



# ELECTIONS 2016

Weekly Overview

September 12-18



International Center for Civic Culture considers important to periodically summarize political processes ongoing in Georgia during pre-election period. For this purpose, our organization is observing pre-election activities of political parties, governmental and non-governmental sector and presents its weekly review.

International Center for Civic Culture  
(ICCC)

#20A Bako Street  
Tbilisi  
0112  
Georgia  
[info@iccc.org.ge](mailto:info@iccc.org.ge)  
+995 (32) 940296

2016

## Content

---

Election News 03

Central Election Commission 09



## National-Democratic party and 'Topadze-Industrials' removed from registration by CEC

September 12

National-Democratic Party has been removed from the registered parties for the elections as well as Topadze – Industrials bloc. The decree has been published at the CEC website

According to the CEC head's decree, National Democratic Party cannot run for elections as it has not presented its party list.

According to Georgia's legislation the party list should be presented to the CEC head no later than 30 days since the party/bloc is registered.

As reported 'Industrials' party plans to appeal the CEC decision.

## Kakha Kaladze has become professional liar – Irma Nadirashvili

September 12

It is a pity that Kakha Kaladze has become a professional liar, - media secretary of National Movement Irma Nadirashvili has responded to Kaladze's statements that judges in Georgia are not pressured at all.

According to Kaladze, if there are virtual judges it should be said.

As Nadirashvili has remarked, this is Georgian Dream that makes voters live in a virtual environment.

'There are judges refusing to fulfill their obligations as ordered by the government. The constitutional court has become totally inactive by the government,' Irma Nadirashvili has said.

## Does anyone need Khatuna Lagazidze? – Paata Burchuladze on his former teammate

September 12

Khatuna Lagazidze really needs to be protected but from her own mind only, - head of State for People movement Paata Burchuladze declared at TV Pirveli.

According to him, Lagazidze's statements are not true and she decided to leave the party for not being put as she wanted to be in the party list.

'All the accusations from her were very unexpected,' - he has remarked, - 'I wonder if anyone needs Khatuna Lagazidze, moreover now, when she left our party,' Burchuladze has said.

## Paata Burchuladze responds to Bidzina Ivanishvili

September 13

Paata Burchuladze has responded to former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili's statement as

per which Burchuladze asked a large sum of money in return for assistance.

Paata Burchuladze said on TV Pirveli that he does not know what money Ivanishvili is talking about.

"Frankly, I wonder what money he is talking about. What amount of money could I ask him? Perhaps I asked 3.5 billion, as kings are asked the half of their kingdom", - said Paata Burchuladze.

Former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili said that three years ago Paata Burchuladze demanded "a lot of money" in return of going to politics and supporting Georgian Dream party.

## There are reports that some parties are preparing provocation for the elections – Interior Minister

September 13

There are some reports that some parties are preparing provocation for the elections, - Minister of Internal Affairs Giorgi Mghebrishvili told reporters.

The Minister refrained from elaborating on further details and noted that the agency is mobilized in this direction.

"The Ministry of Internal Affairs has all the resources and power to prevent destabilization in the country", said Mghebrishvili

## Giorgi Rukhadze leaves Paata Burchuladze's movement

September 13

Giorgi Rukhadze has left Paata Burchuladze's movement The State for the People.

"It is very hard for me to say what I have to say, but I'm leaving Paata Burchuladze's party, since it is no longer Burchuladze's movement. This is no longer an alternative to the Georgian Dream or the National Movement. Paata Burchuladze is not a leader any more. This is a force ruled by Pavle Kublashvili and Giorgi Meladze and it serves Bidzina Ivanishvili's interests", said Rukhadze and added that if the party enters the Parliament, it will be an appendix to the Georgian dream.

He also said that Bidzina Ivanishvili destroyed Paata Burchuladze as a politician.

"Paata Burchuladze was playing an independent political game, but Ivanishvili closed all the financial channels to him and then he opened one channel in the form of the Girchi party," - said Rukhadze .

As for Rukhadze's future plans, he says he remains in a very active public space.

