

Levan Davitashvili: Georgia and U.S. Positions Fully Aligned on Future Cooperation

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia's First Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Levan Davitashvili, during a visit to Washington together with the Minister of Finance and the President of the National Bank, said that Georgia and the United States have aligned positions on future cooperation.

"We had a rather lengthy meeting in the U.S. State Department, which covered all aspects of cooperation between Georgia and the United States. Of course, we also touched on the problems that have existed in past years in the relationship between the two countries, but the main focus was on the prospects for cooperation, where the positions of the new U.S. administration and Georgia are fully aligned," said Levan Davitashvili.

As Davitashvili highlighted, the visit included productive meetings with international financial institutions, where they discussed financing opportunities for Georgia. He emphasized that maintaining a steady flow of international funding is crucial for advancing major projects in the country. Davitashvili also stressed the importance of fostering a close dialogue with the new U.S. administration during the visit.

"In parallel, we are holding bilateral meetings, mainly with counterpart agencies, but we started these meetings with the State Department, as it is important to have clear political positions — this is a key prerequisite for various types of cooperation, including in the economic field," Levan Davitashvili stated.



According to the First Vice Prime Minister, the Georgian government's interest and goal is to build cooperation around a positive agenda and to identify areas where mutually beneficial collaboration is possible for both countries. He said that these areas should eventually be translated into concrete action plans.

"There was full support for this approach, including at the State Department, because this aligns with the overall vision of President Trump's administration, and naturally, the State Department is supportive of implementing that vision. We touched on many areas during the meeting at the State Department, and the dialogue then continued with specific, relevant agencies, including the Department of Commerce, the Treasury Department, and so on.

We will also have meetings with the U.S. Trade Representative, and the following meetings will continue at the White House, where we will have close communication with many representatives of the administration and cover many important topics," said the First Vice Prime Minister, according to a statement released

by the press service.

According to Levan Davitashvili, it is also worth noting that it has been less than three months since the new U.S. administration entered the White House, and thus, many things are still in the process of being formed, including in terms of international policy — something that was noted at every stage of the meetings.

Helsinki Commission Urges Action on Georgia, Calls for New Elections and Release of Political Prisoners



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Leaders of the U.S. Helsinki Commission have issued a strong statement of support for the Georgian people, marking the 150th consecutive day of peaceful protests against the ruling Georgian Dream party.

Senator Roger Wicker (MS), Representative Joe Wilson (SC-02), Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (RI), Representative Steve Cohen (TN-09), Representative Richard Hudson (NC-09), and Senator John Cornyn (TX)

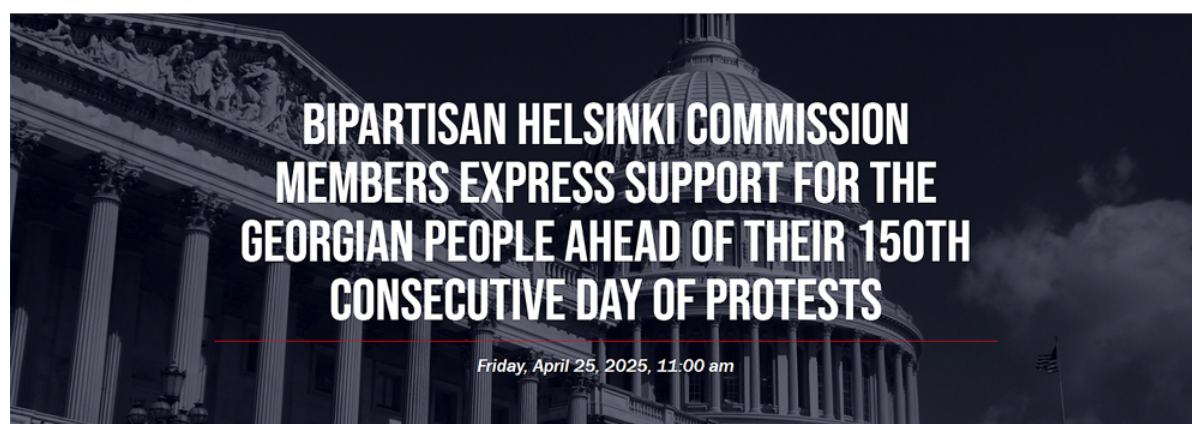
called attention to what they described as a growing threat to democracy in Georgia.

