



GRASS Disinfo Brief

MONITORING PERIOD:
December 19 – December 25



- Georgian Dream-affiliated People's Power says "Global War Party" will continue to incite a revolution in Georgia
- Conservative Movement/Alt Info demonstratively burn EU flags, anti-Western propaganda discredits Georgia's EU membership candidate status
- Pro-Russian propaganda celebrates Stalin's birthday, continues to portray Russia as a guarantor of Georgia's territorial integrity

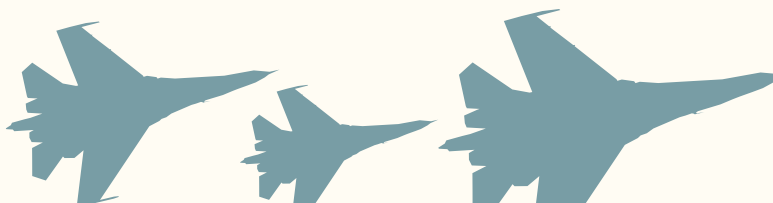
Georgian Dream-affiliated People's Power says "Global War Party" will continue to incite a revolution in Georgia

On December 21st, a week after celebrating Georgia's EU membership candidate status, the Georgian Dream-affiliated People's Power movement released a statement with a focus on the notorious "Global War Party", proving that the movement will remain loyal to its initial narratives about an ambiguous "Global War Party" conspiracy.

Despite congratulating the Georgian people and taking credit for the EU membership candidate status, the movement assessed it as "a topic made up by the "Global War Party" to increase pressure on the Georgian government four days after the war started in Ukraine". According to the statement, the initial plan was to deny Georgia candidate status. The negative decision would then be utilised to provoke the Georgian people into starting a revolution, overthrowing the Georgian Dream government, and bringing the United National Movement into power. The candidate status issue lost its revolutionary relevance after the People's Power movement equipped the public with the truth, after which the "Global War Party" realised that even if Georgia was denied candidate status, the Georgian people could not be provoked into overthrowing the government, ultimately leading to the decision to grant Georgia candidate status, the statement reads.

The statement warns that in 2024, the opposition will not accept the election results, the CSOs will speculate about election violations without providing evidence, and Georgia's "foreign friends" will try to use EU accession negotiations for revolutionary purposes. A few days before or after the elections, the "Global War Party" will ensure the European Commission issues a negative recommendation about starting accession negotiations with Georgia. Suppose the opposition is successful in mobilising the people for mass protests in this period. In that case, the European Council will refuse to start negotiations with Georgia, leading to an attempted revolution after the elections.

- One of the leaders of the People's Power movement, Guram Matcharashvili, stated that due to the movement's correct policies, Georgia maintained peace and achieved EU candidate status. A disinformation campaign was initiated by internal and external enemies about Georgia not deserving the EU candidate status. The People's Power movement acted as a shield, filtering disinformation and providing the public with



accurate information, which led to Georgia receiving candidate status. “Provocations and discrediting of state institutions will certainly continue in 2024 - we will continue to expose these attempts!” stated Matcharashvili.

- Mikheil Kavelashvili, MP and another leader of the People’s Power movement, said that Ukraine is losing territories and military power, corruption is rampant, and there are “talks about getting rid of Zelenskyy”. According to the MP, the radical opposition and President Zourabichvili wanted the same faith for Georgia, framing it as necessary for Georgia’s EU integration. Kavelashvili underlined that the People’s Power movement will closely monitor whether or not the EU will force the Georgian government to make concessions that can potentially harm its national interests. “We want the EU, but it depends on how we reach it and at what cost. The Prime Minister also mentioned that we received the candidate status with dignity, standing on two legs”, stated Kavelashvili.
- Vato Shakarishvili, a former member of Georgian Dream and founder of an anti-Western movement called “Georgia first and foremost”, stated that EU membership candidate status is important not because it will bring tangible positive results for the country and its people but because it means the defeat of the “Global War Party”. The actions orchestrated by foreign forces attempted to cause unrest in Georgia, overthrow the government, and, as a result, drag the country into a war. Shameful resolutions of the European Parliament, accusations of helping Russia avoid international sanctions, portraying the American Law on Foreign Agents as a Russian Law, an unfair decision to not grant Georgia candidate status in 2022, sanctioning Georgian judges, de facto sanctioning Bidzina Ivanishvili, and calling the Georgian Dream pro-Russian were all aimed at achieving this objective. According to him, the US State Department, large corporations (“Blackrock”, “Vanguard”), international media, European institutions, foreign embassies, international organisations, and agents operating within the country as political parties and the non-governmental sector are all culprits in the abovementioned plan of the “Global War Party”.
- Commenting on the fact that Georgia did not support the extension of the “Magnitsky Act” until December 2026, Chairperson of the parliament, Shalva Papuashvili underlined that Georgia’s policies regarding international sanctions will not change. Georgia does not plan to impose sanctions on Russia, and according to Papuashvili, “which has saved Georgia from risking a war and economic collapse while still achieving EU membership candidate status.

