

Volodymyr Zelenskyy Says Georgian Authorities are 'Slowly Killing' Mikheil Saakashvili

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, stated at a press conference held together with the President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen that the government of Georgia is 'slowly killing' the former president of the country, Mikheil Saakashvili.

Zelenskyy said that before the meeting with van der Bellen, he was given a photo depicting the current state of Mikheil Saakashvili.

"Once he was the president of Georgia. They [photos] were given to me by Davit Arakhamia. I would like you to see how he looks.

I believe that today the government of Georgia - what they are doing: they are killing him [Saakashvili]. You know they poisoned him and now they are slowly, sorry, killing him.

I would like the press to see what is happening: the public torture of a Ukrainian citizen. I will not discuss the issue - why the former president of Georgia was arrested, what are the consequences for Georgian politics and democracy. This is their internal issue. I am talking about the detention of Mikheil Saakashvili, a citizen of Ukraine, who is publicly tortured every day. And I think that they have a goal - to kill



him," said the President of Ukraine.

The third president of Georgia, who is in prison, participated in recent court proceedings remotely. He addressed the court in Georgian and Ukrainian languages and said that "the only thing he is asking for is to provide adequate means of treatment".

The judge asked him about his health condition, to which he replied that he is ill. He requested to apply in the Ukrainian language.

"I gave Georgia all my knowledge... now I gave my health... if necessary, I will give my life." "My condition has worsened," he said.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy ques-

tioned the Georgian government's political position and asked "who are they siding with" since Russian government treats their politicians "the same way":

"Are they neutral or towards Russia? Because Russia treats its politicians in the same way as today the leadership of Georgia treats not its politicians, but

the citizens of Ukraine. And so again: are they neutral? Or are they towards Russia? Or are they just against Ukraine, etc.?" Zelenskyy said.

Zelenskyy noted that Ukraine treats this as an internal issue with great respect, but does not understand such an attitude towards Saakashvili.

Rati Bregadze: Ministry of Justice Not Responsible for Prisoner's Self-Harm

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE



Minister of Justice Rati Bregadze stated that there is no 'objective' reason for transferring the third president Mikheil Saaakshvili to the intensive care unit.

"According to yesterday's statement of the Director of Vivamed, the patient does not have a swallowing disorder or any other interfering mechanism that may exist for food intake. The convict was offered parenteral nutrition, which he categorically refuses and states that he will accept such nutrition only if he is transferred to the intensive care unit.

The patient's physiological parameters remain within the norm, even if the mass index does not correspond to the treatment parameters in the intensive care unit, which ultimately means that there is no objective

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6552; Euro - 2.8912; GBP - 3.2720; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.7851; Swiss Franc - 2.8977

Rati Bregadze: Ministry of Justice Not Responsible for Prisoner's Self-Harm

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reason to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili to the intensive care unit," he said.

The Minister of Justice said that an 'active campaign' to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili to the intensive care unit has been underway for 2 days, which, according to him, serves the purpose of forming 'incorrect' public perceptions about the state of

health with artificially intensifying the emotional background, and intentionally presenting the fair actions of the state in an unfair manner.

"As part of the above-mentioned campaign, Mikheil Saakashvili's lawyer and members of his political team deliberately spread false information yesterday that the prisoner was transferred to the intensive care unit. In matters of treatment, the opinions of the medical staff

are reliable for us, and not baseless statements aimed at misleading the society of politically engaged persons," said Bregadze.

Minister Bregadze said that the Ministry of Justice and authorities are only responsible for 'proper' performance of their duty and called on everyone responsible for supporting 'self-harm' of imprisoned Saakashvili.

"We can only be responsible for the proper performance of our

duty, but we cannot be responsible in any way for the prisoner's self-harm, which is manifested in his selective intake of non-caloric food and regular non-fulfillment of medical prescriptions," he said.

Bregadze also called on 'responsible' groups to urge Mikheil Saakashvili to follow medical recommendations:

"Based on the best interests of the prisoner's health, we call on everyone to immediately stop

supporting the self-harm of the prisoner Mikheil Saakashvili, urge him to follow medical recommendations beneficial to his health, and stop politicizing the issue of execution of the sentence. Georgia is a legal state which, on the one hand, protects the rights of the prisoner, and at the same time, ensures the enforcement of the law, which in this case is due to the execution of the sentence," said Bregadze.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Mikheil Saakashvili: I was Tortured and Poisoned



At the court session held in the Tbilisi City Court on the case

of postponement of the sentence or release of the former president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili was involved in the process remotely from the Vivamed clinic. According to him, he is asking for adequate treatment and said

that he is being 'tortured'. While participating in the

trial, he also addressed his children and told them that 'everything will be fine'.

"I gave Georgia all my knowledge...now I gave my health and the only thing I ask for is to be given adequate treatment. If necessary, I will sacrifice my life, Aliska, Nikusha, don't worry about anything, in the end, everything will be fine," said Saakashvili.

He made the statement in the Ukrainian language and noted that he is confident in the victory of the Ukrainians.

"I am being tortured and I was poisoned. I am proud that everyone admires the Ukrainian people, I am proud that the president is Zelenskyy, I am grateful to his office. I am absolutely sure of our victory, but if I do not live to see victory, which is so near, my heart must be buried in Kyiv. It belongs to Ukraine," said Saakashvili.

Karasin on Resumption of Air Traffic Between Russia and Georgia: It Takes Two to Tango

Russia is ready to resume air

traffic with Georgia, but it requires the consent of the Georgian side. The Chairman of the

"Naturally, we discuss this, change our opinions, but there is such a saying: it takes two to



International Committee of the Council of the Russian Federation, the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Grigory Karasin stated this in a conversation with the RBK agency.

tango, and if one member of the duet has doubts, there is no need to use force. Such an opportunity exists, and what decision will be made does not depend only on us," said Karasin.

Georgia: New Head of EU Monitoring Mission appointed

Weather

Thursday, February 2

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 6°C

Night Showers
Low: 2°C

Friday, February 3

Day Cloudy
High: 8°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: -3°C

On 31 January, the Council of the European Union appointed Dimitrios Karabalis, a Greek diplomat, as the new Head of Mission for the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia).

Dimitrios Karabalis is currently Director for Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, South Caucasus, and Central Asia at the Greek Foreign Ministry. His mandate as Head of EUMM Georgia will run from 1 February until 14 December 2023.

Karabalis succeeds Ambassador Marek Szczygiel, a Polish



diplomat, as Head of Mission.

EUMM Georgia is an unarmed civilian monitoring mission consisting of over 200 monitors from the EU member states, deployed in Gori, Mtskheta and Zugdidi in October 2008, following the conflict between Georgia and Russia.

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