

## Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili Addresses UN General Assembly's SDG Summit

By Liza Mchedlidze

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili delivered a speech at the United Nations General Assembly's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit, emphasizing the country's dedication to the 2030 Agenda. He highlighted the significant actions taken by the Georgian Government to strengthen its public service capabilities in order to tackle prevailing challenges.

Prime Minister Garibashvili expressed pride in Georgia's contributions to the SDGs and highlighted the multitude of initiatives and partnerships that Georgia has undertaken to promote sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

Garibashvili also emphasized the Government's commitment to building coordination capacities and transparency mechanisms. As part of this effort, Georgia has established a monitoring system for real-time updates on SDG targets within the UN Sustainable Goals national agenda.

According to the Prime Minister, the country has become a global hub for business and finance. In 2021 and 2022, Georgia achieved double-digit economic growth, maintaining a high growth rate of 7.2% in the first seven months of 2023.

"Our Government has taken robust actions to advance the 2030 Agenda and build its public service capacities to address existing challenges, which is reflected in multiple global



rankings: I am proud that Georgia's contributions to SDGs have made us a leader in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Through various initiatives and partnerships, Georgia is fostering sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

In 2016, Georgia highlighted the inclusion of SDGs into its strategic documents and objectives in the first Voluntary National Review. This was followed by the second Review in 2020, which detailed SDG progress.

Georgia has identified all 17 SDGs and 93 targets as national

priorities and has defined 200 indicators for tracking its progress. We also established the SDGs National Council to foster constructive, interpersonal dialogue.

Georgia is turning words into actions by aligning our national policies with SDGs. Our policy planning now integrates SDGs into our national processes so that new strategic documents align with our commitments.

My Government has further devised a Localization Plan in 2021 to integrate SDGs at the grassroots level. Currently, 32 out of 64 municipalities in Geor-

gia are contributing to SDGs through the plan. By 2025, every municipality will sign on.

This localized pursuit aligns with our "Vision 2030 – Development Strategy of Georgia," which outlines key priorities for development in compliance with the UN Sustainable Development Agenda.

Our Government additionally seeks to build coordination capacities and transparency mechanisms. To this end, we have created a monitoring system for the UN Sustainable Goals national agenda for real-time updates on SDG targets.

Our significant advances position Georgia as a global hub for business and finance. Georgia is one of the world's fastest-growing economies, with double-digit economic growth recorded in 2021 and 2022. Growth remains high at 7.2% in January-July of 2023.

Georgia's position as a responsible global actor advancing the 2030 Agenda is reflected in its numerous policies aimed at reducing poverty, promoting social inclusion, improving education access, developing renewable energy, and utilizing eco-friendly practices," Gharibashvili said.

## National Bank of Georgia Freezes Otar Partskhaladze's Accounts Amid US Sanctions

By Liza Mchedlidze

Otar Partskhaladze, the former chief prosecutor of Georgia, was restricted by the National Bank of Georgia from accessing assets and executing financial transactions due to US sanctions.

"As is known, since February 26, 2022, in accordance with the instructions of the National Bank of Georgia, the country's financial institutions have been fully complying with the financial sanctions imposed by the USA, the European Union, and Great Britain against the Russian Federation..."

In line with the aforementioned instructions and rules, Georgia's financial sector has been directed, among other

things, to adhere to the requirements established by the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) regarding individuals listed on the Sanctioned Persons List (SDN list). This involves restricting sanctioned individuals' access to assets and limiting their ability to carry out various financial transactions. Sanctioned persons are restricted in both fund management and the execution of all types of financial operations.

We would like to remind you that the Georgian financial sector operates in full compliance with the requirements outlined by the sanctions regimes," stated the National Bank of Georgia.

Chairman of Georgian Dream,



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6412; Euro - 2.8271; GBP - 3.2740; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7467; Swiss Franc - 2.9474

# National Bank of Georgia Freezes Otar Partskhaladze's Accounts Amid US Sanctions

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Irakli Kobakhidze, responded to the National Bank of Georgia's decision to restrict assets and

transfers for Otar Partskhaladze, stating that it contradicts the presumption of innocence.