Conservative Movement/Alt Info demonstratively burn EU flags, anti-Western propaganda discredits Georgia’s EU membership candidate status

On December 18th, Lasha Sharukhia burned an EU flag raised over an administrative building in Mtskheta. The Prosecutors office accused him of destroying someone else's property "by setting fire, explosion or other generally dangerous means", which is punishable by up to 6 years of imprisonment according to Article 187, Part 2 of the Criminal Code. In response to



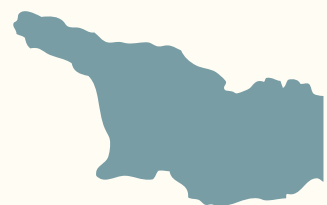
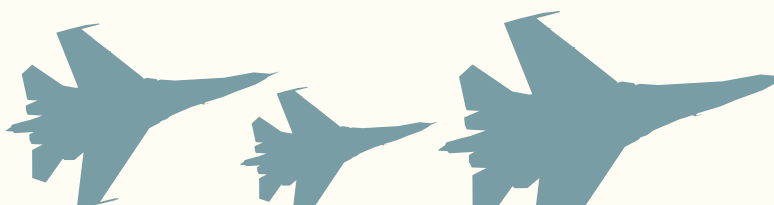
Sharukhia's arrest, pro-Russian Conservative Movement/Alt Info members and supporters started to demonstratively film themselves burning EU flags and uploading the videos on social media. Videos also show Orthodox priests such as Basil Akhvlediani, Spiridon Tskipurishvili, deacon Davit Datuashvili, and others burning EU flags. Additionally, Alt Info released a video of unidentified people burning a large EU flag in protest.

Eventually, the flag burning turned into a social media campaign. Similar videos were detected on virtually every Alt Info-affiliated social media profile. As some of the propagandists themselves reported, they were contacted by the authorities.

Moreover, Alt Info leaders tore up an EU flag on their broadcast, followed by one of the prominent propagandists, Aleksandre Palavandishvili, and the Conservative Movement/Alt Info leader, Konstantine Morgoshia.

On December 22nd, Zurab Makharadze and Irakli Martinenko tore down an EU flag from the Tbilisi City Hall building and burned it on the spot without any hindrance from the City Hall security. Irakli Martinenko was fined 1000 GEL, while administrative proceedings started against Zurab Makharadze for repeating the same offence. Makharadze tore down an EU flag from the Georgian parliament building and burned it in March 2023.

- One of the leaders of Alt Info, Shota Martinenko, claimed that by arresting Lasha Sharukhia, the Georgian Dream neglected the law, justice, morals, and once again demonstrated its obedience towards the West by repressing its own people to sow fear.
- Alt Info propagandist Aleksandre Palavandishvili alleged that the decision to arrest Lasha Shamukhia was made by a high-level executive government official who directly received these orders from the EU.
- Orthodox clergyman Spiridon Tskipurishvili, who openly called for violence on July 5th, 2021, and demonstratively burned an EU flag, published a video on social media. He said that only Georgian national flags should be displayed on administrative buildings because Georgia is a country of men and women with dignity. The clergyman also condemned the Georgian Dream for celebrating EU candidate status, calling the ruling party Euro-slaves.
- Another propagandist went on Facebook Live, where he offered a solution on how to burn EU flags while avoiding fines. He suggests that people should not show their faces in the videos or make children under 14 years old burn the flags as they cannot be held responsible by the authorities. "Why enrich the liberal sodomist system by paying fines?" he argues.
- Propaganda sources accused the government of double standards for arresting Lasha Shamukhia, while those who protested against the Russian-styled foreign agent's law in March were not prosecuted.
- Alt Info-affiliated social media profile argued that if people are being imprisoned "for burning a blue cloth", Christians will be prosecuted because of their faith in the future.



- Another social media user argued that Georgia has turned into a country that does not respect its own flag and is enslaved by foreign forces.

In addition to the flag burning campaign, several other narratives were propagated last week.

- Anti-Western propagandists manipulated a statement made by Jens Spahn, a member of the German Bundestag, who said that all new refugees who enter EU countries illegally should be sent to third countries. “Rwanda is probably ready to do it; maybe Ghana is too. Negotiations with Eastern European countries such as Georgia and Moldova are also needed”, stated Spahn. Propagandists portrayed this statement as if the EU is demanding Georgia to accept illegal immigrants in turn for the membership candidate status. A propagandist on Alt Info claimed that employment quotas would be set for illegal immigrants, leaving Georgian citizens without jobs. Another propagandist alleged that migrant camps would be built in Georgia because accepting immigrants is an essential element of joining the EU, and “If Georgia joins the EU, it will experience a flow of migrants from Africa and Asia”.
- One of the most prominent pro-Russian propagandists, Levan Vasadze, argued that before Georgia secedes its sovereignty to join the EU, it should assess how it will benefit population growth, economic development, and territorial integrity. According to Vasadze, all of the EU countries are experiencing demographic problems due to mass illegal immigration and neglect of traditional family values. As for the economy, the propagandist claims that each EU country has massive foreign debt and is close to bankruptcy. Overall, Georgians should not be baselessly celebrating the EU membership candidate status because even potential membership will not bring viable benefits to Georgia.
- A narrative that was prevalent last week suggested that by accepting EU membership candidate status, Georgia is giving up its occupied territories and de facto recognizing the so-called independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
- According to another narrative, Georgia’s EU membership candidate status means that the country was committed to officially transforming into a geopolitical tool for Brussels, basically seceding its political sovereignty. The EU does not view Georgia as an equal but an instrument.
- Several propaganda sources asserted that the EU will never accept Georgia as a member because of geographical and cultural incompatibilities. Moreover, the EU will dissolve before Georgia will be fit to become a member.
- Traditional anti-Western sources propagated that European democracy and the EU as a whole are based on “perversion and same-sex marriage”.
- Propagandists on both Sezoni TV and Alt Info claimed that Georgia’s Western integration does not benefit Georgia’s economy and security. 99% of those who support Western integration have personal financial interests for which they are ready to surrender the country’s sovereignty.

