

By Liza Mchedlidze

## Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili Expresses Concern Over Declining EU Sentiment in Georgia, Urges EU to Fix It

Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili expressed concern about the declining positive sentiment towards the European Union among the population of Georgia. He noted that this decline has been significant, amounting to an 11 percent drop in the past year. Papuashvili believes that the decrease in positive sentiment towards the EU is a reflection of the frustration felt by Georgian society. He attributes this frustration to the fact that Ukraine and Moldova were granted candidate status within the European Union while Georgia was not similarly recognized.

The Parliament Speaker criticized this 'wrong' decision, stating that it was not based on the individual merits of each country and that the credibility and trustworthiness of the European Union are now in question due to this decision.

He urged the EU to take corrective actions and demonstrate to the Georgian people that it remains committed and reliable in supporting their aspirations for closer European integration.

"One of the significant findings of this study is the declining positive sentiment towards the European Union among Georgia's population, which has dropped by 11 percent in the past year. I believe this decline reflects the frustration experienced by our society with the EU. In June of last year, the European Union made a political decision regarding three countries: Ukraine, which was granted candidate status despite being a country at war; Moldova, a country bordering a conflict zone; and Georgia

This decision was not based on the individual merits of each country; as such, it was considered a wrong political decision. Unfortunately, it led to disappointment within Georgian society and contributed to an 11 percent decrease in positive attitudes towards the European Union, which is a concerning trend. We



hope the EU will take corrective actions. The credibility and trustworthiness of the European Union is currently at stake

due to this decision. The EU needs to demonstrate to the Georgian people that it remains committed and reliable in sup-

porting their European aspirations," Shalva Papuashvili stated.

## Partskhaladze Responds to US State Department Sanctions, Says It's an Orchestrated Discrediting Campaign

By Liza Mchedlidze

Sanctions have been imposed by the United States against over 150 individuals and legal entities in response to Russia's unlawful conflict in Ukraine. Notably, Otar Partskhaladze, the former chief prosecutor of Georgia, is among those subjected to these sanctions. Following a statement issued by the US State Department concerning Otar Partskhaladze, the State Security Service of Georgia has initiated an inquiry into the case, and Partskhaladze has released a written response to the allegations against him.

According to Partskhaladze, "The sanctions imposed against him are inspired by specific people and represent the culmination of this ten-year discrediting campaign." He further pointed out that despite not having held a state position in almost a decade, the United National Movement and 'propagandist media' have continuously tarnished his reputation and deliberately sought to discredit him throughout this entire period.

"That is why I believe that the sanctions imposed against me are inspired by specific people and represent the culmination of this ten-year discrediting campaign. On the other hand, the reactions of individuals with specific political interests at the local level have convinced me that they are actively trying to link my name with state institutions or authorities, which, I emphasize once again, has no basis. I am confident that the Georgian public best understands the motives behind these efforts.

Anyone who has read the statement from the US State Department clearly saw that the decision was made solely based on assumptions, as the authors themselves confirm in the published text:

"FSB officer Onishchenko allegedly assisted his accomplice Partskhaladze in obtaining a Russian passport and potentially Russian citizenship."

'According to the spread information, Partskhaladze received personal benefits as a result of



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6333; Euro - 2.8076; GBP - 3.2695; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7321; Swiss Franc - 2.9396

# Partskhaladze Responds to US State Department Sanctions, Says It's an Orchestrated Discrediting Campaign

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the connection with the FSB.' "To be certain of this, only these two excerpts quoted verbatim from the text are sufficient. That's why, naturally, I will demand from the State Department, as well as from the authors of the orchestrated campaign against me and the individuals involved in it, at least one piece of evidence or one fact that would even minimally support the false

accusations presented in the statement. However, I can assure the public that such evidence simply does not exist," Partskhaladze's statement reads. He concluded by stating that he would utilize all the legal and legitimate avenues available to him to demonstrate that the decision to impose 'unfair' sanctions against him is not founded on facts but rather on a 'slandorous' campaign orchestrated by entities with specific interests.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Georgian Defense Minister Juansher Burchuladze Explores Hungary's Defense Industry Developments



The press service of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia is spreading the news that the Minister of Defense of Georgia is continuing his visit to Budapest. During his visit, Juansher Burchuladze received updates on the local defense industry from his Hungarian colleague and gained insights into Hungarian military capabilities.

