

## Zourabichvili: MEGOBARI Act Signals Georgia's Growing Isolation, Calls for New Elections

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia's fifth President, Salome Zourabichvili, has sharply criticized the ruling Georgian Dream party and its honorary chair Bidzina Ivanishvili, saying the recently introduced U.S. MEGOBARI Act marks a turning point that confirms Georgia's growing international isolation.

"This is an indicator that there is a deep political crisis in the country," Zourabichvili stated, referencing the U.S. legislation that targets high-ranking Georgian Dream officials. "The country is paralyzed and entering isolation from its main partners—both the EU, whose representatives are insulted daily by Georgian Dream, and the U.S., which is already enforcing this list."

According to her, those named in the MEGOBARI Act are now flagged internationally. "Being found on such a list means that these names are known at the borders of all countries. This is a crisis for the country."

Zourabichvili directly blamed Bidzina Ivanishvili for the crisis, alleging he is ruling alone and possibly under Russian in-



fluence. "No one is responsible except for the person who is leading this country into an abyss," she said. "The solution is clear: new elections."

She argued that fresh elections are a peaceful, democratic way to resolve the ongoing crisis and restart stalled governance. "This country has been

frozen for six months," she said. "We need decisions that will revive this country."

Zourabichvili concluded with a call for unity: "Everyone must

come to their senses. We must help the country by standing together and demanding elections now. Time is running out."

## Kobakhidze Elected Georgian Dream Chair, Unveils Council and Sets Party Agenda

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE



On May 7, Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze was elected as chair of the ruling Georgian Dream party during its congress, following Irakli Garibashvili's resignation from politics on April 25. Kobakhidze announced the party's new 15-member political council and delivered a speech outlining GD's ideological stance and future goals.

Kobakhidze opened by praising GD founder Bidzina Ivanishvili, crediting him for 13 years of peace and sovereignty. "Thanks to Mr. Ivanishvili, Georgia has not seen war since independence and is more sovereign than ever," he said. He also thanked Garibashvili for leading the party through the 2024 elections.

In his speech, Kobakhidze warned of unnamed "influential forces" that threaten sovereignty, democracy, and traditional values. He accused them of eroding identity, promoting immorality, and fighting against

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.7467; Euro - 3.1219; GBP - 3.6668; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.3965; Swiss Franc - 3.3334

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CONTINUED FROM Page 1

Christianity. "This is a difficult battle in which any retreat is a crime against our nation," he said.

Kobakhidze outlined GD's pri-

orities: EU membership, economic development, political unity, and reintegration of Russian-occupied territories. He promised improved living standards for every family and vowed to remove "radicals" from poli-

tics.

The new political council includes: Bidzina Ivanishvili (Honorary Chair), Irakli Kobakhidze (Chair, PM), Kakha Kaladze (General Secretary), Shalva Papuashvili, Mamuka

Mdinaradze, Giorgi Volski, Tea Tsulukiani, Ministers: Vakhtang Gomelauri, Irakli Chikovani, Maka Botchorishvili, MPs: Nikoloz Samkharadze, Dimitri Samkharadze, Nino

Tsilosani, Mariam Kvirishvili, Sul Khan Tamazashvili

Kobakhidze said GD is already preparing for local elections and expects a tenth consecutive victory.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### U.S. Embassy Issues Security Alert Over Bomb Threats in Tbilisi



U.S. EMBASSY IN GEORGIA

Country/Area ▼

Emergency Information for American Citizens

Information for U.S. Citizens in Russia

### EMERGENCY ALERT – U.S. EMBASSY TBILISI MAY 7, 2025

By U.S. EMBASSY TBILISI

On the evening of May 6, the U.S. Embassy in Georgia issued a security alert regarding reported bomb threats targeting three major shopping malls in Tbilisi: East Point, Galleria Tbilisi, and the Tbilisi Shopping Area. The Embassy advised its personnel to avoid these locations until further notice and encouraged the public to monitor local media for updates.

"The Regional Security Office of Embassy Tbilisi has advised all Embassy staff to avoid these locations," the alert stated, raising concerns over public safety and the nature of the threats.

Shortly after the alert was made public, Georgia's State Security Service (SSSG) responded via a Facebook post,

releasing uncoordinated statements.

### Tbilisi Court Sentences Businessmen in Embezzlement Case, Families Claim Political Motives

Judge Iza Kelenjeridze of Tbilisi City Court found businessman Giorgi Chikvaidze and his associate Irakli Papiashvili guilty of embezzling large sums of money. Chikvaidze received a nine-year prison sentence, while Papiashvili was sentenced to eight years. Both men deny the charges, and their legal teams plan to appeal the ruling. Tensions flared in the courtroom as

Papiashvili was taken into custody, prompting an emotional reaction from supporters and family members. Chants of "Shame!" and "Murusidze's servant"

revealed information about Bidzina Ivanishvili, founder of the ruling Georgian Dream party, and vowed to reveal more in the coming days. Tsereteli de-



echoed through the court — the latter referencing influential Appeals Court judge Levan Murusidze, often associated with Georgia's so-called "judicial clan."

Chikvaidze's mother, Eka Tsereteli, alleged that the case was politically motivated. She claimed her son holds sensi-

fended both men's innocence and openly criticized the presiding judge.

Similarly, Papiashvili's father accused the court of being influenced by politically connected figures, suggesting that the verdict was intended to target Chikvaidze specifically.

### Follow EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos on Instagram

European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos now



has an account on Instagram.

Follow her account to stay up to date with her posts, photos and videos related to EU Enlargement, European integration of Ukraine and Moldova, and cooperation with other Eastern Partner countries.

Her next visit will be to Moldova, from 9 to 11 May, where Marta Kos will join the celebrations to mark Europe Day 2025.

Marta Kos is the Commissioner for Enlargement since 2024. She drives the European

Union's enlargement process forward and develops the EU's relations with countries in the region, including in the Western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova.

She is responsible for working with candidate and potential candidate countries on their merits-based path to join the EU, leading the Commission's continued support of Ukraine, and supporting the countries of the Southern Caucasus, in particular on regional connectivity.

(eunighbourseast.eu)

## Weather

Thursday, May 8

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 25°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 13°C

Friday, May 9

Day Clear

High: 28°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 16°C

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