

## Mikheil Saakashvili To Continue Legal Battle After European Court of Human Rights Decision

By Liza Mchedlidze

The Minister of Justice, Rati Bregadze, made an announcement that the European Court of Human Rights had released its decision regarding the temporary measure applied for in the Mikheil Saakashvili case. According to Bregadze, the court did not grant the lawyers' request to transfer Saakashvili to another medical institution or country.

In response to Bregadze's statement, Saakashvili took to his Facebook page to state that his trial and "fight for life, Georgia, and Ukraine" continue in the Strasbourg court.

Saakashvili said that he is innocent and claimed to have been subjected to two years of torture based on false accusations. He stated in his Facebook post that his fight is for liberty, but he emphasized the need for Georgia to amplify its voice to secure his and other wrongly detained individuals' release.

"My only crime is that I created a real state under Russia's nose and firmly turned it towards the European Union and NATO. Now everything is in great danger, and that's why I'm in prison by order of Putin.

Georgians all over the world, and first of all in Georgia, should raise their voices louder about this injustice!

I have been fighting for the freedom of Georgia all my conscious life. I want Georgia to raise its voice even louder for the freedom of me, Nika, Lazarus, and all those who are unjustly imprisoned.



Mikheil Saakashvili

1.3M followers

Foreign countries alone cannot do our work. The West and the free world will only help us if they see our continued, relentless struggle. I am sure that Georgia will not rely solely on Ukraine," wrote Saakashvili.

Giuli Alasania, the mother of the third president, has reacted to the statement released by Georgia's Minister of Justice, Rati Bregvadze, saying "The decision we were waiting for has been made."

Alasania has disclosed that it was not feasible to permit European physicians to examine Mikheil Saakashvili, which

implies that the initial response may have been unfavorable.

Alasania expressed her disappointment with the situation, stating that "It is very sad, but it is a process." She also added that they are now moving to the second stage, where the lawsuit will be reviewed, and she hopes for a decision that many people, countries, and the population of Georgia are waiting for, as numerous surveys have indicated.

Alasania said that many countries support Saakashvili and want to save his life.

She also mentioned that the European parliamentarians, the Council of Europe, the Seimas of Lithuania, and the Seimas of Ukraine and Poland have all made unanimous decisions calling for Saakashvili's release for treatment. Alasania stated that Saakashvili is in prison for fabricated charges, but in reality, he is being punished for not surrendering his country to Putin.

Despite the situation, Alasania stated that she remains optimistic and believes that justice will prevail in the end.

## US State Department Warns Georgian Companies of Sanctions if Direct Flights with Russia Resume

By Liza Mchedlidze



Vedant Patel, the Deputy Spokesman of the US State Department, expressed concern that Georgian companies servicing Russian aircraft may face sanctions if direct flights between Russia and Georgia are resumed. He pointed out that many Western countries, including the US, prohibit Russian planes from entering their airspace due to import and export controls. Patel also stated that the Western community has distanced itself from the Russian regime and increasing engagement with Russia is not advisable at this time.

Patel suggested that the Georgian people would likely prioritize the withdrawal of Russian military forces from the 20% of Georgian territory under occupation over the resumption of direct flights or changes in the visa regime:

"Many Western countries, including the US, prohibit Russian aircraft from entering their airspace. If direct flights between Georgia and Russia were to resume, we would certainly be concerned that companies operating at Georgian airports might be at risk of sanctions if they service aircraft that are subject to import and export controls.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.5458; Euro - 2.7805; GBP - 3.1998; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.3428; Swiss Franc - 2.8470

# US State Department Warns Georgian Companies of Sanctions if Direct Flights with Russia Resume

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The entire Western community has dissociated itself from the Russian regime and now is not the time for any country to increase its engagement with Russia...

"The Georgian people would probably prefer Putin to withdraw the Russian military from the 20% of Georgian territory occupied by Russia than to see the restoration of direct flights or a change in the visa regime," Patel said.

While discussing the resumption of

direct flights from Russia, Mikheil Sarjveladze, the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, stated that Georgia has no intention of engaging with any sanctioned companies. As such, the committee will consider which companies and airlines are subject to sanctions.

