

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Ukrainian Diplomat Expresses Concerns Over Bilateral Relations

Mykhailo Kharyshyn, the temporary representative of Ukrainian affairs in Georgia, has raised concerns about the current state of Georgia-Ukraine relations, suggesting that there are forces attempting to undermine the historically strong ties between the two countries.

In an interview with Interpressnews, Kharyshyn highlighted a sense of growing tension, particularly around the issue of diplomatic representation. Ukraine currently lacks a full-fledged ambassador in Georgia, and Georgia's ambassador to Ukraine, Giorgi Zakashvili, was recalled from Kyiv at Ukraine's request. Kharyshyn pointed out that during the preparation of a presidential decree for appointing Ukraine's ambassador to Georgia, unexpected and unclear rhetoric emerged from the then head of the Georgian government.

"It is strange that such rhetoric coincided with the 'performance' held near the embassy building, featuring anti-Ukrainian, pro-Russian slogans and insulting posters against Ukraine," Kharyshyn stated. He noted that, unfortunately, some Georgian politicians, including government representatives and members of the parliamentary corps, adopted similar rhetoric. This, he suggested, gives the impression that certain forces are trying to suppress what was once an exemplary relationship between Georgia and Ukraine.



Despite these challenges, Kharyshyn emphasized the enduring bond between the two nations, describing Georgia and its people as "brotherly" to Ukraine. He affirmed that Ukraine values its relationship with Georgia and remains committed to maintaining close,

equal, and partnership-based relations.

Kharyshyn also mentioned efforts by diplomats to restore normal dialogue between the two countries, noting that several meetings have already taken place at the level of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. He ex-

pressed hope that full-fledged dialogue at the deputy minister level would soon resume, paving the way for a restoration of diplomatic relations to their previous levels.

"Ukraine is not against our diplomatic relations at the level of ambassadors," Kharyshyn

clarified. However, he stressed that to achieve this, certain negative factors and tendencies must be addressed. "The ball is currently in the Georgian half of the field," he concluded, implying that the next steps depend on the Georgian government's actions.

Kobakhidze Criticizes President Zourabichvili's Invitation to Crimea Platform Summit



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The 4th summit of the Crimea Platform is set to take place in Kyiv on September 11, with an invitation extended to Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili. This information was confirmed by Mykhailo Kharyshyn, the temporary representative of Ukraine in Georgia, during an interview with *Interpressnews*.

Kharyshyn highlighted that Georgia has been actively involved in international efforts related to Crimea, noting President Zourabichvili's participation in the first global peace summit in Switzerland. "Georgia participates in the work of the international platform on Crimea," he said, adding that Ukraine, through its embassy in Georgia, has formally invited President Zourabichvili to attend

the upcoming summit in Kyiv.

Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze has openly criticized the invitation extended to Georgian President. The summit, which is set to take place in Kyiv, focuses on the ongoing Russian occupation of Crimea and is aimed at reinforcing support for Ukraine's territorial integrity. This year's summit will continue to focus on these critical issues, bringing together global leaders to discuss and coordinate actions in support of Ukraine.

Kobakhidze expressed his concerns over Zourabichvili's involvement, accusing her of calling for Georgia to engage directly in the Russo-Ukrainian war. "The friendship between Salome Zourabichvili and specific Ukrainian high-ranking officials is absolutely not surprising,"

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6891; Euro - 2.9677; GBP - 3.4848; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0026; Swiss Franc - 3.1084

Kobakhidze Criticizes President Zourabichvili's Invitation to Crimea Platform Summit

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Kobakhidze said, alleging that Zourabichvili had previously pushed for Georgia to open a "sec-

ond front" in the conflict.

Kobakhidze accused Zourabichvili of praising Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during a meeting

shortly after the war began, reportedly stating, "Look, Zelensky is a hero, and you should be a hero." He suggested that her stance was clear from the start,

making her alignment with Ukrainian officials unsurprising.

"Accordingly, the friendship between Salome Zourabichvili

and specific high-ranking officials is absolutely not surprising to me," Kobakhidze reiterated.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

MP Accuses Georgian Dream of Manipulating Unemployment Data Ahead of Elections



MP Paata Manjgaladze, a leader of the Unity - National Movement, has criticized the recent unemployment data released by Geostat, alleging it is a pre-election manipulation by the ruling Georgian Dream party. According to Geostat, the second quarter of 2024 saw a

2.1% increase in the number of employed individuals, reaching 935,800, and a 10.1% rise in self-employed persons, totaling 451,500.

Manjgaladze argued that these statistics do not reflect the true economic hardships faced by

Georgians. He asserted that high living costs and insufficient job opportunities are prompting many Georgians to leave their homes and the country. He described the situation as a result of the Georgian Dream's policies, which he believes are enriching a small elite while impoverish-

ing the broader population.

"The increase in employment figures does not address the core issue of inadequate and poorly paid work," Manjgaladze said. "This is a direct consequence of the Georgian Dream's policy of robbing and impoverishing its own citizens. If they remain in power after October 26, we can expect further economic decline and isolation, leading to even more emigration."

Prime Minister Addresses Reports on Partskhaladze's Presence in Georgia

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze has addressed recent reports about Otar Partskhaladze, a former Georgian prosecutor currently under US sanctions, being in Georgia. Media reports, including from SOVA, indicate that Partskhaladze was recently spotted near Orbeliani Palace, the residence of the President of Georgia.

Kobakhidze stated that Partskhaladze has not served as Chief Prosecutor in Georgia for ten years, and dismissed specu-



lation about his presence. "Ten years have passed since Otar Partskhaladze no longer held the position of Chief Prosecutor in Georgia. Therefore, there is no room for speculation," Kobakhidze said.

On the matter of the US sanctions, the Prime Minister mentioned that the Georgian govern-

ment had requested evidence from Washington but had not received any. "No charges have been brought against him. As for the sanctions, we always ask for proof, but they have never been able to provide us with evidence regarding any such case, including for judges and Otar Partskhaladze," Kobakhidze said.

Ukraine: on the way to EU border management standards

On 14 August, a European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine delegation, led by the Deputy Head of Mission Maura O'Sullivan, visited the Ukrainian Border Crossing Points at Krakovets and Shehyni on the Ukrainian-Polish border. The visit, joined by the Deputy Head of Lviv Customs and representatives from the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine's Western Directorate, aimed to strengthen cooperation and to support Ukraine's efforts to align with EU Integrated Border Management standards.

The delegation observed first-hand how Ukrainian authorities

manage border control and customs clearance for both passengers and cargo. This direct insight is crucial for EUAM to tailor its support to its partners effectively.

During the detailed tour of the facilities, the delegation learnt from their counterparts about their operational challenges, particularly regarding the need for updated equipment and infrastructure.

The Mission's ongoing support for Ukraine in implementing European Integrated Border Management is vital not only for enhancing the efficiency of border operations but also for ensuring that the border remains secure, facilitating smoother trade and travel between Ukraine and the European Union.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

21 AUGUST
BORJOMI | Borjomi Likani Hotel

23, 25 AUGUST
BATUMI | Batumi Drama Theater

15, 17, 18, 20
SEPTEMBER
TBILISI | Tbilisi State Conservatoire

Founder of the Festival: LIANA ISSAKADZE | Artistic Director: GIORGI ISSAKADZE

Weather

Tuesday, August 20

Day ☀️ Clear
High: 33°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 21°C

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