

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgian Prime Minister Meets with Turkish President in Turkey

Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey. Erdogan affirmed his support for Georgia's European integration and expressed optimism that ongoing events in Georgia would be resolved in the best interests of the Georgian people.

The Georgian delegation was hosted by President Erdogan at the Turkish Presidential Palace. Following the meeting, both leaders addressed the media and shared statements regarding their discussions.

"Today, two friends and leaders of two strategic partner countries met, and a very fruitful conversation took place. I once again supported Georgia's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and prosperity. Additionally, I expressed my continued support for Georgia's path of integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

I was very happy to hear your views on the current events in Georgia. In Turkey, we believe that these events will be resolved in the best interests of the Georgian people," Erdogan said.

The Turkish President noted that Turkey is ready to participate in major projects in Georgia, including the construction of airports, ports, energy infrastructure, and transmission lines.

According to Erdogan, they pledged to cooperate in security and counterterrorism efforts. They also shared their assessments of current events in the Gaza Strip and discussed the role of the international community in addressing these issues.

"All of humanity must support the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom. They have paid a heavy price for this, and all of humanity should unite within the framework of law and diplomacy. The resolution adopted at the UN General Assembly shows where the international community stands, and I also believe that supporting mechanisms are necessary to encourage Palestine. This is very important, very crucial at this stage. I call on all countries that have not recognized the statehood of Palestine to do so," Erdogan said.

According to the information, they ex-



changed opinions on the Ukraine-Russia war.

"We support the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and emphasize the importance of peace, including in the Caucasus. We expressed our desire to continue working in this direction."

"In my opinion, the peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan represents a historic opportunity for the entire region," Erdogan said.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister provided President Erdogan with updates on various developments occurring in Georgia. They also engaged in discus-

sions concerning ongoing events in the Middle East, emphasizing Georgia's support for achieving peace in the region through diplomatic negotiations with international backing.

"Certainly, I have provided Mr. President with information regarding the processes that will take place in our country from different points of view. We also discussed the processes taking place in the Middle East. It was noted that Georgia supports the idea of the need to establish peace in the Middle East, which can be achieved through negotiations with the support of the international community.

Taking into account the current pro-

cesses in the modern world, we made a special emphasis on the prospects of deepening regional, trade-economic and transport-energy cooperation. In this context, the importance of transit function, connectivity was especially noted.

The Republic of Turkey is the number one trade partner for Georgia and we discussed how our partnership can be further deepened. Of course, we see great potential for further deepening of bilateral trade relations. We also had a conversation about the importance of exports from Georgia and bilateral trade in general," said the Prime Minister.



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MEPs urge Georgian authorities to withdraw the "foreign agent law"

Press Releases **AFET** Yesterday

The law will cause rifts within Georgia and further harm the country's international standing and its European future, warn leading MEPs in the joint statement.

Joint statement by the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs [David McAllister \(EPP, DE\)](#), the Chair of the Delegation for relations with the South Caucasus [Marina Kaljurand \(S&D, ET\)](#) and the European Parliament's Standing Rapporteur on Georgia [Sven Mikser \(S&D, ET\)](#).

"We deplore the adoption of the "foreign agent law" by the Georgian Parliament. We are greatly disappointed that the ruling majority has ignored the concerns expressed by human rights watchdogs and international partners, including the EU and the US. We urge the Georgian authorities to withdraw the law before it causes deeper rifts within Georgia and further jeopardises the country's international standing and its European future.

MEPs Call for Reevaluation of EU-Georgia Relations Amid Adoption of "Foreign Agent" Law

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

In a joint statement issued by MEPs David McAllister, Marina Kaljurand, and Sven Mikser, strong disapproval was expressed regarding the adoption of Georgia's "foreign agent law" by the Georgian Parliament. The statement emphasized deep disappointment with the ruling majority's disregard for concerns raised by human rights watchdogs and international partners, including the EU and the US.

The MEPs urged Georgian authorities to retract the law promptly to prevent further divisions within Georgia and to safeguard the country's international reputation and European aspirations. The statement reaffirmed full solidarity with

the Georgian people, highlighting their defense of democratic principles and advocacy for a Euro-Atlantic future.

The statement called for immediate de-escalation by the Georgian Dream government, urging them to refrain from using force against peaceful demonstrators, opposition figures, NGOs, and independent media protesting against the law. Any acts of violence or intimidation against protesters are condemned as a violation of the right to peaceful protest, deemed unacceptable in a democratic society.

The MEPs stressed the importance of fostering a supportive environment for civil society and media freedom, citing these as essential elements for democracy

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7596; Euro - 3.0002; GBP - 3.4972; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0377; Swiss Franc - 3.0571

MEPs Call for Reevaluation of EU-Georgia Relations Amid Adoption of “Foreign Agent” Law

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and fundamental requirements for EU accession.