"When certain decisions are made, and when they may con-

flict with each other, I'm not sure if there may be an internal regulation of the National Bank, but priority is always given to the Constitution of Georgia. If the

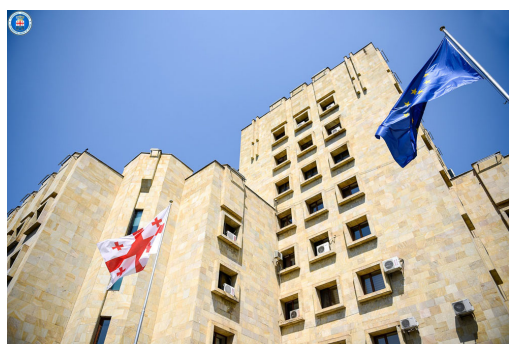
National Bank has indeed made such a decision, it directly contradicts the Constitution of Georgia, particularly one of its fundamental principles – the pre-

sumption of innocence concerning a Georgian citizen. You know, the constitution provides special protection for Georgian citizens," Kobakhidze said.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Prosecutor's Office of Georgia: Otar Partskhaladze Has No Ties to Office Since 2013



The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia has issued a statement regarding Otar Partskhaladze, stating that since leaving office in 2013, Partskhaladze has no connection to the prosecutor's office.

According to the agency, a "disinformation campaign has been renewed" against the prosecutor's office, with the purpose of deliberately discrediting the office, misleading the public, and hindering its normal activities.

"As for Otar Partskhaladze, he left the position of Chief Prosecutor of Georgia in 2013 and has had no involvement with the activities of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia since then. Furthermore, he had no connection to the criminal cases against Mikheil Saakashvili. The primary objective of this slanderous campaign is to falsely link Otar Partskhaladze to this case, which can be easily researched," stated the Prosecutor's Office.

### Georgia and the Republic of Peru Sign Agreement on Visa-Free Travel

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an agreement on visa-free travel between Georgia and the Republic of Peru was signed on September 18, and the agency has issued a statement about it.

The statement reads, "On September 18, 2023, an agreement on visa-free travel was signed between Georgia and the Republic of Peru. The signing ceremony took place during the 78th session of the United Nations

General Assembly in New York and was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iliia Darchiashvili, and the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru, Anna Cecilia Gervas."

The agency reports that during the meeting held in New York, both parties discussed various aspects of their bilateral and multilateral agendas, as well as future prospects. They highlighted the significance of high-level visits and the deepening of cooperation across political, trade, economic, cultural, and educational domains in their joint statement.

It is also noted in the field of foreign affairs that during the meeting with his counterpart, Iliia Darchiashvili emphasized



the importance of cooperation with Latin American countries for Georgia. According to the agency's statement, both parties

agreed to actively foster bilateral cooperation across various sectors.

## Weather

Wednesday, September 20

Day Partly Cloudy High: 22°C

Night Mostly Cloudy Low: 15°C

Thursday, September 21

Day Few Showers High: 23°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 16°C

**XV საერთაშორისო ფესტივალი**  
XV INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

**დაპინს სერენადები**  
NIGHT SERENADES

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

**აგუსტ 24-25, ბათუმი**  
Iliia 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

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# BBC's World Questions Shines Spotlight on Georgia's Concerns in Tbilisi

By MESSENGER STAFF

The British public service broadcaster BBC hosted a panel discussion at the Free Theatre in Tbilisi, featuring participation from Georgian Dream MP Mariam Lashkhi and United National Movement's Tina Bokuchava, Professor of Political Science at Tbilisi State University Kornely Kakachia, and Georgian philosopher Levan Ghambashidze as part of the program "World Questions" on Sep-

tember 12. During the event, they addressed inquiries from the audience, covering topics ranging from relations with Russia to social and economic issues.

The debate moderator, Anu Anand, emphasized the importance of conducting public debates, particularly in light of the current political climate in the region. She highlighted that Georgia is grappling with challenges that resonate with many nations, including questions about safeguarding security, navigating

international relations, and determining its position in the shifting landscape of global alliances.

Helen Towner, the producer of World Questions, explained that the decision to record the program in Georgia was driven by the country's intriguing moment, marked by its anticipation of a response regarding European Union membership. The recording of the Tbilisi debate will be made accessible to BBC radio listeners across the globe.

Towner underscored the significance of World Questions, highlighting its distinctiveness in uniting both academic and political figures in a live setting, engaging directly with the inquiring audience. With a staggering weekly listenership of over 380 million, the program provides a global platform for understanding the perspectives of the Georgian public, shedding light on their concerns and facilitating dialogues with politicians.

*See photo coverage from the event*

