

Prime Minister Gharibashvili Condemns President Zourabichvili’s Statement on Chinese President Xi Jinping

By Liza Mchedlidze

According to the Georgian government administration, Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili met with the Chinese Ambassador to Georgia, Zhou Qian, and expressed regret regarding President Zourabichvili’s recent statement about Chinese President Xi Jinping.

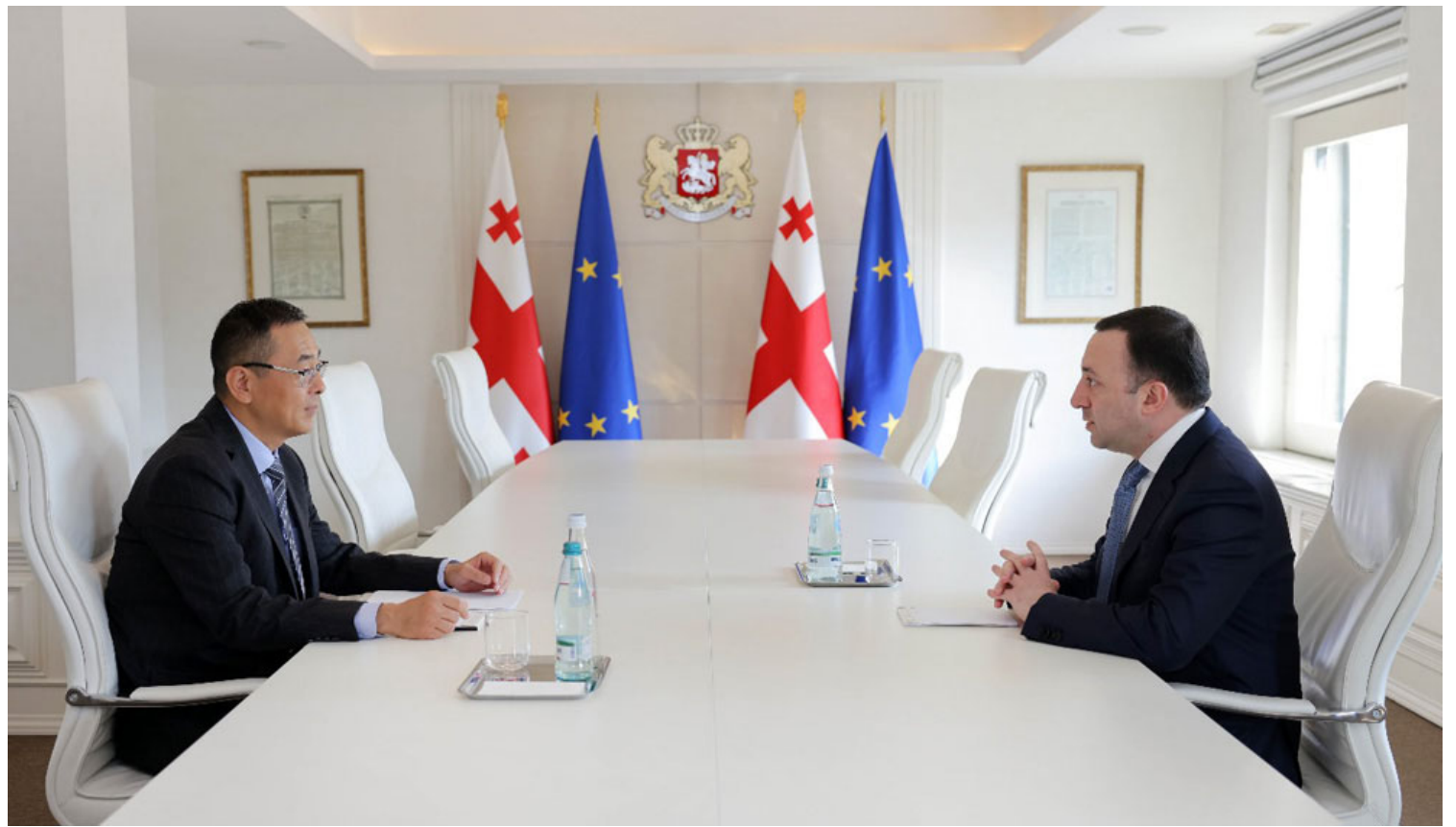
In an interview with LCI, President Zourabichvili was asked whether she hopes that Putin and Xi Jinping will ever be prosecuted — Xi Jinping for the genocide of the Uyghurs and Putin for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The president stated that such an outcome would be historic, putting certain issues in their place, although she acknowledged that it is not realistic.

As per information from the administration, during the meeting with the Chinese ambassador, the Prime Minister strongly condemned the statement made by the President of Georgia, describing it as both categorically unacceptable and deeply disturbing.

The Prime Minister clarified to Chinese Ambassador Zhou Qian that the president “does not oversee foreign policy,” as this authority is “exclusive” to the Georgian government.