Moreover, the joint statement called upon the Council and the European Commission to reconsider the nature of EU-Georgia relations, including political and financial support for the country, in light

of recent developments. Specifically, the MEPs urge the Commission to promptly provide an oral assessment on how the implementation of the foreign agent law could impact Georgia’s EU accession process.

“We deplore the adoption of the “foreign agent law” by the Georgian Parliament. We are greatly disappointed that the rul-

ing majority has ignored the concerns expressed by human rights watchdogs and international partners, including the EU and the US. We urge the Georgian authorities to withdraw the law before it causes deeper rifts within Georgia and further jeopardizes the country’s international standing and its European future. We reiterate our full solidarity with the Georgian people who are defending democratic values and demonstrating for their country’s Euro-Atlantic future.

The government in Tbilisi must de-escalate immediately by refraining from any further use of force against peaceful protesters, opposition politicians, NGOs and independent media protesting against the

law. Any violence or continued intimidation against the protesters is an infringement of the right to peaceful protest and therefore unacceptable. Creating a friendly environment for civil society and media freedom is core to any democracy and a crucial requirement for EU accession. We call on the Council and the European Commission to reconsider EU-Georgia relations, including our political and financial support to the country.

We call on the Commission to provide an immediate oral assessment on how the foreign agent law will impact Georgia’s EU accession process, as already proposed by 12 Foreign Ministers,” read the letter.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgia and Turkey Sign Energy Cooperation Memorandum during Prime Minister’s Official Visit



A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of energy was signed between Georgia and the Republic of Turkey during the official visit of Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze to Turkey. The Government Administration has announced this development, highlighting that the signed document aims to strengthen and deepen the exist-

ing partnership between Georgia and Turkey in the energy sector.

“The memorandum will allow the two countries to share knowledge and experience in areas such as: renewable energies, energy efficiency, digitization of infrastructure, reduction of carbon emis-

sions, etc.

The memorandum of understanding was signed by the First Vice Prime Minister of Georgia, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Levan Davitashvili and Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Turkey Alparslan Bayraktar. The signing ceremony was attended by Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Kobakhidze and

President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan,” the information reads.

National Bank of Georgia Sells \$60 Million at Foreign Exchange Auction Amid Market Turbulence



The National Bank of Georgia announced the sale of 60 million US dollars at a foreign exchange auction in response to recent turbulence in the foreign exchange market. The decision to provide liquidity was prompted by large one-time transactions that led to excess demand for currency, placing additional pressure on the exchange rate of the Georgian Lari. The Bank clarified that these market fluctuations are short-term and not

driven by fundamental macroeconomic factors.

“As a result, there was excess demand for the currency, which created additional pressure on the exchange rate of the lari. We clarify that the fluctuations observed in the currency market are not caused by fundamental macroeconomic factors and are therefore short-term.

Macroeconomic parameters are healthy: international reserves are at a historical maximum, foreign inflows are stable, the current account deficit is at a historical minimum, high economic growth has been recorded in the last three years, inflation is below the target of 3%, and the fiscal balance and public debt have been maintained at a sustainable level,” the National Bank said.

EU Ambassador at UN Security Council: ‘Russia, stop your illegal war’

Addressing the UN Security Council on 14 May, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations,



Stavros Lambrinidis, called on Russia to stop its “systematic and brutal bombing of Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure right now”.

“Stop your illegal war, and the illegal means you are using to pursue it,” said Lambrinidis in his statement on behalf of the EU, its member states and EU candidate countries, including Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

He also said Russia and its leadership must be held “fully accountable” for waging a war of aggression and for other “most serious crimes” under interna-

tional law and “for the massive damage they have caused”.

The EU Ambassador said that in the past weeks, Russia has continued its missile and drone attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure, destroying a “significant portion of Ukraine’s energy generation capacity”.

“Many thousands of Ukrainians now lack access to electricity. Its missile attacks also continue on Odesa and other Black Sea ports, threatening the freedom of navigation and hindering

grain and other deliveries to the global market. [...] Indeed, there are credible reports of Russia using ‘double-tap strikes,’ where the second attack hits rescue workers,” he said.

Lambrinidis reiterated the EU’s support for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine. He also welcomed Switzerland’s initiative to host a Summit on Peace in Ukraine next month and called on all states to participate.

(eunighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Friday, May 17

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 18°C

Night Clear
Low: 8°C

Saturday, May 18

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 19°C

Night Clear
Low: 9°C

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43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia

Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze

Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000

E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge

http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli

Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze

Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili

Layout Designer, Photographer

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