

Shalva Papuashvili and Irakli Kobakhidze Criticize Kelly Degan's Statement on Russian Cruise Protest

By Liza Mchedlidze

Speaker of Parliament Shalva Papuashvili criticized US Ambassador Kelly Degan for her statement regarding the protest against the Russian cruise and labeled it as a "dangerous approach" for foreign diplomats to speak on behalf of the Georgian people.

Degan's remark about the protest in Batumi port raised concerns among the ruling party, as she stated, "Georgians should not be expected to welcome people from a country that occupies 20% of Georgia's territory, has an artificially created 'border', and detains Georgian citizens, sometimes keeping them in captivity for months."

Papuashvili deemed Degan's statement manipulative and expressed unease about foreign diplomats making declarations on behalf of the Georgian people. He emphasized that the Georgian people do not require foreign guardianship, as they elect their representatives through democratic elections, who, in turn, represent their interests.

He pointed out that ambassadors solely represent their own countries and protect the interests of their own people, not those of the Georgian people. He considers it a concerning trend when representatives of foreign countries speak on behalf of Georgians, implying that the Georgian people lack their own voice and representation.

"Ambassadors, when representing someone, solely represent the interests of their own country, and if they protect the interests of any people, it is only the inter-



ests of their own people. Therefore, safeguarding the interests of the Georgian people is not the responsibility of a foreign country's ambassador. Hence, it is a concerning trend when representatives speak on behalf of the Georgian people. This approach is patronizing towards the Georgian people, suggesting that they lack their

own representatives and need foreign assistance to express their opinions."

Papuashvili further argued that such assessments, including the one made by Degan, 'fuel' violence and hysteria. He attributed the recent 'attack' on Georgian police during the protest to the support of such assessments.

Chairman of the Georgian Dream party Irakli Kobakhidze also responded to Degan's statement, stating that speaking on behalf of the Georgian people is not the role of any ambassador, especially when characterizing the protests of a specific group as representing the entire Georgian population.

Irakli Gharibashvili Holds Meeting with Kazakh Prime Minister Alikhan Smailov

By Liza Mchedlidze

Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili met with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Alikhan Smailov.

At the working meeting, the parties reviewed the existing friendly and partnership relations between Georgia and the Republic of Kazakhstan. Among the discussed issues were the main directions of cooperation in

the fields of tourism, energy, transport, and trade.

Attention was drawn to the importance of the full-scale functioning of the Middle Corridor. The sides also discussed the positive dynamics of high-level visits during the recent period.

At the meeting, Gharibashvili focused on the development of the Middle Corridor.

"Mr. Prime Minister, during your visit to Tbilisi, we discussed a wide range of issues related to

our bilateral relations, as well as our ambitious plans and potential projects that may be of interest to both countries, both Kazakhstan and Georgia. We pay great attention to the development of the Middle Corridor and have a good plan for its implementation. Last year we also signed the corresponding guide, which I think is very important for us to develop this corridor.

Recently, I was on a visit to

China, where I had a good discussion with the Chinese government about our joint project, and there I mentioned our plan, the roadmap for the Middle Corridor. Therefore, I believe that our future cooperation will be as fruitful as it was before and as it is now. Once again, thank you very much for the meeting with me and my delegation," stated the Prime Minister.

At the working meeting, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasized that Kazakhstan and Georgia are connected by close and long-friendly ties and multilateral cooperation.

"We support mutual readiness for the development of Kazakhstan-Georgia cooperation based on trust and respect. Georgia is an important and reliable partner of Kazakhstan in the South Caucasus.

During my visit to Georgia, we agreed to increase the annual figures of bilateral trade, and it is very good that, according to the results of six months, our bilateral trade has increased by

30%. In order to further increase our trade turnover, I suggest that we use the possibilities of our intergovernmental commission.

We attach great importance to cooperation in the field of transit and transport. It is good that our partnership in the development of the Trans-Caspian international transport route is rapidly strengthening. In six months of this year, the volume of cargo transportation through the Middle Corridor increased by 77% and reached 1.3 million tons. The agreements reached during our last meeting gave additional impetus to the development of the route.

Special importance was given to the issues of digitization, ensuring stable transportation rates, and creating a single logistics operator along the corridor. We are interested in increasing the transport connectivity of the region and constantly improving the transit conditions. In these plans, we take into account the transit and transport potential of Georgia. In general, the government of Kazakhstan is ready to continue multilateral work to ensure the dynamic development of the Kazakh-Georgia partnership in all areas," said Smailov.



