

Gia Volski Criticizes Helsinki Commission's Claims on Scam Call Centers and Georgian Government

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Gia Volski, the First Vice-Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, has dismissed recent allegations made by the US Helsinki Commission regarding the involvement of the Georgian government in illegal scam call center operations. The Helsinki Commission claimed that the Georgian government relies on "black money" from fraudulent call centers to fund its operations and target opposition groups.

Volski expressed his concerns over the statement, calling it "very disturbing". He emphasized that the Georgian prosecutor's office, in collaboration with European authorities, is actively investigating the scam call centers.

"The statement by the Helsinki Commission seems to transfer us from a reality where we are dealing with actual investigations and potential crimes, to a fictional scenario where the Georgian government is accused of involvement in call center crimes," Volski said. He suggested that the Helsinki Commission's remarks might be an attempt to undermine the legitimacy of upcoming elections by implying that the opposition's alleged use of "dirty money" could influence the electoral process.

Volski underscored the strong historical partnership between Georgia and the United States



and expressed hope that this relationship would continue unaf-

ected by recent controversies. "Georgia has always been a very

solid and loyal partner of the USA, and hopefully, our relation-

ship will continue in the same way in the future," he stated.

Former Members of European Georgia Launch New Political Party Federalists

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Former members of the European Georgia party have announced the formation of a

new political party named Federalists. The official presentation of the party is scheduled for August 15, with the party congress set to take place in September.

Tamar Chergoleishvili, explained that the foundation of the Federalists is rooted in the belief that federalism is the most effective system for balancing

and restraining power. "Federalism is not just a territorial arrangement," Chergoleishvili said, "it is the best system for balancing and restraining power."

She further elaborated on the motivation behind the party's creation, pointing to systemic issues within the country. "The fact that the lives of people and children have no value in this country is a systemic problem. We believe that federalism is the key to solving this problem."

Chergoleishvili stated that federalism is a natural system for European countries, including Georgia, and is essential for breaking free from what she described as a coercive, centralized state influenced by Russia. "Until we free ourselves from this coercive system and carry out radical decentralization, we cannot return to Western civilization at home - in Europe," she stated.

The creation of the Federalists party follows recent internal

tensions within European Georgia. On August 1, Giga Bokeria stepped down as chairman of European Georgia and left the party. Chergoleishvili also withdrew from the party's election list, citing disagreements over the direction of the party and the handling of primary elections.

The new party aims to address the issues of centralization and corruption by promoting a decentralized system where local politicians are held accountable by their constituents rather than being beholden to powerful leaders or oligarchs. "In a decentralized system, politicians, even at the smallest level, are given weight by the citizens of Georgia," Chergoleishvili noted. "They need their services to elect politicians, not the compliments dedicated to the leaders and oligarchs."

Chergoleishvili emphasized that federalism is the solution to both national and individual problems, and it is through this system that Georgia can fully integrate into Europe. "Federalism is the key to our national and individual problems, this is how we will return home to Europe, and that is why we named our party Federalists," she said.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

New British Ambassador Gareth Ward Takes Office in Georgia



Gareth Ward, the newly appointed British Ambassador to Georgia, presented his credentials to Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili today.

The meeting highlighted the strong strategic partnership between the UK and

Georgia, focusing on the Wardrop Strategic Dialogue, which encompasses political, defense, security, trade, and cultural ties.

tegrity.

Ambassador Ward pledged to continue strengthening Georgian-British relations and reaffirmed the UK's commitment to Georgia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and Euro-Atlantic integration.

"I look forward to strengthening Georgia-UK bilateral relations and enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation.

Welcome to Georgia!" Darchiashvili wrote on X.

UNM Chair Criticizes Georgian Dream Over ICC Ruling



Tina Bokuchava, chairperson of the United National Movement, has criticized the ruling Georgian Dream party in light of a past ruling by the International Criminal Court of The Hague.

Bokuchava accused the Georgian

Dream of exploiting fears to cling to power. "The government's persistent focus on this issue indicates their attempt to rewrite recent Georgian history with Russian narratives.

fears to maintain their grip on power," she said.

Looking ahead to the upcoming elections in October, Bokuchava expressed confidence that the Georgian people will make a well-informed decision.

Advertisement for the 'LIANA' festival featuring violinist Giorgi Issakadze. Dates: 21 August (Borjomi), 23, 25 August (Batumi), 15, 17, 18, 20 September (Tbilisi). Includes logos of sponsors like Brazil, Yves Rocher, and TKT.GE.

Weather forecast for Thursday, August 15: Day Clear, High: 30°C; Night Partly Cloudy, Low: 19°C.

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