## PACE Pre-Election Mission Visits Georgia

September 13

A seven-member delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is visiting Georgia on September 13-14 to assess election campaign and political climate ahead of the October 8 parliamentary elections.

The delegation, led by Lithuanian MP Emanuelis Zingeris from the group of European People's Party (EPP), will meet leaders and representatives of the political party, civil society and media organizations, as well as diplomatic community.

In Tbilisi, the delegation also plans meetings with speaker of outgoing Parliament Davit Usupashvili, who is the leader of the Republican Party; Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili, who is leader of the ruling GDDG party, as well as Interior Minister Giorgi Mgebrishvili; Chairperson of the Central Election Commission Tamar Zhvania, and head of the National Communications Commission Vakhtang Abashidze.

PACE's pre-election mission to Georgia also includes French MP Maryvonne Blondin from the Socialist Group (SOC); Spanish MP Jordi Xuclà from the group of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE); Ingebjørg Godskesen of Norway from the European Conservatives Group (EC); Andrej Hunko of Germany from the Group of the Unified

European Left (UEL); Boriss Cilevičs of Latvia the Socialist Group, who is a co-rapporteur for the monitoring of Georgia, and Swedish MP Kerstin Lundgren from ALDE group, who is also a co-rapporteur for the monitoring of Georgia. PACE also plans to send a 32-member delegation to observe the vote on the election day.

## Interior Minister issues decree on holding elections in safe environment

September 14

Georgia's Interior Minister Giorgi Mgebrishvili has issued a special decree and presented it to MIA employees.

As reported by the ministry the decree has been elaborated for holding Adjara High Council, parliamentary and midterm elections in a safe environment.

According to the decree the Interior Ministry will implement additional measures. Responsible groups will be created in all Georgian regions by heads of police departments that will provide safety and security in their areas.

## Alleged phone conversation between Rustavi 2 Director and Paata Burchuladze released on the internet

September 14

As reported a recording of a phone conversation allegedly between Rustavi 2 Director General Nika Gvaramia and State for People leader Paata Burchuladze has been released on the internet.

They discuss political processes in the conversation. Nika Gvaramia says he is dissatisfied because Girchi members want be in coalition with Georgian Dream. In turn, Burchuladze says such things do not happen.

Authenticity of the recording has not been confirmed yet but Rustavi 2 Director general says he really had the conversation with Burchuladze, saying he had nothing to conceal.

Georgia's State Security Service has refused any connection with the recording.

## PM: National Movement interested in radicalizing situation

September 14

As Georgia's Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili has declared, United National Movement aims to radicalize the situation in the country and creates organizations for this reason.

'I had a conversation with the Interior Minister. We have been informed that a certain political force aims to radicalize the situation in the country. We declare this on a basis of a particular statement the interior minister is not obliged to publish. We are obliged to make a preventive statement instead in order to avoid tensions,' Kvirikashvili said.

According to him the Georgian government will not allow anyone to escalate the situation in the country.

'They (UNM members) refuse but we are informed they are creating organizations such as 'In the name of Devotion to Georgia' that directly aims to radicalize the situation, block entrances, etc.,' he has remarked.

## Georgia's Interior Ministry releases statement over releasing recording of phone conversation

September 14

Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs has released a statement concerning the fact of releasing the phone conversation recording on the net.

The conversation was held between Nika Gvaramia, Rustavi 2 Director General and Paata Burchuladze, head of the State for People movement.

'The division against cybercrime of the Central Criminal Police Department under the Ministry of

Internal Affairs launched investigation on the fact of Disclosure of Privacy of Personal Correspondence, Telephone Conversations or Other Massage.

As it is known, telephone record has been disseminated through internet, containing conversation of the General Director of Rustavi2 TV Company Nika Gvaramia and leader of political movement "State for People" Paata Burchuladze. Investigation is in progress on the fact of of Disclosure of Privacy of Personal Correspondence, Telephone Conversations or Other Massage,' reads the statement.

