

Kobakhidze Responds to Antony Blinken's Statement and Ukraine's Sanctions on GD Officials

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Kobakhidze responded to a statement by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who announced that the United States is preparing to take additional measures regarding the ongoing events in Georgia, including sanctions. Kobakhidze said the current U.S. administration is "trying to leave the new administration in as difficult a situation as possible," and that Blinken's statement is part of this effort.

"One thing is that this statement is completely false. We are talking about peaceful protesters, and when you see how peaceful the rallies organized in Georgia were, such a falsehood from the head of the State Department is certainly extremely disturbing. I very much hope that after January 20 [Trump's inauguration], we will not encounter such falsehoods in any American statement. Of course, this announcement is also a continuation of this process."

The current administration is trying to leave the worst possible situation in the entire region for the new administration. This applies to Ukraine, Georgia, and this statement is, naturally, a continuation of all of this," said Kobakhidze.

Kobakhidze also addressed Ukraine's imposition of sanctions on Bidzina Ivanishvili and 18 other individuals, stating that this reflects the difficult situation within Ukraine itself.

The Prime Minister of Georgian Dream claimed that there are two reasons for the sanctions: "Georgia did not impose sanctions on Russia and did not send volunteer fighters to Ukraine."

Kobakhidze spoke about "two fronts".

"From here, it became apparent what the actual intention was. There was a plan for not one front, but two fronts. Of course, this decision taken by the Ukrainian authorities at the time was a continuation of that plan."

He also mentioned the expulsion of Georgia's ambassador from Ukraine, a man who had remained in Kyiv since the start of the war. "Expelled — why? Because Russia was 'killing Saakashvili by torture in Georgia with our hands'," Kobakhidze said.

"Today, the situation of the Ukrainian government is even more difficult, and the probable decision we are talking about is an echo of this difficult situation," he added.

Kobakhidze also addressed the arrests of opposition leaders, stating, "The main source of violence was the party offices, and as soon as we entered the party offices and removed the relevant weapons of violence, the violence immediately ended."

"Yesterday, you saw that violent party groups no longer had the resources for violence. As soon as the source of the violence was removed, the Ministry of Internal Affairs did not need to react immediately."



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Opposition Leader Aleksandre Elisashvili Transferred to Clinic After Arrest

Aleksandre Elisashvili, a leader of the opposition's Strong Georgia coalition, was transferred to the Vivamed clinic following his arrest on December 4. His lawyer reported that Elisashvili had been subjected to physical violence during the arrest, resulting in visible injuries.

"Serious violence was committed against Aleko Elisashvili during the arrest. He has injuries, bruises on his face, and potentially a broken rib," the lawyer stated.

Elisashvili was detained at the Courtyard Marriott hotel in Freedom Square. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, his arrest is connected to an incident involving Ali Babaev, chairman of the National Congress of Azerbaijanis in Georgia and a co-founder of the *Georgian Dream* of Democratic Georgia party.

Authorities allege that on December 2, near Kostava Street in Tbilisi, Elisashvili verbally and physically assaulted Babaev on political grounds. Elisashvili has

been charged under Article 156, Part 2, Sub-Clause "A" of the Georgian Criminal Code, which addresses persecution related to political activities committed with violence. If convicted, he faces up to three years in prison.

The Public Defender has addressed the treatment of Elisashvili, claiming that police used excessive force during his arrest.

"The police used disproportionate force against Aleko Elisashvili during his detention. We visited him yesterday, and he has visible injuries, including bruises and scratches on his face. He also reported back injuries from the beating," stated Public Defender Ioseliani.

The Public Defender's office has notified the Special Investigation Service about the alleged mistreatment and confirmed it will monitor the ongoing investigation.



The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Kobakhidze: Georgia to Wait for International Recognition of Election Legitimacy Before Activating Bilateral Relations



Irakli Kobakhidze stated that Georgia will wait for each country to recognize the legitimacy of the elections, after which "this will allow us to activate bilateral relations." This was Kobakhidze's response when asked if members of the Georgian Dream government had communicated with their European partners following the elections. "Communication continues on a regular basis. The new Minis-

ter of Foreign Affairs is currently in Malta, where ongoing meetings are held in the OSCE format, and we will continue these discussions. There has also been some confidential telephone communication, including with European Union representatives," Kobakhidze explained. "At this stage, our consulta-

tions are primarily in multilateral formats, such as with the OSCE and the European Union. We will wait for each country to recognize the legitimacy of the elections, and once that happens, we will activate bilateral relations. It is crucial that everyone accepts the OSCE/ODIHR's conclusions. Once we receive this recognition, we will engage actively with any country," Kobakhidze added.

Public Defender Reports Police Misconduct Against Protest Detainees

Public Defender Levan Ioseliani has reported widespread allegations of police misconduct against detainees arrested during ongoing protests. "My office continues visiting arrested and injured individuals. So far, my trustees have visited 260 people, and it is regrettable that 188 of them report improper treatment by the police," Ioseliani stated.

Representatives of the Public Defender's office have conducted visits to temporary detention centers and civil clinics across multiple locations, including



Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi, and other cities. Many detainees have

alleged beatings and mistreatment during their detention.

EU urges Georgian authorities to stop using excessive force against protesters

Post



🇬🇪 Georgia: Alarming reports of arbitrary detention, violence and ill-treatment against protesters.

We urge authorities to stop using excessive force and ensure freedom of assembly. All acts of violence must be investigated immediately.

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The European Union's Lead Spokesperson on foreign and security policy, Anitta Hipper said yesterday on X that the EU is getting "alarm-

ing reports of arbitrary detention, violence and ill-treatment against protesters".

"We urge authorities to stop using excessive force and ensure freedom of assembly. All acts of violence must be investigated immediately," Anitta Hipper said.

Another wave of protests in Georgia started as a result of the Georgian Dream government's decision on 28 November to suspend the EU accession process and withdraw budgetary support from the European Union until the end of 2028.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

On December 4, at the Ambassador's official residence, Ambassador Ishizuka presented the Ambassador's Commendation Award to the movie director Ms. Lana Gogoberidze.

Ms. Gogoberidze, a graduate of the Department of Filmmaking at the Moscow State University, and also worked at the movie studio "Georgian Film". She won in the Best Director category at the Tokyo International Film Festival for "Oromtriali" (1986). "Golden Thread" (2019), a film inspired by Japanese "kintsugi" (gold thread), was screened in Japan when she was 91 years old, attracting much attention, and

Ambassador's Commendation Ceremony of Ms. Lana Gogoberidze

thus contributing to the mutual understanding between Japan and Georgia through film.

On this day, Ambassador Ishizuka presented Ms. Gogoberidze with a certificate of

commendation in recognition of her achievement in promoting friendship and goodwill between Japan and Georgia through cultural exchange over many years. Ms. Gogoberidze's associates

were also present at the ceremony.

The Japanese Ambassador/Consul-General stationed in each country or region confers this award on individuals or or-

ganizations that have contributed to the promotion of mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and their respective countries or regions.



Weather

Friday, December 6

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 9°C

Night Clear

Low: -1°C

Saturday, December 7

Day Clear

High: 9°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 2°C

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