

CEO Hermitage Capital, Head of Global Magnitsky Justice campaign, and Author of Red Notice & Freezing Order (April 2022)

The British financier and the author of the Magnitsky Act Bill Browder said in an interview with "TV Pirveli" that the ex-president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, is being tortured, and behind it is Vladimir Putin. According to him, if Saakashvili dies in prison, sanctions against several people will be inevitable.

As Browder noted, the more information there is about Mikheil Saakashvili being tortured, the more likely it is to create a temporary so-called 'Saakashvili's list', which will include people who participate in this action.

"I hope that the people who are making decisions now will stop doing this because if Saakashvili dies, they will have a hard life. It is obvious that Mikheil Saakashvili is being tortured. This can be seen from the photos, it didn't take a medical expert to see it. What's more interesting is who's responsible, as prosecutors are blocking his pleas to get medical treatment, prison doctors are probably involved in wrongdoing, and government officials are giving orders. The more information we have, the more likely we are to create a temporary,

CONTINUED FROM Page 2



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6941; Euro - 2.8921; GBP - 3.2779; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.8801; Swiss Franc - 2.9249

# Bill Browder says behind Mikheil Saakashvili's 'torture' is Vladimir Putin

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

as we call it, 'Saakashvili list' where we include people who do this. This is an unbelievably evil act.

This is a humanitarian issue and every day we hear from the Georgian government that they are stubbornly not releasing and sending him to Europe for treatment. In this way, Georgia destroys its reputation at the international level."

According to him, President of Russia Vladimir Putin is behind all this, and he wants to take revenge on Saakashvili.

"It is clear that Saakashvili stood up to Putin in 2008 when he invaded Georgia. He has a personal vendetta against Mikheil Saakashvili. There are people in the Georgian government who like Putin and now it is clear that the situation is not going the normal way. In my opinion, Vladimir Putin is behind all this. He is trying to take revenge on Mikheil Saakashvili, who treated him disrespectfully. This is also a message to Volodymyr Zelensky, 'this is what will happen to you in the future', so we must not allow this," Browder said.

Mikheil Saakashvili stood up to Putin in 2008 when he invaded Georgia. He carried out a personal vendetta against Mikheil Saakashvili. There are people in the Georgian government who like Putin. And now it is clear that the situation is not going in a normal way. In my opinion, Vladimir Putin is behind all this. He is trying to take revenge on Mikheil Saakashvili, who treated him disrespectfully. This is also a message to Vladimir Zelensky: "Here's what will happen to you in the future." Therefore, we should not allow this.

Mikheil Saakashvili addressed an open letter to Browder and asked him to help local Georgian groups in compiling a new Magnitsky list before the fatal outcome for him.

Browder responded to Saakashvili's letter and asked the ex-president to have his team prepare documents on who is obstructing medical treatment and who is responsible for his poisoning and torture. Browder promised Saakashvili that he would do everything to ensure that the governments of Western countries pay attention to Magnitsky's sanctions.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgia purchased Buk missile systems, Ministry of Defense writes



The Ministry of Defense issued a statement regarding Buk

systems and said that Georgia did not receive them from Ukraine free of charge.

"With the mentioned multi-million dollar purchase, the Buk system was received by the Ministry of Defense in 2007. It was carried out under a secret agree-

ment, which is why we are deprived of the opportunity to specify more details.

We would like to explain to the public that tens of millions of dollars were also paid by the Ministry of Defense in 2017 for the purchase of anti-tank systems "Javelin" from the USA," the statement reads.

According to them, Georgia firmly continues its humanitarian and political support to Ukraine, based on its available capabilities.

### Hodges: If Russia succeeds in Ukraine, Georgia will never take Abkhazia and Tskhinvali back

According to General Ben Hodges, the former commander of US ground forces in Europe, if Russia succeeds in Ukraine, Georgia will never regain Abkhazia and Tskhinvali.

Hodges said that Georgia should join the economic sanc-

tions against Russia and use all diplomatic means to say that Russia's actions are illegal.

"Georgia's economy is directly linked to security and stability in the Black Sea region, so if Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine is successful, if it has the opportunity to seize

international rules. If Russia succeeds in Ukraine, Georgia will never take back Abkhazia and Tskhinvali.

In my opinion, Georgia should be on the side of Ukraine, not with troops, but should engage in all economic sanctions and by all legal and diplomatic means



Crimea, it will completely shake the order based on the so-called

to say that what Russia is doing is illegal," Hodges said.

### A green comet will appear in the night sky for the first time in 50,000 years

BY ASHLEY STRICKLAND, CNN

A recently discovered comet will soon make an appearance in the night sky for the first time in 50,000 years.

Discovered on March 2, 2022

by astronomers using the Zwicky Transient Facility's wide-field survey camera at the Palomar Observatory in San Diego County, California, the comet will make its closest approach to the sun on January 12, according to NASA.

Named C/2022 E3 (ZTF), the

comet has an orbit around the sun that passes through the outer reaches of the solar system, which is why it's taken such a long journey — and long time — to swing by Earth again, according to The Planetary Society.

Skygazers in the Northern Hemisphere using telescopes

and binoculars should look low on the northeastern horizon just before midnight to spot it on January 12, according to EarthSky.

The icy celestial object, which has steadily brightened as it approaches the sun, will subsequently make its closest pass of Earth between February 1 and February 2, around 26 million miles (42 million kilometers) away, according to EarthSky — as the comet nears Earth, observers will be able to spot it near the bright star Polaris, also called the North Star, and it should be visible earlier in the evening.

The comet should be visible through binoculars in the morning sky for sky-watchers in the Northern Hemisphere during most of January and those in the Southern Hemisphere in early

February, according to NASA.

Depending on how bright it becomes in the coming weeks, C/2022 E3 (ZTF) may even become visible to the unaided eye in dark skies toward the end of January.

In this 30 second exposure, a meteor streaks across the sky during the annual Perseid meteor shower Friday, Aug. 12, 2016 in Spruce Knob, West Virginia. Photo Credit: (NASA/Bill Ingalls)

The comet can be distinguished from stars by its streaking tails of dust and energized particles, as well as the glowing green coma surrounding it. The coma is an envelope that forms around a comet as it passes close to the sun, causing its ice to sublimate, or turn directly to gas. This causes the comet to look fuzzy when observed through telescopes.



## Weather

Wednesday, January 11

Day Light Snow  
High: 0°C

Night Light Snow  
Low: -3°C

Thursday, January 12

Day Light Snow  
High: 0°C

Night Light Snow  
Low: -3°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.