

NEWS DIGEST ON GEORGIA

October 15-16

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❖ Occupied Regions

❖ Abkhazia Region

1. Abkhaz 'Government Head' Appointed

On October 14, Raul Khajimba, the Moscow-backed leader of Abkhazia, appointed Valery Bganba as the head of the region's "cabinet of ministers."

According to the "presidential" decree, "prime minister of Abkhazia" should submit proposals on the structure and composition of the "cabinet of ministers" now.

Bganba's appointment follows the recent "presidential polls" in occupied Abkhazia where Raul Khajimba was re-elected for a second five-year term (*Civil.ge, October 15, 2019*).

❖ Tskhinvali Region (*so called South Ossetia*)

2. State Security Service – Russian occupational forces continue provocative activities near Chorchana and Tsaghvli villages

Russian occupational forces continue provocative activities, namely illegal 'borderization' process near Chorchana and Tsaghvli villages of Khashuri Municipality – The State Security Service informs.

According to the Security Service, no 'borderization' works are being carried out on the territory of Kobi village of Khashuri Municipality.

As State Security Service told Georgian First Channel, a hotline is activated and the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia is informed about the ongoing illegal works (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

❖ Foreign Affairs

3. Georgian PM meets with his Armenian colleague as part of official visit to Armenia

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, being on an official visit in Armenia, met with his Armenian colleague Nikol Pashinyan.

The official ceremony took place at Governmental House of the Armenian Republic in honoring of Georgian PM. Georgian and Armenian prime ministers held a face-to-face meeting after the welcoming ceremony. The sides talked about friendly neighborly relations and cooperation in different spheres.

Georgian Prime Minister underlined that ancestors laid the foundation for the history of friendship between the two countries and nations.

"The Georgian government is ready to work harder to make the Georgian-Armenian relations more efficient for the welfare of every citizen. Although we have good relations at present, we can further

develop the relations to bring more benefit to people including in economy, constructions, infrastructure, culture, sport and other spheres," Gakharia said (*1TV, October 15, 2019*).

4. Georgian PM – Stability in the region is one of the main objectives that will give possibility to work for economic development of our countries

Stability in the region is one of the main objectives that will give us the possibility to work for the economic development of our countries – Giorgi Gakharia, being on an official visit in Armenia, said during the meeting with his Armenian colleague Nikol Pashinyan.

Georgian PM thanked his Armenian colleague for a warm meeting and expressed hope that his visit would be productive and results-oriented. "Our cooperation is very good on international platforms, we cooperate well in direction of economy, culture, and we will do our best to make this cooperation more effective, results-oriented and intensive," Gakharia said (*1TV, October 15, 2019*).

5. Georgian PM meets with President of Armenia, Catholicos of All Armenians

Prime Minister of Georgia Giorgi Gakharia, being on an official visit in Armenia, met with President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

Georgian Prime Minister and President of Armenia held talks in face-to-face and expanded formats. The sides stressed a positive dynamics in direction of friendly and neighborly relations and the development of trade-economic connections.

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II hosted the Georgian governmental delegation. The head of the Georgian government laid a wreath at the Memorial of Armenian Genocide of 1915 (*1TV, October 15, 2019*).

6. President of Georgia – Georgia stands with the people of Japan

President of Georgia Salome Zurbashvili expressed sorrow about people, who died during and in the aftermath of Typhoon Hagibis in Japan.

"I offer my condolences to the families of the victims of Typhoon Hagibis. Georgia stands with the people of Japan in this difficult time and hopes for a speedy recovery from this tragedy," President Zurbashvili wrote on Twitter.

The toll of death and destruction from a typhoon that tore through central and northern Japan climbed Tuesday, as the government said it was considering approving a special budget for the disaster response and eventual reconstruction (*1TV, October 15, 2019*).

7. Georgia in NATO PA London Resolutions

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly's Autumn Session in London adopted six resolutions on October 14, appealing among others for Alliance leaders' to reaffirm NATO's Open Door Policy towards Georgia.

