

President Zourabichvili Broadcasts Video Address on 1,000 Days Since the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

By Liza Mchedlidze

On November 19, Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili broadcasted a video address marking the 1,000th day since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In her address, she celebrated Ukraine's unwavering resistance and highlighted its broader significance in defending European freedom.

"For 1,000 days, you, Ukrainian friends, have been fighting to defend your country, your independence, and your freedom," Zourabichvili said. She emphasized that Ukraine's fight goes beyond its own borders, representing a broader struggle for all European nations standing against Russian imperialism and territorial expansion. "And you are waging this fight on behalf of us, on behalf of everyone, and on behalf of all Europeans who want to defend freedom against Russian imperialism and Russia's desire to annex the territory of its neighbors."

Zourabichvili expressed solidarity with Ukraine and reiterated that their struggle would never be forgotten. "This struggle of yours, dear Ukrainian friends, will never be forgotten,"



she added.

The president also made a pointed connection between Ukraine's resistance and Georgia's own ongoing challenges with Russia.

Zourabichvili referenced protests in occupied Abkhazia, where Georgian citizens are opposing Russia's attempts to further annex the region. "And it may be a coincidence, but certainly not,

that today, in occupied Abkhazia, our citizens are opposing another attempt by Russia to annex Abkhazia," she said.

The President expressed confidence that Russia's efforts in

both Ukraine and Georgia would fail, emphasizing that "wherever people fight for freedom and independence, they will win everywhere."

122nd IPRM Meeting Focuses on Detentions and Borderization

By Liza Mchedlidze



On November 19, the 122nd Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meeting was held near Ergneti, close to the Tskhinvali occupation line. Key discussions revolved around the illegal detention of Georgian citizens by Tskhinvali's occupying forces and ongoing "borderization" activities.

Irakli Antadze, deputy director of the analytical department of Georgia's State Security Service, highlighted the continued efforts to secure the release of nine Georgian citizens currently detained. "Active work is ongoing with support from international partners to ensure their return," he stated.

The meeting also addressed the "borderization" process, where occupying forces erect physical barriers along the occupation line. Antadze reiterated the Georgian government's stance that these actions disrupt freedom of movement and provoke severe incidents, urging an end to such activities.

Another key issue was the restricted operation of crossing points along the occupation line. The Georgian government criticized the current allowance of ten operational days per month as inadequate and called for daily crossings to better serve the local population.

The unresolved case of Tamaz Ginturi, a Georgian citizen allegedly murdered by occupying forces, was also raised. Antadze emphasized that justice for Ginturi and other victims remains a priority for the central government.

The next IPRM meeting is scheduled for early February 2025, continuing the dialogue on these pressing issues.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Abkhazia's De Facto President Resigns Amid Ongoing Protests and Russian Pressure



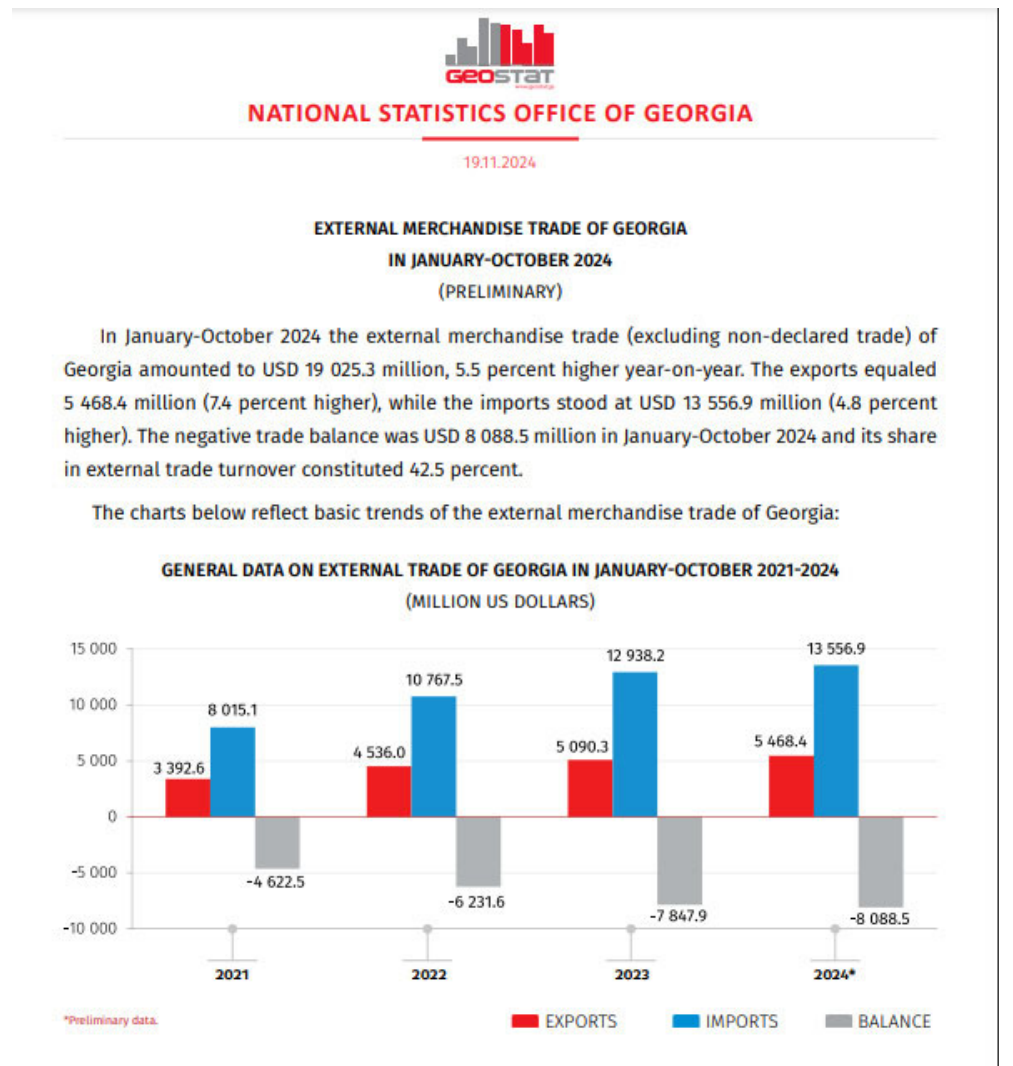
The parliament of occupied Abkhazia voted to accept the resignation of de facto president Aslan Bzhania, following protests sparked by the controversial "Investment Agreement with Russia." The decision came after several days of unrest, which began on November 15, when demonstrators stormed the so-called parliament and residential buildings in opposition to plans to ratify the agreement that would allow Russian ownership of land and property in the region.

