

## Former Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia's Party 'For Georgia' Calls for Transfer of Mikheil Saakashvili to Penitentiary

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The political party 'For Georgia', founded by the former prime minister Giorgi Gakharia, called on the ruling team to transfer Mikheil Saakashvili to the penitentiary.

Mikheil Daushvili, a member of the party, asserted that Mikheil Saakashvili is being provided with the opportunity to make political statements during court hearings, violating the Criminal Procedure Code.

"We want to inform the public that there is a special operation organized by today's 'Dream' for the survival and reunification of the United National Movement. This operation is being carried out using the Chinchaladze-Murusidze court system, which is sanctioned for corruption.

Mikheil Saakashvili, accused of exceeding his official authority, is obligated to provide answers to justice. This includes explaining incidents such as the attack by special forces and the shutdown of the 'Imedi' TV station, which was critical of the government at the time.



During yesterday's court session, he conducted a live party meeting from the chamber, issued assignments, discussed the plan for the reunification of the 'National Movement,' and made

statements in Ukrainian. In other words, he addressed circumstances unrelated to the

criminal case under consideration. According to the criminal procedure legislation of Georgia, he does not have the right to do so, and at such a time, the judge should intervene and stop him," Daushvili stated.

He asserted that a citizen of a foreign country, currently facing charges and imprisoned, is actively involved in national political processes, a practice forbidden by the law. He added that the 'Georgian Dream' not only refrains from prohibiting such involvement but even allows it.

Tina Bokuchava, one of the leaders of the United National Movement, responded to this statement by asserting that President Saakashvili is Putin's prisoner. She added that everyone remembers the instances where the eyes of Georgian citizens were 'gouged out' in praise of Putin.

Bokuchava stated that the statement from the 'For Georgia' party answers several questions. "When you are attacking Putin's personal prisoner and you have a Russian government in the country under the leadership of a Russian oligarch, in whose service you were in the recent past, this statement answers many questions. President Saakashvili is Putin's prisoner, and everyone remembers who gouged out the eyes of Georgian citizens to praise Putin," said Bokuchava.

## Joachim Stamp Addresses the Migration and Mobility Agreement between Germany and Georgia

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Joachim Stamp, the German government's Special Commissioner for Migration Agreements, addressed the migration and mobility agreement between the governments of Georgia and Germany. Stamp stated that a permanent framework for cooperation in the field of migration is being established.

According to the Special Commissioner, the main goals of this cooperation are to prevent illegal migration, reduce undocumented asylum seekers, and enhance orderly migration. Stamp believes that these efforts will benefit both Germany and Georgia.

Stamp also underscored the initiation of expert groups to implement targeted campaigns, aiming to decrease undocumented asylum applications and encourage legal migration opportunities, ultimately improving prospects for individuals.

He also expressed the significance of the initiative in workforce management without negatively impacting partner countries. Additionally, Stamp acknowledged the unique opportunity to explore Georgia's rich cultural diversity, considering it a valuable addition for Europe.

"I am pleased that we have not

only signed an agreement with Georgia but have also established a permanent framework for cooperation in migration. Our goal is to prevent illegal migration, reduce undocumented asylum seekers, and enhance orderly migration, benefiting both countries. We have agreed with the Georgian side to promptly initiate expert groups. These groups will work on developing targeted information campaigns to decrease undocumented asylum applications and increase opportunities for legal migration. This approach aims to improve prospects while avoiding the so-called brain drain.

A formal agreement establishes a collaborative effort to benefit both parties involved. We are committed to its further development. This initiative is crucial to sourcing the workforce without adversely affecting our partners. It ensures that individuals without prospects of staying do not resort to this path.

We have a unique opportunity to explore Georgia, which offers rich cultural diversity that would be a valuable acquisition for Europe. I eagerly anticipate mutual exchanges, particularly in the educational field. I express my gratitude to Georgia for initiating this positive cooperation," stated Joachim Stamp.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

**President Zourabichvili Denounces Possible Transfer of Bichvinta Country Houses to Russia as Illegal and Illegitimate**



The President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, denounced the potential transfer of Bichvinta country houses to Russia, labeling it as both illegal and illegitimate.

“This decision, like all others related to the airport and Ochamchire, is illegitimate, illegal, and has been made without the will of the people.

These are our lands, our airport, our port—collectively ours. Therefore, our

defense lies in the international arena, consistently protesting to prevent these illegitimate steps from becoming de facto actions,” said Zourabichvili.

According to the information reported by the so-called opposition of the Abkhazian occupation regime, Bichvinta cottages may finally be handed over to

Russia on December 28. The self-proclaimed parliament is planning to ‘ratify’ the relevant document on December 28.

In January 2022, a document was secretly signed between the government of the occupation regime of Abkhazia and Russia. According to this agreement, the government country house ‘Bichvinta’ will be transferred to the ownership of the Russian Federation.

**Ministry of Internal Affairs Denies Georgia’s Rejection of the ‘Balkan Model’**



The Ministry of Internal Affairs has released a statement regarding the agreement between Georgia and Germany on migration and mobility. The statement clarifies that the so-called ‘Balkan model’ was not discussed in the agreement signed between the two countries.

Refuting claims made by the German publication ‘tagesschau’, the Ministry of Internal Affairs stated that the information about the Georgian side rejecting the so-called ‘Balkan model’ is false. According to the publication, Joachim Stamp, the special representative of the German federal government in migration agreements, proposed to the Georgian government the opening of the labor market for Georgian personnel, drawing inspiration from the Western Balkans model.

“Unfortunately, incorrect information is

circulating in various media outlets, suggesting that the Georgian side rejected the so-called ‘Balkan model’. This is not true. We would like to emphasize that the

negotiation process between Georgia and Germany, including relevant meetings and visits, took place over an extended period. The resulting draft agreement did not include discussions about the so-called ‘Balkan model’.

It should be noted that the agreement signed on December 19, 2023, marks a significant step forward in our country’s path toward European integration. The decision of the Federal Republic of Germany to recognize Georgia as a safe country is particularly welcomed,” the statement reads.

According to the agency, the agreement will expand the scope of legal employment for Georgian citizens in the German labor market. Beyond seasonal jobs, additional employment opportunities will emerge in areas such as logistics, transport, and services.

**Georgia: EIB Global and TBC Bank sign Euro 70 million loan agreement to support businesses**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) announced the signing of a Euro 70 million loan agreement with TBC Bank on 20 December to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and mid-caps in Georgia.

The loan will be available in two tranches: Euro 40 million will be allocated to green finance, while the remaining Euro 30 million will be directed towards growth and innovation. A minimum of 30% is earmarked for initiatives promoting gender equality and empowering women.

The loan is being provided by EIB Global (the arm of the EIB



working beyond the European Union), and is expected to benefit more than 230 companies and sustain over 15,000 jobs. It is complemented by support under the Greening the Financial Systems technical assistance programme, funded by the German government’s International Climate Initiative.

The multicurrency loan will improve access to finance with long-term funding on attractive terms and conditions, with the option to make such funding available in local currency to help businesses avoid exchange rate risks.

The loan will also contribute to sustainable economic recovery under the European Union’s flagship Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Eastern Partnership, which aims to help 80,000 SMEs.

([euneighbourseast.eu](http://euneighbourseast.eu))

Weather

Friday, December 22

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 11°C

Night Cloudy  
Low: 3°C

Saturday, December 23

Day Mostly Cloudy  
High: 10°C

Night Mostly Cloudy  
Low: 0°C

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