"Tomorrow marks the 150th consecutive day of peaceful demonstrations in Georgia, an extraordinary expression of Georgians' enduring commitment to freedom and independence for their country. We are proud to stand with the Georgian people as they refuse to surrender their democratic aspirations to an illegitimate regime," the statement reads.

The Commissioners condemned the actions of the Georgian Dream government, accusing it of undermining democratic institutions and pushing Georgia closer to authoritarian powers.

"Georgian Dream is clinging

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7496; Euro - 3.1224; GBP - 3.6597; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.3301; Swiss Franc - 3.3156

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to power by denying Georgians the rights and liberties that democratic societies hold dear. By cracking down on independent media, opposition political parties, and peaceful protestors,

Georgian Dream is isolating their country from the transatlantic community and condemning Georgia to a future of repression aligned with Russia, China, and Iran," the statement said. The statement warned that Georgia's shift toward autocracy

would have serious consequences for U.S. interests and regional security. "Georgia's vibrant democratic spirit once made it a beacon of hope in the region. If Georgia continues down this pathway toward autocracy, we stand to lose

an ally firmly committed to our shared security and democratic values. Meanwhile, we will be leaving Georgians to suffer under a Russia-controlled authoritarian government after their decades-long struggle for freedom," the Helsinki Commission

members stated. They called on the United States' allies to take a firm stand. "We call on our transatlantic partners to join us in demanding new free and fair elections and the release of all political prisoners in Georgia. Failure to act would not only betray the hopes and dreams of millions of Georgians, but also greatly diminish the possibility of a free, secure, and prosperous South Caucasus," the statement concluded.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Irakli Garibashvili Leaves Georgian Dream and Politics



Irakli Garibashvili, chairman of the ruling Georgian Dream party and former prime minister, announced his departure from both his party role and politics altogether. Speaking at a press briefing on April 25, Garibashvili said he has "accomplished" his goals and plans to move into the private sector to "test" his abilities in other fields. Citing a desire to "devote more time" to his family, Garibashvili reflected on his political career, saying, "Every step I have taken in my political life has been based on a specific goal: to serve our country and people and to strengthen our

state." He emphasized that he had "paid his dues" by promoting stability and progress and that he "no longer sees the need to remain in politics."

Garibashvili did not announce any specific plans for his next role but confirmed that his time in politics is over for now. During his remarks, Garibashvili praised Georgian Dream's founder and honorary chair, Bidzina Ivanishvili, calling him "a guarantee of peace and stability" who has "averted major threats" and "brought tangible progress and development to all spheres" of Georgian society. Garibashvili added, "If the Georgian Dream has finally emerged as a united and strong political force, it is thanks to Ivanishvili."

Public Defender Comments on 5,000 GEL Fines for Blocking Streets



Public Defender Levan Ioseliani commented on the recent imposition of 5,000 GEL fines for citizens blocking streets during protests, speaking on the air of Palitra. Ioseliani stressed that small groups do not have the right to obstruct public roads. "A fine of 5,000 GEL is a deterrent, including for such rallies, because when such fines are imposed, people may refrain," he said. He noted the financial impact of the fine, calling it significant. "A fine of 5,000

GEL is a high burden. It is important for the participants of the rally to consider that 10, 20 and even 50 people have not

been given the legitimacy to block the street." According to Ioseliani, protestors still have the right to express their views, but blocking streets must meet certain conditions. "They can express their opinion somewhere, but this is not a sufficient number. In the case when the street is blocked due to the large number of people, then the prerequisite for the existence of that fine will not exist either," he explained.

EU and UNDP in Ukraine deliver specialised vehicles to health care services to Chernihiv Oblast



The European Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Ukraine have handed over four specialised vehicles to Chernihiv Oblast to strengthen mobile teams that provide social, psychosocial, and health care services. These "hubs on wheels" will help respond quickly to the needs of community residents affected by the war. They will ensure access to a wide range of services — including home care, palliative, and in-kind assistance, and psychological support — even in

the most remote areas. The vehicles will enable multidisciplinary teams to reinforce the health care and social support systems, delivering more comprehensive and higher-quality care to vulnerable population groups. The vehicles were procured and equipped as part of the flagship 'EU4Recovery – Empowering Communities in Ukraine' partnership between UNDP and the EU.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Monday, April 28

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 16°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 7°C

Tuesday, April 29

Day Rain
High: 8°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 7°C

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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

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