Sarjveladze said that the recent statement from the US State Department was understandable and reflective of the current situation. He also mentioned that the Georgian government had made a statement prior to the State Department's

warning, which had already been taken into account. "What we say is fulfilled," he added.

The chairman also noted that Georgia's attitude towards EU integration remains unchanged.

Sarjveladze believes that the restoration of direct flights from Russia will not have any political impact on Georgia's European integration:

"I don't think there should be any political influence on European integration, and to tell you the truth, it wouldn't be

fair if anyone tried, including the opposition of our country, or its supporters politicians abroad. If they try to use this factor against the government of Georgia and the interests of Georgia, it will not be fair, it will not be honest, because everyone understands very well that this was a decision in 2019, then in 2023, which was made by the Russian Federation completely independently. Of course, responsibility for Georgia would not be justified in any way," said Sarjveladze.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgia Hosts Official Ceremony to Welcome Danish Foreign Affairs Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen



Georgia welcomed Lars Løkke Rasmussen, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark, and held an official ceremony to mark his arrival at Tbilisi Shota Rustaveli International Airport. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Teimuraz Janjalia, and Georgian Ambassador to Denmark, Nata Menabde, were in attendance, as per the statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia.

The Foreign Ministry has reported that during his visit, the leader of Denmark's Foreign Ministry will be received by Georgia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ilia Darchiashvili. The

meeting will take place in both one-on-one and extended formats.

"Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili will hold a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark.

It should be noted that Lars Løkke Rasmussen is accompa-

In addition, Lars Løkke Rasmussen will visit the occupation line and get acquainted with the current situation on the ground," Foreign Ministry's statement reads.

### Georgian Citizen Released from Unlawful Detention by Russian Occupying Forces

The State Security Service has reported that Giorgi Terashvili, who was unlawfully held by Russian occupying forces in the occupied area near the village of Mejvriskhevi in the Gori municipality on May 11, was released. The Service has also confirmed that Terashvili is currently in an area under the control of the central government.

"In order to immediately release Giorgi Terashvili, both the 'hotline' mechanism and all other tools at the disposal of the central government were actively used.

Responsibility for all destructive actions carried out in the occupied regions of Georgia and along the occupation line rests with the occupying power.

The central government, together with international partners, continues to work actively to release all citizens of Georgia who are illegally imprisoned in the occupied territories," the State Security Service wrote.

nied by a delegation of Danish businessmen, the meeting of the minister and the delegation will be held with the Vice Prime Minister of Georgia, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Levan Davitashvili.

Within the framework of the visit, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, together with his Georgian counterpart, Ilia Darchiashvili, will officially open the Danish Embassy in Georgia.



## Weather

Monday, May 15

Day Partly Cloudy High: 16°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 6°C

Tuesday, May 16

Day Clear High: 20°C

Night Clear Low: 9°C

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## 1st Mediterranean Film Festival

Tbilisi, 16-21.5.23

Amirani Hall

The 1st Mediterranean film festival opens its doors for the Georgian public on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, in Amirani cinema Hall. On the initiative of their accredited embassies to Tbilisi, six countries of this beautiful part of the world (France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain and Turkiye) will showcase, for 6 days, through their selected movies, stories of the unique Mediterranean lifestyle, culture, traditions and customs.

The festival will kick off on Tuesday May 16, 2023, at 19.00, with a collage of 6 short movies and last until Sunday May 21, with two movies per day during weekdays and 3 films per day during the weekend.

Admission is free for the public. Tickets are available on-a first come first serve base at the Amirani box office (36/1 Merab kostava street).

1st Mediterranean Film Festival

16 - 21.05

Opening featuring 6 short films from each country

16.05 19:00	WHISPER IF I FORGET	DELICIOUS	
17.05	WEDDING DALL BLURAY	CHAMPIONS	
18.05	WELCOME VENICE	THE TAILOR	
20.05	PAPICHA	UMBERTO D	WHEN TOMATOES MET WAGNER
21.05	IN THE FAMILY	THE BEASTS	ON THIS HAPPY NOTE

Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis at the Amirani box office

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