In the vote, 31 "deputies" participated, with two ballots declared invalid. De facto Vice President Badra Gunba will assume the role of acting "president", while former "speaker" Valeri Bganba was appointed as the de facto prime minister.

According to a statement released by the press service of the de facto president, Bzhania's resignation was made to preserve stability and uphold constitutional order in the region. His resignation comes after growing discontent among the population, particularly over Abkhazia's closer ties with Russia, which included a decision by Moscow to cut funding to the region in September.

Geostat: Georgia's Foreign Trade Rises by 5.5% in 2024

Preliminary data from Geostat indicates that Georgia's foreign trade grew by 5.5% year-on-year in January-October 2024, reaching a total value of USD 19.025



billion. Exports rose by 7.4% to USD 5.468 billion, while imports increased by 4.8% to USD 13.557 billion, leaving a trade deficit of USD 8.089 billion, which accounts for 42.5% of trade turnover.

Turkey emerged as Georgia's top trade partner with USD 2.636 billion in trade volume, followed by Russia, the United States, China, and Germany. Kyrgyzstan led as the largest export destination with USD 1.048 billion, while Turkey dominated imports with USD 2.219 billion.

EBRD provides financing for Azerbaijan's largest ever solar projects at COP29

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has announced a landmark investment at the 29th annual United Nations Climate Change Conference in Baku (COP29), financing two utility-scale solar projects in Azerbaijan alongside the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

The three multilateral development banks will each provide US\$ 160 million, supporting the construction of two solar power



plants in Azerbaijan. The 445 MW and 315 MW solar parks in Bilasuvar and Neftchala are the largest renewable energy projects in the Caucasus. They are expected to operate from 2027.

"We are very pleased to be financing these solar plants, the largest to date in the Caucasus, saving over 600,000 tonnes of CO2 annually," said Nandita Parshad, Managing Director of the EBRD's Sustainable Infrastructure Group. "In addition to the real-world impact of powering up to 300,000 homes with green energy, this significant investment will transform the entire renewable energy market in the region."

(eunighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Wednesday, November 20

Day Partly Cloudy High: 14°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 7°C

Thursday, November 21

Day Partly Cloudy High: 16°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 5°C

published by The Messenger

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

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact. All contributions should be submitted by e-mail. The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.

And the award goes... to His Excellency Pizza!

An evening full of emotions took place on November 17 in the Georgian capital where the celebrations of the IX Week of Italian Cuisine in the world began!

The absolute protagonist of the first long-awaited event, organized by the Italian Em-

bassy in Tbilisi in collaboration with ICE-ITA as part of #SCIM24, #pizza, the most well-known and consumed Italian dish everywhere and one of the most famous symbols of Italian cuisine.

In the multifunctional space of

ExpoGeorgia, pizza makers and pizza enthusiasts gathered to celebrate one of the most loved and appreciated dishes in the world. The professionals of some Italian pizzerias present in Tbilisi challenged each other in a competition in the name of fun and love for pizza, an

iconic dish, simple but extraordinary, and tried to amaze the jury and the public with unique flavor combinations by proposing pizza prepared in all its flavors and versions. A real party, crowded and full of emotions, laughter and passion for Italian cuisine!