Pro-Russian propaganda celebrates Stalin’s birthday, continues to portray Russia as a guarantor of Georgia’s territorial integrity

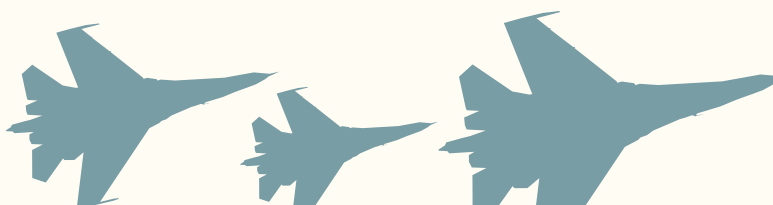


December 21st was a special date for Russian proxies in Georgia as it marked Joseph Stalin's birthday. Many social media users shared posts dedicated to myths and legends about Stalin's figure, underlining his "patriotism and merit towards Georgia."

- A pro-Russian social media profile listed infrastructure projects commenced under Stalin's rule, emphasizing his role in Georgia's industrial and cultural development while highlighting that if there was not the US resistance, Stalin would bring historic Georgian territories of Tao-Klarjeti under Georgian rule again. According to the propagandist, it is shameful that Georgia has a statue of Ronald Reagan and streets named after George Bush and Ilham. Meanwhile, Stalin does not even have a statue in his hometown of Gori.
- Another social media profile argued about Stalin's crucial role in developing a book about Georgia's history, in which the importance of the Georgian language, religion, and culture are emphasized. The author of the post claims that Stalin was a patriot of Georgia and cared about Orthodox Christianity.
- "Today is the birthday of the great man who completely adapted communist ideology to Orthodox teaching!" reads another social media post.
- A profile affiliated with the pro-Russian Alt Info group described Stalin as a genius who was a simple peasant but established himself as one of the most important figures in world history. "The Georgian gene, which we Georgians do not appreciate".
- A prominent pro-Russian social media profile, who repeatedly spreads disinformation, wished that god granted Georgia another leader like Stalin, in which case US-funded liberals would be "taken care of".
- A separate post describes Stalin as "an architect of equality".

Simultaneously, other pro-Russian statements were voiced from propaganda sources.

- One of the main pro-Russian propagandists, Valeri Kvaratskhelia, published an article on "GeWorld", where he claimed that the sole guarantor of Ukraine's territorial integrity was Russia, but Ukraine made a detrimental mistake and aligned with the West, leading to its demise. The same applies to Georgia – Georgia should have been a strategic military partner of Russia. All other paths led Georgia to significant territorial losses, if not to complete disintegration. According to Kvaratskhelia, future Western integration will lead to processes that can only be named as "Ukrainization of Georgia".
- Another propagandist, Arno Khidirbegishvili, an editor of pro-Russian "Saqinform," asserted that Georgia's welfare and sovereignty mostly hinge on Russia. Georgia was free, sovereign, and prosperous during the Soviet Union; now, it is joining the European Union, which, according to him, is based on "fascism, inquisition, anti-semitism, same-sex marriage, and the LGBT agenda."
- A social media user argued that Azerbaijan lost control over Nagorno Karabakh thirty years ago as the Azerbaijanis planned to join the EU and NATO in the early 1990s. Because of this, Russia assisted Armenia in the first Karabakh War, leading to



Azerbaijan's defeat. In contemporary times, talks about Western integration started in Armenia, while Azerbaijan retained stable relations with Russia. Accordingly, Armenia lost the war and control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region in 2020. The narrative suggests that those who remain loyal to Moscow maintain territorial integrity.

- Pro-Russian Sezoni TV anchor argued that international sanctions could not cripple Russia and Belarus. Moreover, Russia's economy is continuing to grow.
- Kremlin-sponsored "Sputnik Georgia" published an article by a Russian "analyst", who claimed that Russia's defence industry is convincingly winning the high-tech arms race in the 21st century. The US and other NATO countries are decisively behind in this regard.