

EU Directive vs. Georgian Draft Law and EU Concerns over 'Agents Law'



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

In response to a question posed by Fact-Meter regarding the differences between the draft directive in the European Union and the reintroduced draft law by Georgian Dream, particularly in terms of their scope or overall approach, Peter Stano, spokesperson for the European Union's foreign service, stated that the EU directive draft differs significantly from the Georgian one. Stano emphasized that foreign funding organizations are not

the target of the EU directive.

"The draft directive of the European Commission "On the transparency of activities representing the interests of third countries" differs significantly from the Georgian law.

The directive we introduced was initiated to support efforts against foreign interference and disinformation. It focuses exclusively on entities that carry out activities representing the interests of third countries (such as lobbyists) and primarily aims to harmonize the ap-

proach between EU member states in order to ensure common transparency standards in the EU.

The directive does not target entities that receive foreign funding, nor does it specifically mention civil society or the media.

In addition, the Directive contains strong safeguards to ensure that measures are proportionate, do not discriminate or stigmatize any actor, and do not in any way restrict the exercise of important fundamental rights, such as freedom

of expression or association.

The draft also includes clearly defined supervisory prerogatives of independent national institutions and the right to effective judicial review," Stano stated.

During a press conference in Luxembourg following the Foreign Affairs Council meeting, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, stated that the 'Agents law' recently adopted by the Georgian Parliament in its first reading is incompatible with European Union values.

Borrell highlighted the situation in Georgia as a key topic of discussion at the council, noting concerns expressed by foreign ministers of EU member states regarding the Russian law. Additionally, Borrell emphasized that the Georgian government failed to fulfill its obligation when it reintroduced the so-called Russian law, which had been withdrawn one year prior.

Josep Borrell stated, "Last week, EU Commissioner Varhej and I published a statement in which we emphasized that this law is incompatible with the values of the European Union. I repeat, this law is incompatible with the values of the European Union." He added that the European Commission must submit an annual report, expressing concern that the "Russian law" has returned to the parliament.

Rikard Jozwiak, editor of RFE Europe Bureau, mentioned that during the Council of Foreign Affairs, there was a proposal made to either send ministers to Georgia or invite the Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to the next Council of Foreign Affairs of the European Union.

"The situation in Georgia was brought up today among EU foreign ministers. there was a call to send ministers to Georgia for a visit or the Georgian foreign ministers to come to Brussels for an upcoming EU foreign affairs council," Jozwiak wrote.

Public Defender of Georgia Calls Out Russian Occupation for Human Rights Violations

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

In a recent statement, the Public Defender of Georgia highlighted the ongoing issue of illegal detentions by Russian occupation forces, citing the arrest of five Georgian citizens near the villages of Artsevi, Otrevi, and Dirbi in April as evidence of the continuing breaches of human rights.

According to the Public Defender, these actions demonstrate a systematic practice by the occupation regime of arresting individuals for "illegally crossing the border", which severely violates the rights and

freedoms of the local population.

The statement also referenced a recent ruling by the European Court of Human Rights on April 9, 2024, which reaffirmed the Russian Federation's responsibility for human rights violations in these territories, specifically noting that such arrests violate Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects the right to freedom and security. This decision aligns with an earlier court ruling from January 21, 2021, which also underscored the Russian Federation's accountability.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6729; Euro - 2.8469; GBP - 3.2968; 100 Russian Ruble - 2.8628; Swiss Franc - 2.9324

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“The Public Defender of Georgia echoes the frequent occur-

rences of illegal detention of Georgian citizens by representatives of the occupation regime. In April of this year, five Geor-

gian citizens living near the villages of Artsevi, Otrevi, and Dirbi were unlawfully arrested.

The mentioned cases clearly illustrate that the occupation regime persists in the illegal practice of arresting individuals for crossing the “border” illegally.

The Public Defender of Georgia emphasized that similar illegal actions carried out by the occupation regime grossly violate the rights and freedoms of

the population living in the occupied territories, thereby confirming once again the necessity of allowing international human rights monitoring missions access to these territories.

It should be noted that on April 9, 2024, the European Court of Human Rights made a decision that once again held the Russian Federation responsible for human rights violations in the occupied territories of Georgia.

In particular, according to the court’s interpretation, any arrest or imprisonment of ethnic Georgians for crossing the occupation line constitutes a violation of Article 5 of the European Convention, which guarantees the right to freedom and security.

The ruling by the European Court of Human Rights on January 21, 2021, further underscores the responsibility of the Russian Federation,” the statement reads.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Two Georgian Citizens Unlawfully Detained by Russian Occupation Forces Near Dirbi Village



სახელმწიფო უსაფრთხოების სამსახური / State Security Service Of Georgia

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Representatives of the Russian occupation forces unlawfully arrested two citizens of Georgia near the village of Dirbi in the Kareli municipality, as reported by the State Security Service.

“Upon receiving information about the mentioned incident, the State Security Service activated the ‘hotline’ operated by the EU Monitoring Mission.

Information about another instance of

illegal detention was immediately reported to the co-chairs of the international discussions in Geneva and to international partners. All existing mechanisms for the release of illegally detained Georgian citizens have been activated.

The occupying forces of Russia bear

responsibility for all destructive actions committed on the occupied territories of Georgia, as well as along the occupation line,” the statement reads.

Prime Minister Kobakhidze to Attend International Conservative Conference in Hungary

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli

Kobakhidze is set to participate in the Conservative Political Action Conference

Terrorism”, “Save the West, Protect the Borders”, “2024 - Super Year of Elections”,



(CPAC) in Hungary, where he is listed as one of the conference speakers alongside Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and conservative politicians from various countries.

Scheduled for April 25-26 in Budapest, the conference will feature discussions on topics such as “Sovereignty Lives, Globalism Dies”, “Sovereignty Defeats

and “Gender Zero”.

The Government of Georgia announced today, April 22, that Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze will be visiting Hungary on April 24-25 along with a government delegation, although the purpose of the visit was not specified in the statement.

Recently appointed Head of EU Monitoring Mission meets with Georgian Prime Minister

On 18 April, the recently appointed Head of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM), Bettina Patricia Boughani, held an introductory meeting with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli



Kobakhidze in Tbilisi.

During the meeting, Head of Mission Boughani underscored EUMM’s commitment to stability and peace in Georgia.

The Head of Mission also used the opportunity to highlight the importance of the Mission-managed Hotline and the Ergneti IPRM as important tools that contribute to security and confidence building.

Prime Minister Kobakhidze thanked the Mission for its continued commitment and contribution to stability, security and peace in Georgia. He confirmed his support for the full implementation of the Mission’s mandate throughout the territory of Georgia.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Tuesday, April 23

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 27°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 13°C

Wednesday, April 24

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 26°C

Night 🌧️ Partly Cloudy
Low: 13°C

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