

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgian President Zourabichvili Meets German President Steinmeier

On September 30, Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili met with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Berlin, following a visit to Paris. Prior to the meeting, Zourabichvili engaged with the Georgian diaspora in the German capital.

During the Berlin talks, the two presidents discussed the pre-election climate in Georgia, which Zourabichvili described as being influenced by Russia. She also highlighted the challenges faced by the Georgian diaspora, noting that they encounter artificial barriers to participating in the country's elections, according to an official press release from the Georgian presidential administration.

Zourabichvili also raised concerns about obstacles being created for non-governmental organizations, specifically mentioning difficulties in conducting monitoring missions.

In reaffirming Georgia's European aspirations, Zourabichvili emphasized that the Georgian people are resolutely pro-European, stating that "the foreign orientation of the Georgian people was, is, and will be European."

President Steinmeier welcomed the Georgian Charter, a roadmap introduced by Zourabichvili aimed at guiding Georgia back toward its EU integration. He expressed his support for the victory of pro-European forces in Georgia and voiced



his solidarity with the Georgian people in their struggle for a European future.

German Ambassador to Geor-

gia, Peter Fischer, echoed these sentiments on social media, tweeting that Steinmeier thanked Zourabichvili for her

clear pro-European stance, while also expressing regret over Georgia's setbacks in the EU accession process. Fischer noted

that the current Georgian government is jeopardizing a historic opportunity for the nation.

TI Georgia Barred from Direct Election Monitoring, Vows to Continue Fight for Fair Elections

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Transparency International Georgia (TI Georgia) has announced that it will not be able

to monitor the upcoming October 26 parliamentary elections under its own name. This comes after the Tbilisi City Court upheld a decision by the Anti-Cor-

ruption Bureau, which declared TI Georgia and its Executive Director, Eka Gigauri, as entities with declared electoral goals. Despite the court ruling, TI

Georgia noted that legal proceedings are still ongoing in an effort to invalidate the Anti-Corruption Bureau's decision. The organization expressed concern about being treated as a political party, even though it does not participate in elections.

"TI Georgia refuses to recognize the above-mentioned status that was imposed on us in an absolutely illegal manner. We would like to stress once again that neither the organization nor its executive director are running for election," the statement said.

This designation subjects TI Georgia and its Executive Director to the same regulations that apply to political parties, including setting up an election fund, restrictions on receiving Western funding, and submitting financial reports like political parties. The organization highlighted that these demands are unjustified: "None of our representatives appear in any political party lists. Therefore, we refuse to comply with the requirements imposed by the Georgian Dream's Anti-Corruption Bureau."

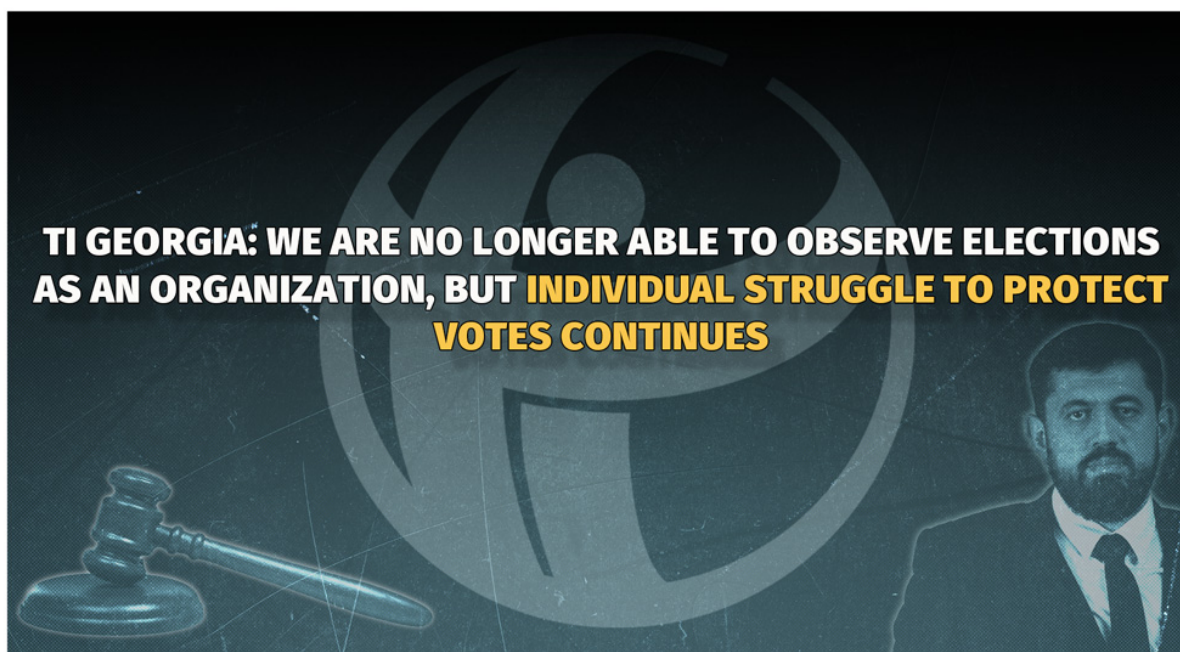
The watchdog believes the decision is aimed at blocking its election monitoring efforts, saying, "We have no doubt that this decision is

directed against the watchdog's efforts to observe the elections through a coalition and the observation mission 'My Voice.'"

