

Sergey Lavrov praises ruling party for 'resisting Western pressure' amid sanctions against Russia

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Sergey Lavrov, spoke about Russia's relations with Georgia at the press conference summing up the year of 2022. He said that 'mechanisms' are necessary for the dialogue between Georgia, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, in which Russia also participates.

According to Lavrov, Russia is in favor of building relations between Georgia and the occupied territories.

Lavrov stated that Western countries and institutions are trying to 'hold hostage' the events taking place in Ukraine in the Geneva format, which, in his opinion, is "due to political grievances and whims."

"We are in favor of Abkhazia and South Ossetia building relations with Georgia. There are dialogue mechanisms in which we also participate.

Western participants in the so-called Geneva talks between Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia - these are the European Union, the United Nations, the OSCE and the USA - somehow try to make this format of dialogue a hostage to what is happening around Ukraine now. I think it's vulgar, unprofessional. This means that they perform specific tasks in a specific region, which is due to their political grievances and whims," Lavrov said.



Sergei Lavrov praised the Georgian government for 'resisting Western pressure' and having a 'courage' to be guided by their own interests.

"We see that Georgia, like virtually all other countries, is un-

der pressure from the West to join the sanctions against Russia. And the fact that a small country and its government have the courage to say that they will be guided by their own interests and the interests of their

own economy is respectable," Lavrov said.

He also expressed hope that direct air traffic between Russia and Georgia will soon be restored.

"I am glad that contact between our peoples is actively de-

veloping. Last year, as I was told, the gross domestic product in Georgia increased by 10%, thanks to tourism and trade relations with Russia. I hope that we will soon be able to resume direct air traffic," Lavrov said.



Opposition leaders respond to Sergey Lavrov's statement with heavy criticism towards Georgian Dream

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

After The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Lavrov praised the Georgian government for 'resisting Western pressure' at the press conference held on January 18, Georgian opposition leaders responded with heavy criticism towards the ruling party.

"This is a sad reality and a fact that confirms that the policy of "Georgian Dream" in relation to the actions of the Russian Federation, in relation to

Ukraine, in relation to sanctions, is anti-European, therefore, anti-national and it only serves to make the authorities of the Russian Federation satisfied.

According to Badri Japaridze, Sergey Lavrov confirmed his satisfaction with the Georgian authorities.

"We have always evaluated the actions of the current Georgian government as deviating from the politics of the entire civilized world, which serves one thing to deserve praise from the

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6695; Euro - 2.8983; GBP - 3.2952; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.8780; Swiss Franc - 2.9248

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Russian Federation, and what

we expected happened. The Russian government directly praised the Georgian Dream govern-

ment. This is a sad reality when the Russian Federation, which currently praises such autocratic regimes as in Syria, Belarus, now praises the Georgian authorities.

This is the assessment of the current government of Georgia, which is actually opposed to the policy implemented by the West and the civilized world towards the Russian Federation. This is a sad reality and a fact that proves that the policy of the Georgian Dream in relation to the actions of the Russian Federation, in relation to Ukraine, in relation to sanctions, is anti-European, therefore, anti-na-

tional, and it only serves to make the authorities of the Russian Federation satisfied, and this satisfaction today has been confirmed by Lavrov," said Badri Japaridze.

Giga Bokeria, the leader of European Georgia, said that "such statements should be alarming for all informed people."

According to him, Lavrov's statement is another symptom of how Ivanishvili's regime leaves Georgia vulnerable to Russian aggression.

"Putin's Russia, Putin, Lavrov are happy when Georgia is isolated from the West and is

vulnerable to its aggression.

This is what causes joy, and everyone who has been deceived by Ivanishvili's propaganda, as if this means that we survived the Russian attack, should remember the examples of what happened to Russia's allies, including open allies, what happened to our neighbor, what happened to Shevardnadze at the time when he gave in, what happened to Yanukovich, so this statement is another symptom of how Ivanishvili's regime leaves Georgia vulnerable to Russian aggression, just like it was in the 90s," Bokeria said.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili meets with President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic



Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili met the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic within the World Eco-

nom Forum.

