

## David O'Sullivan Highlights Georgian Government's Strong Commitment to Prevent Sanction Evasion

By Liza Mchedlidze

During a briefing, the EU Sanctions Envoy David O'Sullivan acknowledged that there are currently no sanctions imposed by Georgia. He expressed disappointment regarding this situation, considering Georgia's aspirations to join the European Union. However, O'Sullivan also recognized the specific circumstances that Georgia finds itself in, including its economic, geographic, and multilateral ties with Russia. He emphasized that the Georgian government is genuinely committed to ensuring that the country is not exploited as a means to circumvent sanctions.

"Georgia has not imposed sanctions. We may be disappointed by this, as this is a country that is aspiring to become a member of the European Union. We would like a high level of compatibility in foreign policy as well, although we also understand the very specific situation in which Georgia is economically, geographically and in terms of multilateral close contacts with Russia. We understand that they are not going to implement our sanctions," said David O'Sullivan.

According to David O'Sullivan, Georgia will continue its efforts to ensure that the country is not used to circumvent sanctions.

"Georgia is making all necessary efforts to ensure that it is not used as a platform to circumvent sanctions, and we believe that Georgia will continue these efforts. Also, I would like to point out that I am not commenting on individual sanc-



tions. This decision can be made jointly by the member states," said David O'Sullivan.

Furthermore, the EU's special representative for sanctions emphasized that they have no intention to intervene in the lawful trade relations between Georgia and Russia.

"This is a matter of Georgian business

and government. Our concerns include sanctions products and, in particular, products that may be used by the Russian armed forces and increase Russia's ability to kill innocent Ukrainians," O'Sullivan said.

O'Sullivan stated that the delegation visiting Georgia expressed satisfaction with the monitoring systems used by the

country to prevent banned products from reaching Russia.

"I will repeat what I said about the 38 components. We are very satisfied with the inspection and monitoring systems used by the Georgian authorities to ensure that these products do not end up in Russia from this country," said O'Sullivan.

## UK's Kumar Iyer Discusses Partnership with Georgia to Prevent Flow of Military Goods into Russia and Impact of Sanctions

By Liza Mchedlidze

Kumar Iyer, the Director General of UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office stated that one of the purposes of the visit is to explore avenues for sustaining the partnership in preventing the flow of military goods into Russia.

"The British Foreign Secretary visited here a few weeks ago, publicly acknowledging the friendship and partnership between the people of Great Britain and Georgia, which represents the essence of our visit. We sincerely appreciate the measures already implemented by the Georgian government to combat sanctions evasion, and this constituted a primary objective of our visit. Additionally, we are aware that the Russian government will persist and explore alternative methods. Therefore, one of the purposes of this visit is to discuss how to maintain our partnership in preventing the transportation of military goods into Russia," Iyer said.

According to him, a signifi-



cant portion of Russian weapons depends on Western components that are sanctioned.

"Ambassador O'Brien discussed the importance of sanc-

tions. I would like to add a few words about their actual impact on Russia. Firstly, they have an impact on the battlefield. We are aware that many Russian weap-

ons rely on Western components that are sanctioned by us. Through studying materials and reports from the front, we have learned that they are no longer

able to obtain these components from Western countries. Instead, they resort to using lower-quality components, resulting in reduced effectiveness of their weapons. We openly and publicly identify the components of great concern to us. If you are interested, you can find all the details published on our website. It is a specific set of 38 commodities that the UK, US, and EU are focusing on," Iyer explained.

He stated that the objective of the sanctions is to expedite the end of the war and prevent the loss of thousands of lives.

"Furthermore, I would like to emphasize the significant impact of our comprehensive sanctions package on the Russian economy. Previously, Russia consistently maintained budget surpluses. However, this year, there is a projected budget deficit of two percent, and based on the available data, it has already surpassed that forecast within the first four months. Additionally, we are aware that Russia's

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6220; Euro - 2.8727; GBP - 3.3326; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0596; Swiss Franc - 2.9280

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revenue from power train sales declined by 45 percent in the first quarter of this year. Furthermore, approximately 60 percent of the sovereign wealth fund and various Russian assets have been frozen. Ultimately, it is crucial to always remember and

remain steadfast in our purpose - to expedite the end of the war and prevent the loss of thousands of lives," said Iyer.

Iyer stated that the primary means of evading sanctions is through land borders. Consequently, their current focus is on exploring additional measures to enhance control and monitoring,

ensuring stricter oversight.

When asked about the potential risk of sanctions evasion associated with the resumption of direct flights with Russia, Kumar Iyer acknowledged that air travel would be an additional area requiring enhanced monitoring and control. He emphasized the importance of tightening

measures in this aspect as well.

"During the meetings, we discussed, for example, the possibility of sharing the best positive experiences that Britain, the United States of America, and the European Union have in this regard. We offered the arrival of experts and the opportunity for additional training to further

refine the control mechanisms. I want to emphasize once again what Ambassador O'Brien said: our goal is not to halt trade, especially when it comes to food products and medicine. Here, we are specifically looking at the type of goods used on the battlefield," Iyer stated.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Minister of Education and Science of Georgia Meets with European Commissioner to Discuss Education Projects and EU Membership

During his visit to Brussels, Minister of Education and Science of Georgia,



Giorgi Amilakhvari, held a meeting with European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Affairs, Oliver Varhelyi. The discussions revolved around ongoing and planned projects in various educational sectors.

