

## State Security Service Accuses USAID of Funding Training on the 'Revolutionary Scenario'

By Liza Mchedlidze

The State Security Service of Georgia accused the trainers invited as part of the USAID program of being connected to the training of NGOs and civil activists for "destructive actions planned in October-December."

According to the agency, the training participants have been instructed on how to take action against specific target groups, including the government, the Orthodox Church, the State Security Service, and other agencies

The State Security Service asserted that the trainers, who are affiliated with CANVAS are Serbian citizens.

"These individuals are associated with the 2003 revolutionary events in Georgia and have been linked to similar processes in Serbia, Ukraine, and other countries in various years. They actively taught methods for organizing protests and strategies for carrying out violent actions. They serve as key figures in CANVAS, with Sinisa Sikman and Slobodan Djinovic also being former members of 'Otpor,' which served as an equivalent to the Georgian organization 'Kmara' in Serbia.

The declared reason for the arrival of the Serbian citizens in Georgia was to conduct training sessions for cultural groups on the subject of 'strategic non-violent fight.' However, the investigation uncovered that their purpose for being in Georgia extended beyond this initial claim. They sought to establish communication and provide training to young people and influential non-governmental organizations. These individuals were intended to form the core of planned de-



structive and illegal actions in Georgia scheduled for October to December of the current year," says the State Security Service.

According to the agency, training took place on September 26 and the participants were taught "to create pickets and roadblocks, to destroy, and generally to overthrow the government," during which they provided a number of dramatic examples of revolutionary processes in Serbia for comparative analysis.

Based on the State Security Service's statement, "the conference held on September 26-29 with USAID funding was organized by CANVAS and the East-West Management Institute. During the four-day training, the representatives of the mentioned organizations and the so-called Civil activists were present."

Lisa Kovack, Acting Director of USAID's Office of Democracy, Rights, and Governance, responded to State Security Service on September 30, stating

that the 'Canvas' training was primarily focused on assisting representatives of the arts and cultural sector in effectively preserving the sector's independence.

"CANVAS is one of the civil society organizations that we support. The training's primary focus was to assist representatives of the arts and culture sector in effectively safeguarding the sector's independence. This training effectively addresses the issues that Georgians are interested in," Kovack stated.

## CANVAS Georgia Assesses State Security Service's Accusations as 'Pressure' and Appeals to International Organizations

By Liza Mchedlidze

CANVAS Georgia responded to the statement from the State Security Service of Georgia, which reads that the organization has observed pressure on the director of the organization and on activists associated with it.

In their statement, Canvas-Georgia is urging international human rights organizations and individuals who are supportive of democracy and human rights protection in Georgia to prioritize this issue when they engage with various private and public institutions operating within Georgia. The organization believes that such support will be of significant assistance to activists who are dedicated to enhancing democracy in Georgia.

According to the organization, threats against the director of Canvas-Georgia, Giorgi Meladze, began even after the March protests. The campaign



### CANVAS GEORGIA

კანვას საქართველო



Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6811; Euro - 2.8259; GBP - 3.2602; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.7215; Swiss Franc - 2.9347

# CANVAS Georgia Assesses State Security Service's Accusations as 'Pressure' and Appeals to International Organizations

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of threats continued on September 18 when the State Security Service announced that the organization was allegedly involved in an organized conspiracy aimed at overthrowing

the current government.

"Ten days after the statement was published, on September 29, the State Security Service summoned Slobodan Dinovic and Sinisa Sikman, members of 'Canvas' who had arrived in Tbilisi, as well as Jelena Tancic,

an employee of 'Canvas's' Belgrade office, for interrogation. After the interrogation, they left Georgia within a few hours without providing an official comment because the investigation was classified as a state secret, and participants were obliged to

not disclose any information.

Canvas-Georgia assesses the mentioned cases as pressure on the head of the organization, on the activists who collaborate with the organization, receive education, and disseminate knowledge about strategic non-

violent campaigns."

"We call on international human rights organizations, supporters interested in the protection of democracy and human rights in Georgia, to pay attention to the mentioned fact and to consider this topic as one of the priorities when interacting with relevant private and public structures and institutions operating in Georgia. We believe that such support will significantly help activists interested in strengthening democracy in Georgia," the statement reads.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### US Embassy in Georgia Refutes State Security Service's Allegations Against USAID, Emphasizes Commitment to Georgian People



The US Embassy in Georgia addressed allegations made by the State Security Service against USAID. The embassy firmly denied these accusations, describing them as false and not representative of the true objectives of their assistance in Georgia.

gia. The embassy emphasized its long history of supporting the Georgian people since 1992 and stressed the transparency of its assistance efforts.

"Allegations made publicly today against one of our assistance projects are false and fundamentally mischaracterize the goals of our assistance to Georgia.

USAID has been supporting the Georgian people since 1992. As always, our assistance is transparent, and we welcome any opportunities to discuss any concerns the government may have.