Irakli Gharibashvili wrote on Twitter that during the meeting with the President of Serbia, support for the territorial integrity of the two countries was emphasized.

"I had the honor of meeting with the President of the Repub-

territorial integrity of our countries was emphasized.

At the meeting, we also discussed the existing dynamic cooperation between Georgia and the Republic of Serbia, economic relations and prospects for expanding cooperation," Gharibashvili wrote.

According to the government administration, the discussion at the meeting touched upon the issues of European integration.

EU Ambassador to Georgia expresses hope significant progress will be achieved on all 12 priorities

The Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski, told reporters after meetings with the chairmen of the parliamentary committees in the legislative body that he hopes significant progress will be achieved on all 12 priorities.

The diplomat expressed hope that the opinion of the European Commission regarding Georgia will be positive and the decision

of the 27 member states of the European Union will be adopted in favor of Georgia's European

election of the public defender. Regarding other priorities, I know that the work in the Parliament



aspirations at the end of this year.

"Work on 12 priorities continues. Progress is being made on many priorities. We are still waiting for some decisions on other priorities. For example, on the

has been stopped for the moment, because the Venice Commission was referred for its opinion. I know that when this opinion is ready, the work will resume," said the EU ambassador.

Building public support for climate action

UNDP and Sweden join hands with Euronews Georgia to inform people about climate change

TBILISI, 18 January 2023 – The vast majority of Georgians, over 94 percent, understand that climate change affects their country posing threat to people and the economy. However, research shows that barely 10 per-

cent are aware of specific policy commitments or requirements related to climate change, while one-third place responsibility for climate action on international organizations and civil society.

To better inform Georgians about climate change realities, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sweden and Euronews Georgia are launching 'Climate Magazines', a series of documentaries focused on key climate issues and their impacts on Georgia.

The series premiered last December with the first two episodes covering climate-induced avalanches and melting glaciers. It will continue through July 2023 covering a range of topics, including the societal and economic impacts of climate change, green lifestyle, low-emission development, climate poli-

cies, energy efficiency, climate change monitoring and reporting, and Georgia's climate commitments undertaken as part of international treaties, such as the Paris Agreement and the Association Agreement with the European Union. The series will showcase a variety of opinions presented by leading Georgian and international environmentalists, economists, climate activists and public officials.

"Climate awareness helps us understand and address the impacts of climate change by making individual and collective choices that are less harmful to the environment. UNDP welcomes our growing partnership with the Georgian media in building public awareness around this critical issue," said Nick Beresford, UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia.

"Sweden is Georgia's strong supporter in achieving its climate goals. A well-informed society is a vital step towards fulfilling a national pledge under the Paris Agreement and building a sustainable future," said Khatuna Zaldastanishvili, Programme Officer (Development Cooperation) at the Embassy of Sweden to Georgia.

"Climate Magazines educate people on climate change impacts on daily lives and the roles of the Government, civil society and individual citizens in addressing this global challenge. By launching a documentary series, we aim to study the issue and inform the public about its existing or expected outcomes. This is how we can build strong public support for climate action, increase accountability, and empower citizens with the knowledge, values

and attitudes needed to act as agents of change," said Marina Vashakmadze, Head of the Editorial Board Member at Euronews Georgia.

UNDP's and Sweden's support for Climate Magazines is part of the UNDP's broader Climate Promise initiative which promotes the timely and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement in 120 countries. In collaboration with 35 partners, including Sweden, Japan and other donors, Climate Promise covers key technical areas associated with climate action, including enhancing political will and ownership across society, strengthening targets and aligning with key national policies, assessing costs and investment opportunities, as well as setting up systems for monitoring and reporting on progress.

Weather

Thursday, January 19

Day ☀ Clear
High: 9°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: -1°C

Friday, January 20

Day ☀ Clear
High: 7°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: -1°C

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