Minister Amilakhvari expressed gratitude to the European Commissioner for the support extended to Georgia on its path

to European Union membership. He emphasized the historic significance of granting Georgia European Perspective, which solidifies the country's unwavering connection to Europe and opens avenues for EU integration.

The implementation of the European Commission's 12 priorities by Georgia and the importance of granting candidate status to the country by year-end were key topics of discussion. The meeting also touched upon the existing collaboration between Georgia and the European Union in education and science, including joint ongoing projects.

Commissioner Varhelyi provided detailed information on the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, highlighting the unique European Union project called the Eastern Partnership European School. He emphasized that the establishment of an educational institution in Georgia, aligned with international standards, is a significant step towards integration into European Union.

The parties further discussed upcoming innovations in higher education and explored avenues to expand cooperation within the Erasmus program. Minister Amilakhvari raised the issue of supporting initiatives for Georgian students and stressed the need for mechanisms to en-

sure equal conditions for Georgian youth compared to their European counterparts.

The meeting also addressed the development of Georgia's unified national strategy for education and science, with active involvement from the European Union. Minister Amilakhvari expressed hope for the European Commission's support in implementing the strategy's action plan. Commissioner Varhelyi commended the close cooperation between the two parties and pledged support for the implementation of joint educational projects, crucial for aligning the Georgian education and science system with EU legislation.

### Georgia's Minister of Internal Affairs, Vakhtang Gomelaury, Conducts Official Working Visit to Hungary

The Ministry of Internal Affairs press service has announced that Vakhtang Gomelaury, along with a delegation, held an official working visit to Hungary.

During the visit, the Minister of Internal Affairs and the delegation visited the Hungarian National Police, where they received comprehensive information about the specific operations of the police units.

Vakhtang Gomelaury also had the opportunity to visit the special tasks unit of the Hungarian National Police, which provides support to local police during special operations.

As part of the visit, Vakhtang



Gomelaury and the delegation also visited the Hungarian counter-terrorist center and gained detailed insights into its activities.

Furthermore, Vakhtang Gomelaury had a productive meeting with his Hungarian counterpart, Sándor Pintér, discussing the prospects of enhancing cooperation between their respective law enforcement agencies.

Following the one-on-one meeting, an official dinner was held in honor of the Georgian delegation, hosted by Sándor Pintér.

# Human Rights in Traditional Societies

EU and UNDP Foster Public Dialogue on Human Rights and Liberties

TBILISI. 27 June 2023 – The European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the Union of Tbilisi Museums – Ilia Chavchavadze Literary Memorial Museum, continue a compelling series of public discussions centred around the vital topics of human rights and liberties. The third meeting of this enlightening series, titled "Human Rights in Traditional Societies," proved to be an insightful and thought-

provoking event.

The discussion, held at the Ilia Chavchavadze Literary Memorial Museum on 27 June, brought together esteemed experts and scholars to shed light on the challenges and opportunities in upholding human rights within traditional societies.

The keynote speech was delivered by Giga Zedania, a highly regarded Georgian researcher and professor at Ilia State University, renowned for his extensive work in the field of human rights and societal norms. Mr. Zedania's thought-provoking insights captivated the audience, generating productive discussions on the importance of striking a balance between tradition

and fundamental human rights.

The event also featured a keynote address by Paul Dalton, Chief Advisor of the Danish Institute for Human Rights, whose vast expertise in the field enriched the dialogue.

The conversation engaged a diverse audience, including representatives of civil society, universities, and public agencies, as well as a group of schoolchildren from the towns of Akhalkalaki and Kvareli.

Through these engaging public discussions, the EU and UNDP create a platform for constructive dialogue, fostering understanding and raising awareness about the importance of human rights and liberties. The series aims to inspire young

people, communities, and policymakers to promote equal, just, and inclusive societies that respect and protect the rights of all individuals.

"We all have traditions and cultural values, and we celebrate these in all their diversity. But it's important to note that these can never be an excuse to diminish or deny any individual's human rights. We're free to choose the traditions and cultural values that matter to each of us. Our human rights are never up for negotiation," said Nick Beresford, UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia.

"The EU strives to encourage an open and inclusive dialogue that can pave the way for positive change and contribute to the

advancement of human rights for all", said Anne Birgitte Hansen, Human Rights, Justice, Donor Coordination Programme Manager at the European Union Delegation to Georgia.

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A series of public discussions "Human Rights Talks" is organized as part of Human Rights for All, a comprehensive EU-funded initiative that aims to empower Georgia in promoting a culture of human rights, bolstering human rights protection, and addressing lingering concerns. Two UN agencies, UNDP and OHCHR, are leading the implementation of the programme with over EUR2.5 million in EU funding.

## Weather

Thursday, June 29

Day T-storm

High: 29°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 18°C

Friday, June 30

Day Clear

High: 28°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 15°C

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*On the occasion of the Czech Armed Forces Day the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Georgia H. E. Petr Mikyska and the Military and Air Attache LTC Michal Sobarna held a reception on June 27.*