The News in Brief

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US State Department Vigilant as Georgia-China Strategic Alliance Unfolds, Calls for Transparency and Autonomy

and investment partners. However, they also highlighted China's history of unfulfilled promises made in exchange for diplomatic recognition, emphasizing the need for vigilant observation of the upcoming steps in the strategic alliance. "We do not oppose investments or in-



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In regards to the establishment of the strategic partnership between Georgia and China, the US State Department has announced its commitment to closely monitoring the future developments.

According to the US State Department, they do not oppose investments or involvement from any country, including China. Their primary concern lies in ensuring that these activities are conducted transparently, adhering to the rule of law, with sustainable funding, and respecting the autonomy of aid recipients to prevent any political reservations. The State Department acknowledges that every country holds the right to make sovereign decisions about their preferred business

involvement from any other country, including China. Our main concern is to ensure that these activities are conducted transparently and in accordance with the rule of law, with sustainable funding and respect for the autonomy of aid recipients, to avoid any political reservations. Ultimately, each country has the right to make its own sovereign decisions about whom they wish to engage in business or investment with. The People's Republic of China has been known to make promises in exchange for diplomatic recognition that ultimately go unfulfilled. Therefore, we will carefully continue to monitor the next steps," said the US State Department.

Irakli Kobakhidze Condemns Protests Against Cruise Ship Entry, Accuses UNM of Anti-State Agenda and Provocations

creasing tourist flows in the country. Kobakhidze pointed out the hypocrisy and double standards of some members of the United National Movement who previously emphasized the significance of Russian tourists and trade with Russia.



Georgian Dream Chairman Irakli Kobakhidze criticized the protests held against Astoria Grande Cruise ship's entry in Batumi, stating that it was driven by anti-state objectives and external motives.

Kobakhidze attributed the concerns about Georgia's economic progress, especially from the "United National Movement" and its foreign supporters, as the root of xenophobic campaigns and political provocations aimed at artificially de-

Regarding the cruise ship, Kobakhidze clarified that it is registered in Palau and sails under the Palau flag. He highlighted that the ship did not enter Abkhazia, and therefore, neither the ship nor its passengers violated the law on occupation.

According to Kobakhidze, the protests of the United National Movement and its backers are merely attempts to provoke disturbances in the country, aiming to harm Georgia's economic and political interests.

EU imposes new sanctions over information manipulation in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

The Council of the European Union decided on 28 July to impose restrictive measures against seven Russian individuals and five entities responsible for conducting a digital information manipulation campaign called 'RRN' (Recent Reliable News), aimed at distorting information and disseminating propaganda in support of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

This campaign, to which government bodies or bodies affiliated to the Russian State have participated, relies on fake web

pages usurping the identity of national media outlets and government websites, as well as fake accounts on social media. This coordinated and targeted information manipulation is part of a broader hybrid campaign by Russia against the EU

and the member states.

"We are targeting those carrying out information manipulation and interference as part of a broader hybrid campaign by Russia against the EU and the member states," said EU High Representative Josep Borrell.



"With these new listings we are sending a strong signal that we know how they manipulate our information space and how they operate."

In particular, the Council imposed restrictive measures on Inforos and three of its founders. Inforos is an online outlet which is closely linked to the Russian military intelligence (GRU), and is responsible for setting up more than 270 media proxy online outlets that disseminate propaganda in support of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Other listings concern: ANO Dialog, a Russian non-profit organisation created by the Moscow Department of Information and Technology and closely linked to the presidential administration, the Institute of the Russian Diaspora, and Social Design Agency and Structura

National Technologies, two Russian IT companies involved in the Russian-led digital disinformation campaign 'RRN' (Recent Reliable News), and prominent representatives of the above-mentioned entities.

Altogether, EU restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine now apply to about 1,800 individuals and entities. All those designated are subject to an asset freeze and EU citizens and companies are forbidden from making funds available to them. Natural persons are additionally subject to a travel ban, which prevents them from entering or transiting through EU territories.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Wednesday, August 2

Day ☀️ Clear High: 35°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 22°C

Thursday, August 3

Day ☀️ Clear High: 35°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 21°C

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