“The mentioned rhetoric contradicts the attitude of the Georgian authorities and the Georgian people towards China, and it does not correspond to the spirit of the friendly, strategic partnership between the two countries. This harms the friendly and partnership relationship between them.

According to the Prime Minister, unfortunately, this isn’t the first time the



President of Georgia has, in violation of the Constitution and to the detriment of state interests, engaged in separate activities and offered personal assessments on international issues not in line with the country’s government. This places Georgia’s international image in an uncomfortable position, and it was the President’s public and blatant violation of constitutional norms that led the ruling team to initiate impeachment proceed-

ings.

According to the Prime Minister, Georgia is a parliamentary republic, where the president does not oversee the country’s foreign policy.

In Georgia, the exclusive authority to conduct the country’s foreign policy has been entrusted solely to the Government of Georgia by the Georgian people.

Hence, the statement of the President of Georgia does not even formally repre-

sent the official stance of the Georgian government towards the Chinese state and its leader. The Prime Minister expressed regret over the statement made by the President of Georgia and conveyed hope that the said statement would not adversely impact the exceptionally positive historical dynamics of the relationship between Georgia and China,” the statement reads.

Opposition Calls for Lowering Electoral Threshold, Georgian Dream Rejects

By Liza Mchedlidze

Following the positive recommendation from the European Commission regarding candidate status, the opposition reminded the government of a promise made a year ago.

In July 2022, Irakli Kobakhidze announced that after attaining candidate status, the parliamentary elections in 2024 would be conducted with a fully proportional system and a 2% electoral threshold. Now, the opposition is demanding the reduction of the threshold from 5% to 2% for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

However, the government’s response to the opposition is that they intended the promise to be fulfilled at the end of 2022, not 2023.

Chairman of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, addressed this issue and stated that the 5% threshold is adequate and that

the request to lower it is inappropriate.

“This demand stands no chance, the 2024 elections are scheduled for October. Everyone has known for a long time that there is a 5% threshold; they should prepare for these elections,” Papuashvili said.

He emphasized that in 2022, when the ruling party promised to lower the threshold, the context was different.

“The context was that a positive decision, granting the status of a candidate, would reduce polarization. Within the context of this decreased polarization, reconsidering the matter would become a possibility.

Not that it has decreased; in fact, in general, we have witnessed an additional year of turbulence. Next year, let’s observe the opposition. I don’t think the opposition is ready to move away from the radical agenda,” said Papuashvili.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Chairman Shalva Papuashvili Condemns President Zourabichvili's LCI Interview



The Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Shalva Papuashvili, was asked about President Salome Zourabichvili's interview with the TV channel LCI.

According to Papuashvili, President Zourabichvili considers the Georgian constitution to be merely a piece of paper. He remarked that it is not surprising that her behavior and actions are "against the interests of the Georgian people."

"We remember when she was in Latvia; the main result she brought out after the meeting with the president of Latvia was a call to impose sanctions on Russia, to put our people in trouble. Now we have seen that the main result of the interview

is that the Chinese ambassador is disturbed because such statements are completely disconnected from any reality and miss the interests of the Georgian people. Mrs. Salome acts directly against the interests of the Georgian people. This is not surprising; she betrayed her voters, trampled the Georgian constitution, and we should not expect anything good from her," Papuashvili said.

Defense Minister Juansher Burchuladze Meets Newly Appointed Czech Ambassador Petr Kubernát

The Defense Minister of Geor-

gia, Juansher Burchuladze, met with the newly appointed ambassador of the Czech Republic to Georgia, Petr Kubernát. During the introductory meeting, the Minister of Defense congratulated Ambassador Kubernát on his recent appointment and wished him success in his diplomatic mission.

The parties discussed the European Commission's recommendation to grant EU candidate status to Georgia. The support of the Czech Republic for Georgia's Western integration path was emphasized, particularly highlighting the political and practical cooperation between the two countries in the areas of defense and security.



Juansher Burchuladze emphasized the fruitful bilateral cooperation in the field of defense between Georgia and the Czech Republic. He discussed the measures outlined in the bilateral cooperation plan between the agencies, highlighting the joint participation of Czech and Georgian military forces in international military exercises.

The EU-funded programme on green economy brings resource efficiency to the core of Georgian industries.

7-8 November, 2023. Tbilisi - The European Union-funded EU4Environment programme, with technical support of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), hosted the national conference on Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) in Georgia at Biltmore Hotel. This year's event marked an important milestone in the Action's activities dedicated to Circular Economy (CE) and New Growth Opportunities in the country. It served as a platform to communicate results, discuss challenges and opportunities, and engage national and international partners on how resource efficiency can guide Georgian businesses toward success.