## The recording confirms that Paata Burchuladze cannot be reliable partner – Khatuna Lagazidze

September 14

Paata Burchuladze was unable to become a politician and all this has only been a business-project, - former teammate of Paata Burchuladze, Khatuna Lagazidze has told journalists.

'The recording also confirms that Paata Burchuladze can never be a reliable partner for anyone let alone people. It is really disappointing as he is responsible before the people first of all,' Lagazidze has said.

## CEC to put Industrials back on registered parties' list

September 14

The Topadze Industrials – Our Motherland party will run for the upcoming October elections.

As CEC head Tamar Zhvania has said she will execute the decision made by Tbilisi City Court.

According to him the court assessed the bloc's documentation as enough for being registered and therefore, it will take part in the elections.

The bloc was removed from the registered parties' list several days ago. It has appealed the decision. Tbilisi City Court declared the party should be put back to the list as a result.

## Irakli Gharibashvili proved to be stronger politician and leader than Davit Usupashvili - Bidzina Ivanishvili

September 15

According to Former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, Irakli Gharibashvili proved to be stronger politician and leader than Davit Usupashvili.

As the Prime Minister said at the meeting in Ambrolauri, Davit Usupashvili had problems with Irakli Gharibashvili and that's why he was happy about the appointment of Giorgi Kvirikashvili as Prime Minister.

"When Kvirikashvili became Prime Minister and

started to work, Usupashvili was excited. He thought he would more easily communicate with Kvirikashvili. Gharibashvili was also a good PM. Gharibashvili won all fights against Usupashvili. He turned out to be a stronger leader and more powerful politician. He was inexperienced, though Usupashvili could not do anything against him, and, of course, was very pleased when Kvirikashvili was appointed to the position", - said the former PM.

In addition, he denied reports that the Kvirikashvili's candidacy was offered to the PM's post by Davit Usupashvili.

"Usupashvili has nothing to do with it. He is telling tales. It's amazing,"- said Ivanishvili.

## It is an absolute lie that the Republican Party was to become the major force and Usupashvili was to be appointed as prime minister - Bidzina Ivanishvili

September 15

Ex-Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili has categorically denied reports that he had offered the PM's post to Davit Usupashvili. He neither confirmed that Kvirikashvili's candidacy was offered to the PM's post by Usupashvili.

"It is an absolute lie that the Republican Party was to become the major force and Usupashvili was to be appointed as prime minister. It is also

an absolute lie that Giorgi Kvirikashvili is his discovery. The only thing I would recall is that when Kvirikashvili became prime minister and started to work, Usupashvili was excited and happy with it," he said.

The ex-PM said that when he was in the coalition, the Georgian Dream and the Republican Party could not tolerate each other and he would never offer Usupashvili the PM's post under those circumstances. "All members of the party were expressing disapproval against the Republicans", he said.

## Second rounds expected in many majoritarian constituencies - IRI

September 15

According to the forecast of the International Republican Institute (IRI) elections will be competitive at all levels and second rounds are expected in many majoritarian constituencies. The International Republican Institute released a report of long-term election monitors, which reviews the pre-election environment in Georgia. The report says that during the monitoring period [August 1-25] election campaign was peaceful, but local officials misused administrative resources.

"There were facts of intimidation of public officials who are regarded as supporters of the opposition parties; Also, the influence of local authorities is used for limiting the pre-election activities of the opposition parties. Such informal

complaints were most often made by the United National Movement members. There were also reports about ill-treatment and harassment of party members and supporters, vandalism against offices, fire outbreaks, dismissal from public services and other measures from the side of the Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia or local authorities”, says the reports. The report says that pro-Russian parties remain weak, though despite their anti-Western sentiment, they still got some support in a strongly pro-Western environment.

## PACE reports on Georgia's pre-election environment

September 16

A delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) said after visiting Georgia this week that “there was an environment for democratic elections.” 7-member delegation, led by Lithuanian MP Emanuelis Zingeris from the group of European People's Party (EPP), visited Georgia on September 13-14 to assess election campaign and political climate ahead of the October 8 parliamentary elections.

The delegation said it “saw a pluralistic political and media landscape and a working legal framework.”