Although TI Georgia has not officially lost its status as an election observer, the organization revealed, "We are in effect unable to directly observe the October 26 parliamentary elections on behalf of Transparency International Georgia." They further stressed, "This is the first time in the 24 years of TI Georgia's existence that we will not have a single observer registered under our name at the polling stations."

However, the organization remains committed to supporting election observation efforts through alternative channels: "Every employee of the organization will use its experience, knowledge, and intellectual resources to assist the observation mission 'My Voice' and to help our partner organizations conduct a highly qualified election observation mission."

TI Georgia reaffirmed its determination to fight for fair elections and Georgia's European future: "We continue to fight for the European future of our homeland! We will protect everyone's votes!"



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Tbilisi City Court Denies Appeals for Additional Polling Stations Abroad, Sparking Outrage

On September 30, the Tbilisi City Court ruled inadmissible three appeals against the Central Election

and former judge Beso Alavidze. ISFED lawyer Rati Tinikashvili criticized the ruling, stating, "The [Court's] rulings question the principles of elections such as universality and equality," and indicated plans to appeal to the Appeals Court.

Opposition member of the CEC, Ana Kobakhidze, claimed the decision deprives 90% of immigrants of their voting rights and expressed concerns about the ad-

Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze Says He No Longer Trusts European Banks Due to 'Robbery' of Bidzina Ivanishvili

"Don't worry about my finances. The reality is in front of you—look at the attitude of foreign banks towards Bidzina Ivanishvili—they robbed him. A person who has won all kinds of lawsuits will not get their money back. This is a po-



Commission's (CEC) decision to open only a limited number of polling stations abroad. This decision came despite requests from emigrants to increase the number of polling stations in cities like Spain, Italy, France, and the U.S.

The appeals were initiated by the United National Movement, represented by Tamar Kordzaia, the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy,

equacy of existing polling stations. She stated there is no legal recourse left to address the issue and called for a meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for clarification.

Kordzaia condemned the ruling as politically motivated, asserting that all branches of government are complicit in fulfilling "Bidzina Ivanishvili's task."



Kakha Kaladze, the Mayor of Tbilisi and General Secretary of the ruling Georgian Dream party, has stated that he no longer keeps his finances in European banks, citing a lack of trust due to their alleged treatment of former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili.

In response to a journalist's question about why he no longer holds funds in European banks, Kaladze referred to Ivanishvili's experience as a key reason.

litical decision," said Kaladze.

He added that such treatment has undermined his own confidence in European banks. "Why should I keep my money there? What is their attitude towards Bidzina Ivanishvili, and what did they do to him, right? They robbed him, in the full sense of the word, and why should I trust them? Of course, I don't trust them," he concluded.

EU supports uResidency launch: become Ukrainian e-resident remotely

Weather

Tuesday, October 1

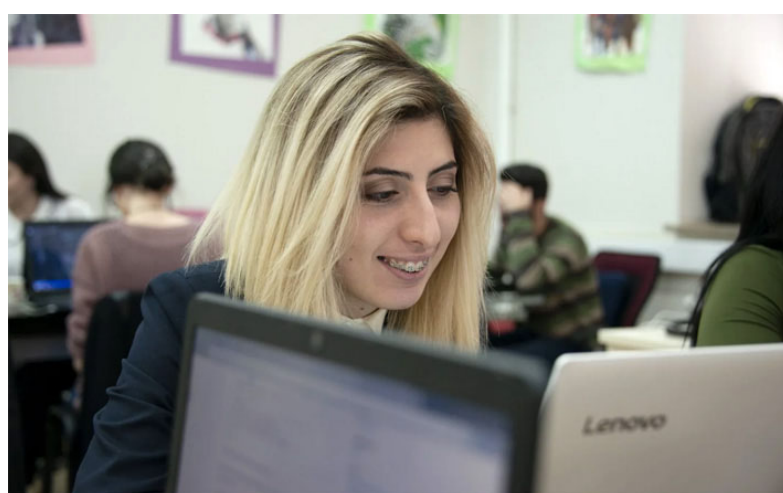
Day ☀️ Clear
High: 20°C

Night 🌧️ Mostly Cloudy
Low: 13°C

Wednesday, October 2

Day 🌧️ Mostly Cloudy
High: 21°C

Night 🌧️ Partly Cloudy
Low: 13°C



The European Union, through its EU4DigitalUA and DT4UA projects, has supported the development and launch of the uResidency – Ukrainian e-

residency programme. Thanks to uResidency, foreigners can register and run a business in Ukraine remotely while investing in the Ukrainian economy.

The programme offers foreign entrepreneurs attractive conditions for doing business — a 5% tax rate on profits, the ability to register remotely as a sole proprietor, and conduct business from anywhere in the world through a mobile application and web portal. Another advantage is the absence of accounting and reports. U-Residents do not need to worry about filling out documents for their business, as the bank will do it for them as a tax agent.

"This is a revolutionary project that not only offers foreigners a great service for doing business in Ukraine, but will also support the Ukrainian economy," said Mykhailo Fedorov, Vice Prime Minister for

Innovations, Development of Education, Science and Technologies — Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine. "There are only a few similar projects in the world. And we are already offering e-residency with the most favourable conditions for business. In addition, uResidency will become a source of support for our economy both during the war and after our victory."

The uResidency programme is aimed at small business owners in Asia and Europe. Its focus is on IT professionals and specialists providing online services in the creative economy.

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On the occasion of the National Day of the Czech Republic “The Day of Czech Statehood” and “Czech Armed Forces Day”, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr. Petr Kubernát and Mrs. Eva Kubernátová held a Reception on September 26.