In particular it urges them "to reaffirm commitment to NATO's Open Door policy as a tool to spread the zone of stability and democratic standards in Europe, to support the Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine, and to help strengthen their resilience against foreign interference." (*Civil.ge, October 15, 2019*).

8. Grigol Liliashvili – Russian occupation remains main threat for Georgia

Russian occupation remains the main threat for Georgia – Grigol Liliashvili, First Deputy Head of State Security Service of Georgia said during the sitting of the Georgian Parliamentary Defense and Security

Committee, where Liluashvili's candidacy is being discussed for the post of Head of State Security Service.

Liluashvili said that the armed forces of the Russian Federation, illegally deployed across Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, serve as a serious challenge for Georgia.

"Struggle against Russian occupation is a challenge for the Georgian central government, and the latest unfortunate international experience shows that conflicts ruled by the Russian Federation in different countries of the world represent the part of foreign policy of the official Moscow coping with which is almost impossible without adequate interference of international partners, support or a reaction," Liluashvili said (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

9. Grigol Liluashvili - State Security Service reduced number of possible supporters of terrorist organizations

The State Security Service significantly reduced the number of possible supporters of terrorist organizations – Grigol Liluashvili, First Deputy Head of State Security Service of Georgia said during the sitting of the Georgian Parliamentary Defense and Security Committee.

Liluashvili named Islamic State as one of the main threats. He said that the Islamic State lost many fighters but this did not give the ground for relaxation since other risks generated with the possible movement of old fighters and their family members to refugee camps that caused new challenges for intelligence services.

"We closely cooperate with our partners including with respect to information supply. Since some Georgian citizens were taking part in the military activities on the territory of Syria, we are trying to provide the coalition with the information and measures about the struggle against terrorism," Liluashvili said (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

❖ Economy and Social Affairs

10. Export increased by 11.1%, import decreased by 3.3% in January-September

The turnover of foreign trade (except non-declared trade) reached USD 9 193.7 million in January-September that is higher by 0.5 percent than the same period of last year based on the data of the National Statistics Bureau.

According to the National Statistics Service, the export was USD 2 719.2 million that is an increase of 11.1% in comparison to the same data of the last year. The import was USD 474.5 million –3.3% less.

The negative trade balance in the calculation period was USD 3 755.3 that is 40.8% of foreign trade turnover (*Geostat.ge, October 15, 2019*).

11. Vice Prime Minister – In case of non-fulfillment of interim obligations, government has the right to terminate investment agreement with Anaklia Consortium

In case of non-fulfillment of interim obligations, the government has the right to terminate investment agreement with Anaklia Development Consortium – Maia Tskitishvili, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure said.

The deadline expires today for Anaklia Development Consortium to present the document that confirms filling up capital fully by the investor. The Consortium also has to present a non-compulsory document that has to do with obtaining credit finances from banks.

Anaklia Development Consortium consists of specialized firms with diverse backgrounds, which together form a global business leadership team that will work with the Government of Georgia to construct Anaklia Deepwater Port (*1TV, October 15, 2019*).

12. EU Ambassador to Georgia – Importance of Anaklia Port Project is obvious for everyone

"Anaklia Port is a very important infrastructure project. Although there is certain disagreement among the partners, its implementation is important. We hear positive attitude and readiness for implementation of the project from all sides, therefore I think that the importance of Anaklia Port Project is obvious for everyone," Hartzell said (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

13. Director General of Anaklia Development Consortium welcomes decision of Ministry of Infrastructure and invites government to negotiations

"We clearly expressed our position and the status of the company and the project in general yesterday. We still maintain this position and believe that there are specific obstacles in the process of the project, which should be overcome by joint efforts," Akhvlediani said.

