



GEORGIA ALERT

ISSUE 18 | May 2 – MAY 9

JOINT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BY POLITICAL PARTIES UNITED NATIONAL MOVEMENT, LELO – FOR GEORGIA, DROA, GIRCHI – MORE FREEDOM, AND CIVIL MOVEMENT DEMOCRACY DEFENDERS.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK:

Jailed third Mikheil Saakashvili diagnosed with anorexia by independent group of medical experts, int' partners call for his adequate treatment.

On April 27th independent group of medical experts set up by the Public Defender for monitoring Mikheil Saakashvili's health condition released a [report](#) according to which the third president is suffering from anorexia: "Compared to the last visit (11.01.2022), the patient's condition has further deteriorated. The patient is currently in a negative catabolic state (the body consumes proteins released by the breakdown of its own organs). In particular, although Mikheil Saakashvili has not formally declared a hunger strike at the moment, unlike his previous hunger strike, he is losing weight at the expense of losing muscle mass (protein). Currently the patient's condition can be described as protein starvation (cause - anorexia)," states the conclusion.

Since then, rallies in support of the former president have been held in Tbilisi, Batumi, and outside the Rustavi prison. Saakashvili's family, political allies, and supporters are demanding his transfer abroad for necessary treatment which was recommended by the medical experts in their latest evaluation: "Timely, complex neuro-psychological and physical rehabilitation is recommended at this stage to get out of the vicious circle of this syndrome. Otherwise, in general - such a significant restriction of food intake, and in particular - protein starvation - will inevitably lead to significant loss of muscle and organic weight, a high risk of infections and disruption of the functioning of internal organ systems."

President of Moldova Maia Sandu has [urged](#) the Georgian government to provide Saakashvili with appropriate treatment: "The reports about the deterioration of Saakashvili's health are shocking. I call on our Georgian partners to provide the former president with appropriate medical treatment and to support his recovery process," wrote Sandu via Twitter.

Similarly, the head of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Carl Hartzell, [voiced](#) his concern over reports of Saakashvili's health. He pointed out that the state is responsible for Saakashvili's physical and mental health: "The main thing for me and the EU is that the state bears responsibility for Saakashvili's physical and mental health. It's not a matter of political choice, it is a fundamental human right," said Hartzell.

NATO Sec. Gen's Special Representative in the Caucasus concerned with "level of implementation of reforms" in Georgia.

In an interview with TV Formula, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, Javier Colomina, [noted](#) that the Alliance is "concerned with the level of implementation of the reforms we have been requesting." He stated that "those reforms have been requested in many ways, lastly in the annual national plan. We mentioned a set of 10 recommendations, the basic ones are the reforms on the judicial reform, electoral reform, and security sector oversight." The NATO official expressed his concern over the "stalled" reforms: "In the last year, year-and-half, things have been stalled and we are concerned, as an Alliance and the Allies themselves," said Colomina.

Public Defender says Ukrainian refugees whose accommodation was paid by the state told to leave premises from May 6th

[According](#) to the Public Defender, the Ukrainian citizens whose accommodation in hotels was funded by the state were told to leave the premises in the coming days from May 6. This puts these families at risk of being left without a roof over their heads. Nino Lomjaria relies on the appeals of the Ukrainian refugees and the information spread in the media. "The refugees from Ukraine do not know what awaits them in the near future," she stated. The Public Defender calls on the Georgian government to take all necessary measures in a tight time frame and to properly inform both the individual agencies and the refugees from Ukraine about how, when, and where they will be resettled. As of April, over 20,000 Ukrainians have arrived to Georgia [according](#) to the Ukrainian Embassy in Georgia.

Georgia's score in RSF's Press Freedom Index drops significantly

In 2021, Georgia's media freedom ranking [declined](#) significantly. The country lost its 60th spot in RSF's Press Freedom Index and dropped to the 89th place. "Verbal attacks and physical assaults on journalists are common. Aggressors include senior government officials, especially during election campaigns. A lynch mob's sustained and brutal assault on 50 reporters during homophobic counterdemonstrations in July 2021, under the gaze of security forces, marked an unprecedented setback. The absence of transparency and of progress in investigations of the event demonstrate the impunity enjoyed by those who commit crimes against journalists," states RSF's annual report.

Adviser to Ukraine's President Podolyak criticizes Georgian government for their position in Russia's war against Ukraine

Adviser to the President of Ukraine Mykhailo Podolyak [criticized](#) the Georgian government for being under the influence of a Russian oligarch Bidzina Ivanishvili and not taking an unequivocal position regarding the war: "Unfortunately, the position of the Georgian authorities, the government and not the people, of course, completely contradicts the position of a democratic society. The Georgian government is directly or indirectly linked to Mr. Ivanishvili who is clearly a Russian oligarch. Unfortunately, he has had an influence on the current Georgian government for a long time. We see that Georgia looks at the war in Ukraine strangely, and does not take the same clear and unequivocal position as the EU countries and the United States have," stated Podolyak.

Georgian Dream MP says that "aside from the occupation," Putin has not humiliated Georgia like Ukraine has

In an interview with TV channel Formula, Georgian Dream MP Nino Tsilosani said that “aside from Russian occupation, Putin has not humiliated [Georgia] like Ukraine has.

Pro-government TV channel “Imedi” airs show about Ukrainian government officials “ties to Russia”

On May 8th, pro-government TV channel “Imedi” [announced](#) it will air a show on “Arestovych, Goncharenko, Podolya, and Arakhamia – the career paths of the Ukrainian critics of the Georgian government, their links to Russia, and their past that goes back to Yanukovich and Dugin.”

A couple days earlier, Mayor of Tbilisi Kakha Kaladze [criticized](#) Podolyak about his comments on the Georgian government and urged citizens to “look into who he is, what kind of life he lived, and what he was like.”