“Although the delegation felt that the general climate was clearly less tense than it was during past elections, following discussions with various interlocutors, it considered necessary to underline that all parties should denounce all

forms of campaign violence and harassment of opponents,” PACE said in a press release distributed on September 15.

“The delegation indeed heard allegations of unacceptable acts of violence, intimidation, harassment and blackmail directed at candidates and voters. In this context, such acts, even if isolated, against candidates, party members or supporters, as well as threats against journalists, must be prevented. Perpetrators of such acts must be identified and punished. The delegation also said that any misuse of administrative resources in the electoral campaign must not happen.” The delegation said that “all parties should focus on the real issues” and called on all stakeholders, “and in particular on the authorities, to avoid any actions that could increase the tensions in the political environment in the run-up to the elections.” The delegation also included French MP Maryvonne Blondin from the Socialist Group (SOC); Spanish MP Jordi Xuclà from the group of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE); Ingebjørg Godskesen of Norway from the European Conservatives Group (EC); Andrej Hunko of Germany from the Group of the Unified European Left (UEL); Boriss Cilevičs of Latvia the Socialist Group, who is a co-rapporteur for the monitoring of Georgia, and Swedish MP Kerstin Lundgren from ALDE group, who is also a co-rapporteur for the monitoring of Georgia.

During the visit in Tbilisi, the delegation met with Georgia's Prime Minister; Parliament Speaker and other senior lawmakers; Chairperson of the Central Election Commission; Interior Minister;

Head of the National Communications Commission, as well as leaders and representatives of parliamentary and non-parliamentary political parties; civil society and the media representatives, Deputy Head of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission and foreign diplomats based in Tbilisi.

PACE plans to send a 32-member delegation to observe the vote on the election day.

## Presidential administration calls on political parties to join the so-called memorandum for peace

September 16

The presidential administration of Georgia calls on political parties to join the so-called memorandum for peace. As head of the administration Giorgi Abashishvili has told reporters, the PM's initiative is a good possibility that should be used by all political forces. ‘We have always criticized all kinds of violence. Therefore, we welcome the initiative,’ Giorgi Abashishvili has said.

According to him Georgia should be able to conduct the elections in peaceful, democratic and fair environment.



## Georgian Dream calls on its supporters not to get involved in conflicts and avoid any kind of confrontation

September 17

The Georgian Dream has released a special statement on the facts of physical confrontation between the Georgian Dream and the National Movement members in Zugdidi and Tetrtskaro.

"On September 16 there were two cases of physical confrontation in Zugdidi and Tetrtskaro. In both cases, the incident occurred between activists and supporters of the Georgian Dream and the United National Movement. As we have mentioned many times, any kind of confrontation and violence are unacceptable in the election process.

As far as we are aware an investigation has been launched into both cases. We are convinced that the law enforcement agencies will effectively conduct the investigation process. We want to call on all parties once again, and especially to the Georgian Dream supporters, not to get involved in conflicts and to avoid any kind of physical or verbal confrontation,"- says the statement.

## Paata Burchuladze is far from medical knowledge - Gia Volsky

September 17

I think Paata Burchuladze is far from medical knowledge, - one of the leaders of the Georgian Dream, Gia Volsky, said when commenting on

Burchuladze's statement on marijuana.

According to him, Paata Burchuladze's statement had a political objective.

"I think Paata Burchuladze is far from medical knowledge. He would make more competent statements on art. He thinks he will attract supporters by this statement. It is a pity that he has been recently making very incompetent statement. He should get consultations from specialists", he said.

According to him, the government is now working on the mentioned issue. He said the law should be loyal towards those who tried marijuana just once.

Paata Burchuladze, leader of the political movement The State for the People, considers that marijuana should be sold in pharmacies.

Burchuladze made the mentioned statement on PalitraNews TV.

"Marijuana should be sold not by drug dealers, but in pharmacies. In my opinion, doctors must scribble prescriptions in pharmacies. Thus, we will eliminate smuggling and will make this process normal. This is ordinary thing in the Netherlands, Austria, and I support it.