The right of citizens to freely voice their concerns and aspira-

tions is foundational to any democracy and is a value shared by both of our countries. USAID has collaborated with CANVAS for more than two years to help people to speak up for the issues that matter to their families and communities. We have partnered with CANVAS to deliver training to mothers advocating for better cancer treatments for children, and to people advocating for the rights of elderly citizens in their communities.

Despite these unwarranted attacks, we will continue to support Georgian organizations who support people to secure the future they determine and deserve and to secure their fundamental rights guaranteed by the Georgian constitution," reads the US Embassy's statement.

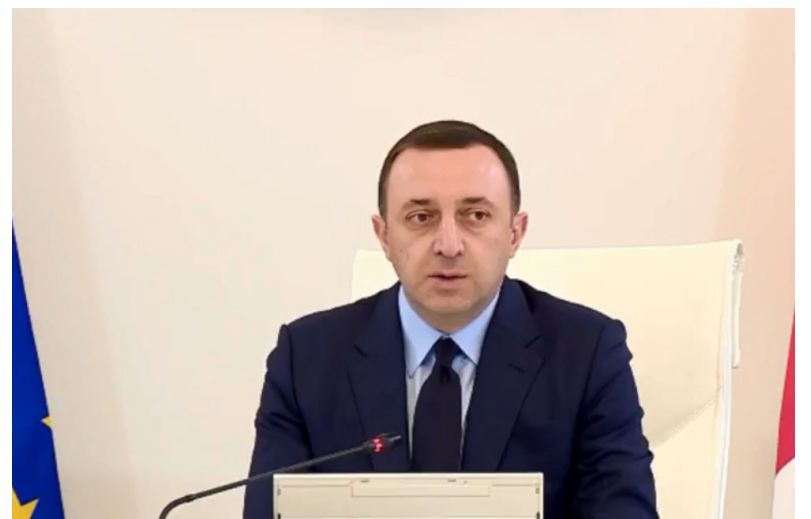
### Prime Minister Addresses State Security Service's Accusations Against USAID and Canvas-Georgia

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili addressed the State Security Service's accusations against USAID and Canvas-Georgia, stating that he "will

not allow destructive forces to harm the country again." According to him, this occurred for the first time in 2003 with the Rose Revolution.

"It is concerning that citizens

appears that these individuals have not learned anything new and are incapable of adapting to the present. Despite so many years having passed, they remain stuck in the past, seemingly



from a foreign state come to our country and conduct training sessions here, all under the guise of providing education to individuals in the field of art and culture. Meanwhile, they are promoting calls and training on how to stage a revolution and overthrow the government through violent means. It ap-

thinking it's still 2003. However, it's now 2023, and we have been in power for over 11 years. Rest assured, we will not allow any disruptions or destabilization in our country caused by these non-existent, destructive, and radical forces. I want to emphasize that today, our state is strong," stated the Prime Minister.

## EBRD financing in Ukraine reaches Euro1.2 billion in 2023 as Bank President visits Kyiv

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has provided Euro1.2 bil-

lion of financing in Ukraine so far in 2023, the Bank's president Odile Renaud-Basso told Presi-

dent Volodymyr Zelenskyy during her third wartime visit to Kyiv.

"Passing this milestone reaffirms the EBRD's unwavering commitment to supporting your country," Renaud-Basso told Zelenskyy, his government and Ukraine's business community. "Our partnership is also a testament to the resilience and potential of Ukraine's economy, its financial and business sectors, and the courage of its entrepreneurs and people."

The EBRD, Ukraine's biggest institutional investor, has committed to deploy at least Euro3 billion of financing in Ukraine's real economy in 2022-23 and to play a key role in future recon-

struction. According to the Bank, its primary focus is on maintaining energy and food security, restoring infrastructure, providing trade finance and supporting the private sector.

In 2022, the Bank deployed Euro1.7 billion in Ukraine – more than one-tenth of the Bank's total investments across its regions – and mobilised a further Euro200 million from partner financial institutions.

With 2023 financing reaching the Euro1.2 billion mark, the Bank is on track to meet its Euro3 billion commitment very shortly, says a press release by EBRD.

(euneighbourseast.eu)



## Weather

Tuesday, October 3

Day Light Rain  
High: 20°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 15°C

Wednesday, October 4

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 21°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 13°C

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*On the celebration of the National Day of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Ambassador of Brazil in Georgia, H.E. Mr. Oswaldo Biato Júnior held the reception and participated in the opening of the Batumi Black Sea Music and Art Festival with the Photo Exhibition “The Amazon and Traditional Cultures”. The Exhibition will be open until 8 October, where you can see Brazil’s Amazon region Indian tribes’ artefacts and the French photographer and anthropologist Serge Guiraud’s photo works, which will enable you to get closer to Brazilian culture.*