In addition, he said that concrete steps should be taken with regard to investors. "Yesterday we talked about a lot of facts that have happened in the last six weeks. There are steps to be taken with regard to investors. I also think that there should be an immediate meeting with the international financial institutions and issues should be decided by joint forces around the negotiating table," Akhvlediani said (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

14. Finance Minister meets with WB Executive Director

Finance Minister of Georgia Ivane Machavariani met with Koen Davidse, Executive Director of the World Bank within the framework of annual meetings with the group of World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

As Press Service of Finance Ministry reports, the sides positively evaluated Georgia's progress in carrying out reforms and expressed hope to make the cooperation more active.

Koen Davidse welcomed Georgia's efforts to make doing business easier and expressed support in the development of infrastructure and the private sector.

The WB Executive Director said that Georgia's economy was developing well. "We see good perspectives and are ready for support," Davidse claimed (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

15. Mamuka Khazaradze makes statement about possibility for continuation of Anaklia Project

"I would like to declare with full responsibility in the address to the government that if we want to implement the historic Anaklia project of national interest, we have to put aside all ambitions. There is only one way out – the government has to admit that the investment environment is worsened in Georgia, and if we look at it in figures, there is a decrease of foreign investments' inflow in our country this year by 54%. Therefore, the government has to draw the conclusion that international organizations do not trust the government.

Also, one of the ways out is that any high-ranking official takes the mandate and writes a serious letter, flies to London to the company, which we brought to Georgia, also to New York, Netherlands, and persuades these companies that the Georgian government is ready and is waiting for them in Anaklia.

This will be a clear standpoint of the government to make it possible for the project to continue,” Khazaradze said (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

16. Evaluation of Plaintiff’s International Group of Advisors into Khazaradze-Japaridze case

The General Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia released an evaluation of the Plaintiff’s International Group of Advisors into Khazaradze-Japaridze case.

According to Prosecutor’s Office, the group of advisors completed its work on the evidences into the case of Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze, founders of TBC Bank Group and chairman and deputy chairman of Board of Governors of Anaklia Development Consortium.

In the letter sent to the General Prosecutor’s Office, international experts claim that the pieces of evidence, submitted to them for probing, contain the signs of a clear scheme through which Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze masked allocation of the money obtained from the bank that represents money laundering and swindling.

On July 24, the General Prosecutor’s Office presented charges to Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze, Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Supervisory Board of TBC Bank on the fact of legalization of illegal revenues in the amount of USD 16 754 000 (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

17. Russian aviation agency allows S7 Airlines to carry out flights to Kutaisi after ban is removed

The Russian aviation agency has allowed S7 Airlines to carry out flights between Kutaisi and Moscow as soon as direct flights between the two countries are restored, Sova News and RIA Novosti report. The Russian airline has been given consent from the state agency to carry out flights seven times a week.

The agency explained later that giving or prolongating permission to carry out flights “is an ordinary procedure,” and the company which was granted the right will be able to fly to Georgia after the ban on flights, imposed by the Russian government starting July 8, is removed (*1TV, October 16, 2019*).

Additional Information

October 17, 2019

OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES

1 USD - 2.9663 GEL	1 GBP - 3.7788 GEL	100 RUB - 4.6123 GEL
1 EUR - 3.2721 GEL	1 TRY - 0.5028 GEL	100 JPY - 2.3658 GEL

Thursday 17 October	Friday 18 October	Saturday 19 October	Sunday 20 October	Monday 21 October
				
10° 23°	12° 25°	13° 25°	12° 23°	11° 20°

-  **Movie Events - English Sessions - [Tickets](#)**
-  **Friends of Museum (Membership to access Georgian National Museums For free of charge after one payment) - [Membership](#)**
-  **Marjanishvili Theatre – [Events and Tickets](#)**
-  **Rustaveli Theatre - [Events and Tickets](#)**
-  **Opera and Ballet – [Events and Tickets](#)**
-  **Concerts – [Events and Tickets](#)**
-  **Sports – [Events and Tickets](#)**