The Government of Georgia recognises the opportunities of the green economy and its potential for sustainable economic growth, especially in terms of job creation and poverty reduction. As small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent 99.7% of Georgian enterprises, to integrate the principles of sustainable development into the production processes, it is especially important to involve SMEs, as they are much more vulnerable in the face of changes, and flexible to make their products more energy, socially, and resource effi-

cient, and of course "green". SMEs are definitely becoming central in the green and CE policymaking within various government institutions and national strategic documents and legal frameworks increasingly provide incentives for green actions within SMEs, said Mr. Romeo Mikautadze, Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia.

Between 2020-2023, within the EU-funded EU4Environment programme, with the technical assistance of UNIDO, eleven professionals and 44 companies have been assessed and trained (17 RECP Clubs members and 27 Demonstration Companies) using the RECP methodology. Overall, 115 RECP measures were recommended, which could potentially yield annual savings worth 2,173,268 EUR. So far, 26 RECP measures have been implemented, expecting savings of 557,650 EUR per year.

"We are happy to learn that due to the regional EU4Environment programme, SMEs are embracing RECP. EU4Environment is part of the EU's efforts to open new opportunities for people and the economy due to twin green and digital transitions. A greener industrial sector is crucial for the development and resilience of our economies and societies. Given that Georgia has a clear European perspective, it is important to align with the European Green Deal", said Mr. Cătălin Gherman, Deputy Head of Cooperation of the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia.

Gathering over 100 participants in a hybrid format, the event centred around Georgia's SMEs through six specialised sessions. Here, the stakeholders discussed practical means to base Georgia's growth agenda on the CE, assessed the country's integration of CE practices in the past decade, and rejuvenated

the policy and regulatory framework for green growth. In addition, international experiences from EU4Business and others, paired with the national experiences on resource efficiency, value chains, and regulatory frameworks, were the catalyst for the increasingly urgent conversation on green skills and how to direct investment towards efficient use of resources in the country.

"Georgia has been making significant progress toward the establishment of the CE in recent years. The "Assessment of the circularity level of the Georgian Economy policy document, which was created with the assistance of the Swedish Government, identifies 14 key economic sectors with the greatest potential for waste recycling and defines the circularity goals and target indicators suggested for the national CE policy. The document also identifies sectoral opportunities and develops policy options and recommenda-

tions. This provides the framework for the next phase, which entails elaboration of the national CE roadmap that will determine the pathway for Georgia to a circular transformation. In addition, it will also be the basis for the development of the CE strategy", said Mr. Solomon Pavliashvili Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

In the past decade, the EU, with the technical assistance of UNIDO, has built the capacity of Georgian SMEs through the RECP Demonstration Projects and via pilot exercises on Industrial Waste Mapping (IWM) and Product Environmental Footprint (PEF). IWM pilot exercise was carried out in the regions of Rustavi and Zestaponi, involving 723 enterprises employing 7,000 workers. The PEF pilot trained 33 experts and initiated an in-depth exercise for five companies to assess selected products. This work will contribute to promoting the potential ben-

efits of the PEF methodology for Georgian enterprises interested in the EU Single Market for Green Products. It will also assist Georgia on its path to EU membership, which requires harmonisation of the country's legal system with the EU acquis.

"Resource efficiency is an essential component of CE and part of UNIDO's mandate to accelerate and promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development, a key contributor to SDG 9. Promoting circularity, we supported businesses in reconsidering their production processes in such a way that waste is prevented, reduced, and reused as much as possible. In addition, (limited) natural resources are efficiently considered, giving Georgian enterprises the edge to increase productivity and competitiveness through innovation", said Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya, EU4Environment Project Manager, UNIDO.

Such an intense program for the Italian Cuisine Week in Georgia (13-19 November)



The 8th edition of the Italian Cuisine Week will be dedicated to the Mediterranean Diet which perfectly combines taste and well-being.

Here is the program of activities organized by the Embassy of Italy in Tbilisi and the Italian Trade Agency.

Monday 13 November
Lectio Magistralis of Professor Michele Filippo Fontefrancesco

(University of Gastronomical Sciences of Pollenzo), on traditional cuisine as an engine of local development and tourism in collaboration with the Georgian Technical University and the Georgian National Tourism Administration-Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development.

The conference will be followed by the exhibition and awarding ceremony of the best pasta-made works created for the 5th edition of the competition "Opere di Pasta", organized by the Tbilisi Committee of the Dante Alighieri Society.

In the following days:
Chef Bruno Cingolani, a well renowned Chef and expert in truffles, will be the protagonist

of a Cooking show and the creator of a Signature Menu, highlighting the perfect match between high level cuisine and Italian Taste.

Friday 17:
Two young Italian Chefs coming from "Ancel Keys" Superior Institute will hold a Cooking Show with typical products from Cilento, Southern Italy, which the public will have the possibility to taste (in addition to other typical Italian products, from wine to gelato).

Finally, during the whole week, many restaurants and commercial activities will offer special menus, promotions and activities linked to the Italian Cuisine Week.

Weather

Tuesday, November 14

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 19°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 9°C

Wednesday, November 15

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 19°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 9°C

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