

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze Ready to Assist Investigation into 'Threat' from European Commissioner

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze stated that he is ready to provide information to any country interested in investigating the "threat" he received from a European Commissioner that mentioned the name of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, who was recently the target of an attempted assassination.

When asked if he would take responsibility for the potential consequences of visa liberalization, Kobakhidze responded that the authorities had received multiple "threats", including one about sharing the fate of the Slovak Prime Minister.

"Over the past few days, we have been threatened with many things, including sharing the fate of the Slovak Prime Minister, who was shot a few weeks ago," Kobakhidze said.

When a journalist mentioned that European Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi had provided a clarification about the incident, Kobakhidze remarked that "this clarification was a disaster."

In response to another ques-



tion about whether he feared for his life, Kobakhidze stated: "No way. I was not afraid of anything. But I said what we were threatened with - sharing the fate of the Slovak Prime Minister. We were directly threatened to share the fate of Fico."

Kobakhidze reiterated his willingness to cooperate with any interested country's investigation.

"If any country has an interest in this regard, I am ready to provide information and evidence to the investigation. Pay attention to what I say again: when it comes to the threat, where the name of the Slovak Prime Minister was mentioned, if there is any interest from any country, I am ready to give relevant information and evidence to the investigation," Kobakhidze stated.

European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi responded to Kobakhidze's accusation, stating that his telephone conversation had been taken out of context and completely misinterpreted.

Prime Minister Thanks China for Abstaining from UN Resolution Recognizing Rights of Georgia's IDPs

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

On June 4, during the 78th session, the United Nations General Assembly in New York adopted a resolution titled "Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia" initiated by Georgia and 63 countries.

The resolution recognizes the right of internally displaced persons and displaced individuals from the occupied territories of Georgia to return to their homes in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali.

This year, the resolution gained support from three additional states, including Armenia, Georgia's neighboring state, marking the first time in history.

Countries voting against the resolution include Belarus, Burundi, Cuba, North Korea, Mali, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, and Zimbabwe. Georgia's new partner country China abstained from the vote.

The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze, addressed China not supporting the resolution by expressing gratitude for "maintaining the position it held before".

Kobakhidze extended thanks to China for its consistent stance. He highlighted the increasing number of supporters for the UN resolution year by year, attributing this progress to

the diligent efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He specifically commended the Ministry for its continuous work in garnering broad support for resolutions related to IDPs.

"In the past year, we achieved triple-digit support for a resolution for the first time. This year, we have reached a record number of 103 countries supporting our resolution. This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and gratitude is owed to the Minister and every diplomat involved," Kobakhidze remarked.

Regarding China, Kobakhidze praised the country for steadfastly maintaining its position. "This resolution was not about that. China firmly recognizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia. This is China's official position," stated Irakli Kobakhidze.

The Chairman of the Parliament also responded to the issue. Shalva Papuashvili noted that "in this case, for us, restraint is equal to support."

According to Papuashvili, Georgia has a strategic partnership with China.

"It is important to us that China maintains the position it has had for years - abstaining from this resolution, as do several other long-time friends and partner countries. This is equivalent to support for us in this situation," said Papuashvili.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Four Journalists Banned from Parliament at the Request of Majority MPs



At the request of members of the parliamentary majority, four journalists were banned from working in the parliament for persisting in asking questions after being denied an interview.

Upon the request of Nino Tsilosani, journalist Sofo Gozalishvili from Formula was banned from entering the legislative body for 6 months, and journalist Nino Balanchivadze from Mtavari Arkhi for one month.

According to the decision of MP Sozar Subari, journalist Nata Kajaia from TV Pirveli will not be able to work in the parliament for one month.

Additionally, at the request of Guram Macharashvili, one of the leaders of People's Power, the parliament suspended the accreditation of another journalist,

Maka Chikhladze, from investigative journalism program Nodar Meladze's Saturday. Chikhladze's work accreditation in the Parliament was suspended for one month.

The letter regarding the suspension of

accreditation for Sofo Gozalishvili stated that, "despite being refused, the journalist persisted in attempting to record the interview".

"Repressive rules approved by the Chairman of the Parliament are being misused by the deputies, creating dangerous precedents," wrote Nodar Meladze, head of the information service at TV Pirveli.

MP Nino Tsilosani Sues Citizen for 'Stalking' After Alleged 'Traitor' Insult

MP Nino Tsilosani, who supported the Foreign Agents law, accuses citizen Data Kuprava of "stalking" after Kuprava reportedly called her a "traitor" on the



street.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs promptly interviewed Kuprava following the incident. Tsilosani asserted that, "due to stalking," she was forced to change her place of residence.

As Data Kuprava stated, he was asked "absurd" questions by the judges during his interrogation.

"This case is not directed solely against one individual, Data Kuprava. It represents the campaign of intimidation that representatives of the Georgian Dream have been conducting for a long time. Now, they are intimidating people who protest rightfully with tenfold force," Kuprava said.

European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards: projects from Armenia and Georgia among winners

On 30 May, the European Commission and Europa Nostra announced the 2024 winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards, co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. This year, Europe's most prestigious awards for heritage go to 26 winners from 18 countries across the continent, including from Armenia and Georgia.



The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards were launched in 2002 by the European Commission and have been run by Europa Nostra ever since. The Awards identify and promote best practices in the conservation and enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, stimulate the trans-frontier ex-

change of knowledge throughout Europe, increase public awareness and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage, and encourage further excellent initiatives through the power of example.

The 'Teryan Cultural Centre - Empowering Armenian Refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh' project from Armenia is one of

five winners in the category 'Education, Training and Skills'.

Since 2002, the Teryan Cultural Centre has been committed to the study and preservation of Armenian and Artsakh culture. Following the armed conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, the centre has provided a wide range of training activities to aid displaced individuals in adapting to their new lives in Armenia.

The 'Citizens' Rehabilitation of the Tsiskarauli Tower' (Akhieli, Georgia) project is among seven winners in the 'Citizens' Engagement and Awareness-raising' category.

Over three years, 46 Georgian and international citizens worked alongside technical experts and traditional craftspeople to restore the Tsiskarauli Tower. The project brought much-needed attention

to the remote community of Khevsureti, and raised awareness of the value of Georgian heritage within Europe's heritage.

Heritage supporters and enthusiasts are now encouraged to discover the winners and vote online to decide who will win the Public Choice Award 2024. You can cast your vote until 22 September.

The winners will be celebrated at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony 2024 on 7 October at the Romanian Athenaeum, the most prestigious concert hall in Bucharest, Romania. The Grand Prix laureates and the Public Choice Award winner will receive Euro 10,000 each.

The Call for Entries for the 2025 edition of the Awards will open in Autumn 2024.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Thursday, June 6

Day ☀️ Clear High: 31°C

Night 🌧️ Partly Cloudy Low: 18°C

Friday, June 7

Day ☀️ Clear High: 29°C

Night 🌧️ Mostly Cloudy Low: 16°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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