

Zourabichvili: The Regime Has Entered Its Final Stage



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia's fifth president, Salome Zourabichvili, addressed a protest rally near the Parliament on Sunday, declaring that the ruling Georgian

Dream party is collapsing and increasingly isolated from both the Georgian people and the international community.

"The result is clear. The collapse has begun in Georgian Dream. They are devouring each

other. There is complete distrust among them, they are removing people and raising corruption issues to get rid of others," Zourabichvili said during her speech. "It's a confusing situation for them, but clear to us.

This is the final stage of a classic dictator and dictatorial regimes."

Zourabichvili claimed that the party's internal power struggles have exposed deep divisions and desperation. "The weaker they

become, the more they try to show supposed strength, and that show of strength results in repressive laws, new fines, and arrests. But this is only an illusion. They cannot regain their strength. They will never regain it. This is their final stage."

She emphasized that Georgian Dream is now fully cut off from international support. "They are in complete isolation from the rest of the world. No one meets with them. They try to create parodies like opening a consulate in Milan to show they have connections, but they have none. The EU High Representative visited Azerbaijan and Armenia, and didn't even glance their way. That is their real situation."

Addressing the protesters, Zourabichvili called on citizens to resist discouragement and remain united in the face of the government's attempts to undermine opposition. "If they cannot grow stronger themselves, they want to weaken us. They do this by removing leaders and trying to pit parties against each other. But there is still a platform for unity, and that is their failure."

She also responded to ongoing criticism over the lack of a detailed opposition plan. "Some people want to endlessly ask me for a non-existent plan. The plan for tomorrow and the day after is unity until we achieve the result," she said. "The regime cannot win. Our answer to everything is unity. We have no other response."

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Elene Khoshtaria, a leader of the opposition bloc "Coalition for Change," has announced she will end her hunger strike if opposition parties agree not to participate in the upcoming local elections.

Khoshtaria made the statement when asked whether she would stop her hunger strike if the opposition formally declared a boycott. "Yes," she said. "If that clarity is established. I'm not saying that the clarity has to be exactly as I put it – with precise points and exactly what kind of struggle it should be. I am simply sharing with the public my vision of how we should fight."

She emphasized that while the details of the strategy could be negotiated, the core principle must be unity around "zero cooperation, non-acceptance, and non-recognition" of the ruling regime.

"If we all agree on this vision collectively, even with adjustments to the form – it shouldn't just follow my way – but if we fundamentally agree, then of course I will put all my energy into the fight I believe in," Khoshtaria said.

Tina Bokuchava, chairperson of the United National Movement, expressed full support for Khoshtaria's position in a statement. She wrote that Khoshtaria's hunger strike highlights the need for a united stance against what she described as a "special operation disguised as local elections."

Khoshtaria Says She Will End Hunger Strike if Opposition Boycotts Elections



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“It should not be necessary to put a human life on the line for all democratic forces to realize that any form of compromise with the regime is disastrous,” Bokuchava wrote. “But I thank her for this self-sacrifice.”

Bokuchava said she learned of Khoshtaria’s decision to begin the hunger strike while returning from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of

Europe (PACE), where she had been advocating for the release of political prisoners.

She reiterated the United National Movement’s position that the local elec-

tions cannot be held separately under the current political conditions. “Local self-government elections can only be held together with parliamentary elections, under conditions that ensure fair rules

of the game.”

Bokuchava concluded her statement with words of solidarity: “Solidarity with Elene. Freedom to the regime’s prisoners.”

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The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

German Ambassador Warns That Political Intolerance Undermines Georgia’s EU Aspirations



German Ambassador to Georgia, Peter Fischer, has responded to criticism from Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili by warning that growing political hostility in the country contra-

dicts democratic values and risks turning Georgia’s goal of joining the European Union by 2030 into an illusion.

Earlier in the day, Speaker Papuashvili commented on the ambassador’s visit to two politicians on hunger strike outside Parliament. “Ev-

lished a statement on his official X account, defending his visit and criticizing the current political environment.

“It is human empathy to talk with politicians on hunger strike,” Fischer wrote. “The environment of ‘if you are not with us, you are our enemy’ is being promoted. This mentality directly contradicts democracy and turns the idea of ‘joining the EU by 2030’ into an illusion.”

Fischer had visited Elene Khoshtaria and Gedevan Popkhadze, two public figures currently on hunger strike near the Parliament building. Khoshtaria is a leader in the opposition coalition, while Popkhadze is a former member of the ruling Georgian Dream party.

Parliament Commission Summons Detained Politicians for Foreign Policy Probe

The Georgian Parliament’s Temporary

Investigative Commission has summoned several individuals, including detained politicians, to its next session scheduled for June 30 at 10:00 a.m. The session will examine actions by certain politicians from 2012 to 2025 that are alleged to have harmed Georgia’s foreign policy interests.

According to the Commission’s statement, former officials Viktor Dolidze and Konstantine Zhgenti have been called to appear. Participation from the penitentiary is also planned for detained politicians Giorgi Vashadze, Nika Gvaramia, and Mamuka Khazaradze.

Gvaramia, Khazaradze, and Vashadze have submitted written refusals to take part in the proceedings.

“The session will address the issue of actions by certain politicians from 2012 to 2025 that have harmed Georgia’s foreign policy interests,” the official statement reads.



EU and UK make contributions to EBRD-managed Chernobyl ICCA fund

The European Union and the United Kingdom will make con-

tributions to the EBRD-managed International Chernobyl Cooperation Account (ICCA) as part of ongoing international efforts to support the restoration of the key functions of the New Safe Confinement (NSC) at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (ChNPP) in Ukraine.

The EU will contribute up to Euro25 million, while the United Kingdom will contribute up to Euro6.7 million. Both pledges

were made at the ICCA Assembly meeting on 26 June, in London. The money will be used to fund emergency repairs to the NSC following the Russian drone attack in February 2025.

According to the EBRD, that strike has severely affected the NSC’s two primary functions: containing radiological hazards and supporting long-term decommissioning. Key systems designed to ensure the NSC’s 100-

year lifespan have been rendered non-operational, with a significant risk of further deterioration in the absence of swift emergency repairs.

“While it is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of the cost of repairs to the NSC at the moment, the scale of the damage and the complex radiological environment suggest that the total cost of the emergency works could exceed Euro100 million,”

says a press release by EBRD.

The International Chernobyl Cooperation Account (ICCA) was established by the EBRD in November 2020 at the request of the Ukrainian government. It was set up as a multilateral fund to support the development of a comprehensive plan for Chernobyl. The EBRD manages the ICCA, which currently holds some Euro25 million in donor funds.

(euneighbourseast.eu)

Weather

Monday, June 30

Day T-storm
High: 23°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 16°C

Tuesday, July 1

Day Clear
High: 28°C

Night Clear
Low: 17°C

published by
The Messenger

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