Generally, drug addicts should not be afraid that they will be arrested and they should not hide the fact that they use drugs. When a person realizes that he is a drug addict, he must go to a doctor and get medical treatment. This is the only way of their recovery. This is a very modern and humane way", - said Paata Burchuladze.

## Iavnana Fund says certain parties are planning a new campaign against them

September 18

Iavnana Fund says certain parties are planning a new campaign against them Iavnana, former fund of Paata Burchuladze, reports that some parties are trying to launch a new campaign against them.

As told by the fund, they will refrain from making any comment on the issue with the media until October 9, 2016, in order to prevent the use of the fund's charitable activities as a political weapon.

"In the last two months, we have witnessed how certain forces used the charity fund for manipulations for the pre-election purposes. We would like to once again remind you that Paata Burchuladze made a statement on leaving the fund on December 2015. Later, he fully distanced himself from the fund's board and administration in accordance with the law.

Despite this, we have been informed that certain parties are planning to launch a new campaign against us. We will refrain from making any comment on these issues with the media until October 9, 2016, in order to prevent the use of the fund's charitable activities as a political weapon. After October 9 the fund will be open to talk about any issue in detail with any media outlet", says the fund's statement.





Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia together with the Union of Blinds prepared audio versions of political parties' election programs within the framework of the project by the "Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy" (NIMD).

The audio version of the election programs will be placed at the voters' information website [www.partiebi.ge](http://www.partiebi.ge). The mentioned service was presented , at the hotel "Radisson". The site is designed to encourage formation of political party programs for the upcoming parliamentary elections, also raise the awareness of the society regarding the political parties' views and programs.

Sophio Sitchinava, Head of the CEC Coordination, Planning, and Reporting Department, noted that the CEC has taken various steps forward to support the independent participation of the persons with disabilities in elections and the mentioned audio recordings are the next step in this respect. "It is a high priority for the CEC to carry out such project that is aimed to ensure the voting of an informed elector; additionally when the project is precisely about the improvement of the inclusive electoral environment" – stated Sophio Sitchinava, stated.

NIMD via its project - [www.partiebi.ge](http://www.partiebi.ge) regularly publishes preliminary opinions of the political parties of Georgia since 2012 regarding country's political, economic and social issues. The representatives of political parties, Parliament of Georgia, international and local organizations, the Central Election Commission (CEC) and diplomatic missions accredited in Georgia attended today's presentation.



Representatives of the pre-election mission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) visited the Central Election Commission (CEC). The CEC Chairperson personally presented the information about the preparation process for the October 8 Parliamentary Elections. The services that CEC introduced to the voters for simplifying their participation in elections and raising their electoral awareness was introduced in details by Tamar Zhvania to Mr. Emanuelis Zingeris, Chairperson of the Mission and the delegation members. Ms Zhvania also talked about the activities for ensuring inclusive election environment and EA's cooperation with the electoral stakeholders.

Along with the Chairperson, the CEC officials also attended the meeting with PACE delegation.

The PACE delegation, within the framework of their pre-election mission also conducted meetings with the Georgian Prime Minister, Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Chairperson of the Parliament, representatives of the parliamentary factions and received information about the pre-election environment in the country.



On September 16, the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia received the updated data of voters. Giorgi Pataridze, Head of Civil Service Development Agency (CSDA) and Mamuka Samkharadze, CSDA Deputy Head delivered the electronic version of the data to Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson and Giorgi Sharabidze, CEC Deputy Chairperson. The agency conveyed to the CEC the data of 3 577 375 potential voters. The Election Administration (EA) will update the unified voters' list based on the provided data.

After re-processing of the data, public version of the unified voters' list will be available for the registered political parties, election blocs, initiative groups as well as for the observer organizations defined by the election legislation and for voters (voters are entitled to request only their and their family members' personal data in the voters' list and to amend it).

In case of any inaccuracy in the data of the voters list, stakeholders shall apply to the relevant election commission or the State Services Development Agency no later than 16 days before elections (September 22, 2016) and request amendments to the data.