According to a press release, the Minister of Defense of Georgia visited the Hungarian unmanned aerial vehicle company Rotors and Cams, where he familiarized himself with the extensive array of industrial, law enforcement, and military prod-

ucts designed by the company for the local market. Additionally, a static display of drone technology was specially organized for the Georgian delegation.

The Minister of Defense of Georgia was hosted by his colleague Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky. Following an of-

ficial welcoming ceremony at the Ministry of Defense of Hungary, the two parties engaged in discussions concerning cooperation in the field of defense and explored prospects for future bilateral relations during their meeting.

The Minister of Defense of Hungary emphasized Hungary's support for Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration. He further mentioned that next year, when Hungary takes over the presidency of the Council of the European Union, it will have an even greater opportunity to support Georgia.

ment is initiating an investigation into Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze, and former Prosecutor General Otar Partskhaladze in response to the sanctions imposed on Partskhaladze by the US State Department.

One of the leaders of UNM, Giorgi Botkveli, referred to leaders of the ruling Georgian Dream party as 'criminals'.

"We witnessed concrete facts provided by investigative journalists yesterday on Nodar Meladze's Saturday program. It confirmed the nature of the criminal activities of Irakli Gharibashvili, Kakhi Kaladze, and the type of business activities in which Partskhaladze is involved.

Partskhaladze, who is now a Russian citizen while unlawfully retaining his Georgian citizenship, is implicated due to the decision of the chief spy, Bidzina Ivanishvili."

The National Movement is demanding that the prosecutor's office initiate an investigation

into Otar Partskhaladze, Irakli Gharibashvili, and Kakhi Kaladze in connection with these facts. - "who, with the money of the Georgian people, organize their own comfort against the interests of the Georgian people in Georgia and engage in criminal activities," Botkveli stated.



### Investigation Initiated by United National Movement into Prime Minister, Tbilisi Mayor, and Former Prosecutor General

The United National Move-

## Weather

Monday, September 18

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 24°C

Night Light Rain  
Low: 14°C

Tuesday, September 19

Day Light Rain  
High: 21°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 14°C

published by

**The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia  
Founded by Prof.

**Zaza Gachechiladze**  
**Tamar Gachechiladze**  
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000  
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge  
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

**Nino Metreveli**  
Commercial Director

**Mariam Mchedlidze**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Khatuna Gogichaishvili**  
Layout Designer, Photographer

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**XV სანერგობის ფესტივალი**  
**XV INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**

**აგვისტო 22, ბორჯომი**  
Hotel BORJOMI LIKANI 19:00

**აგვისტო 24-25, ბათუმი**  
Ilia Chavchavadze Professional State DRAMA THEATER

**სექტემბერი 22-23-24, თბილისი**  
Tbilisi State CONSERVATOIRE, GRAND HALL 20:00

Festival Base Orchestra  
**GEORGIAN VIRTUOSI**  
**GEORGIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA**

**TKT.GE**

# UNFPA launches a brand new board game "Person" to tackle gender stereotypes

Have you ever tried to put yourself in someone else's shoes and look at things through their lenses? A brand new board game "Person" offers this unique opportunity to passionate gender equality supporters.

The board game was launched upon the initiative of the United Nations Popu-

lation Fund (UNFPA), in cooperation with Palitra L publishing and BG Era Games, and support of the European Union on September 14.

By launching the game, UNFPA Georgia Country Office and its partners aim to put yet another brick to the wall aimed to building the real gender equal-

ity in Georgia.

"Person" is not only a board game, but an innovative way enabling the players to face, analyze and debunk harmful practices and gender stereotypes preventing people from being who they really are.

It offers the players a unique opportunity to understand what others may feel

in their everyday life and look at things beyond the borders.

The board game "Person" was prepared within the framework of the "Addressing Gender-Biased Sex Selection and Related Harmful Practices in the South Caucasus" programme, funded by the European Union, implemented by UNFPA.



