



# GRASS Disinfo Brief

**MONITORING PERIOD:**

**January 23-29**

GRASS  
REFORMANDA





- **Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili resigns**
- **Georgian Dream-affiliated People's Power says opposition parties are controlled by the "Global War Party" and should be prosecuted**
- **Irakli Kobakhidze says opponents deliberately attack the Georgian Church and are capable of dragging Georgia into a war with Russia**
- **Pro-Kremlin propaganda assesses Kobakhidze's appointment as Prime Minister as a hit on conservative values**
- **Propaganda praises Moscow, claims Georgia is better off as Russia's ally**
- **Pro-Russian propaganda piggy-backs off the ruling party's rhetoric, says USAID funds programs aimed at undermining Georgia**

### **Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili resigns**

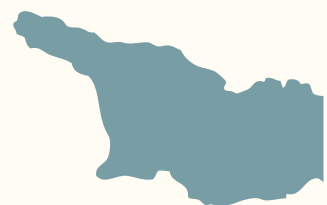
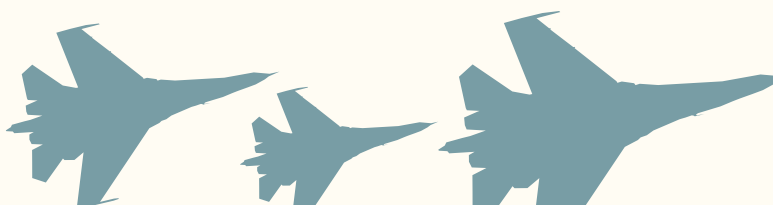
After Bidzina Ivanishvili officially and openly returned to politics last month, he underlined that Irakli Gharibashvili and Irakli Kobakhidze would retain their positions as Prime Minister and Chairperson of the Georgian Dream, respectively (See previous edition of GRASS Disinfo Brief). However, on January 29<sup>th</sup>, Irakli Gharibashvili officially [announced](#) that he would step down. "The political council and I discussed the possibility of me remaining as Prime Minister until the summer, before the start of the election campaign, but I chose to make this decision now. It is important that the next Prime Minister presents their team in time", stated Gharibashvili. [According](#) to him, one of the main determinants of his resignation was internal party democracy and the need for rotation. There are many successful leaders in the Georgian Dream party and others need to be given the opportunity.

Kobakhidze was officially [announced](#) as a candidate for Prime Minister on February 1<sup>st</sup>, after the Georgian Dream's political council's meeting (See detailed information in the upcoming issue of GRASS Disinfo Brief).

### **Georgian Dream-affiliated People's Power says opposition parties are controlled by the "Global War Party" and should be prosecuted**

European Commission in its enlargement report underlined that in Georgia, there is a specific strand of disinformation implying that the West seeks to open a 'second front' against Russia from Georgia. The EU urged Georgian authorities to more actively debunk this disinformation. Despite this, on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, the People's Power movement, who remain in the Georgian Dreams majority in the parliament, published two statement with reference to the "Global War Party" conspiracy.

People's Party Movement statement, released on January 24<sup>th</sup>, [claims](#) that the "collective National Movement", which unites the United National Movement, Lelo, For Georgia, Strategy



Builder, European Georgia, Girchi – More Freedom, Droa, and the Labor party, are agents of the “Global War Party” and should be prosecuted for the crimes they committed, such as, “torturing people, businesses racketeering, hijacking TV stations, giving up territories to Russia, and many others”. According to the statement, these agents are ready to fulfill tasks which could plunge Georgia into a war, cause a severe economic crisis, or even completely lose sovereignty. According to the statement, the opposition parties are controlled and coordinated from one center and would have started “the Ukrainization” of Georgia if not for the ruling party’s correct policies protecting national interests.

The statement stipulates that the “Global War Party” instructed the „European Committee for the Prevention of Torture“ to release a [report](#) that underlined the deficiencies in individualized treatment plans, a lack of mental health care, and excessive security measures. “We all remember that the "Global War Party" put its entire European agents on their feet in order to release Saakashvili from prison”, reads the statement. However, the “Global War Party” realized that even if Saakashvili is released from prison, the United National Movement will still be unable to get sufficient support in the upcoming elections. Therefore, the focus is currently on supporting President Zourabichvili and planning to put her in an alliance with Lelo for the elections in hopes of overcoming the 5% threshold.

Simultaneously, the “Global War Party” is working on uniting Nika Gvaramia and Nika Melia. If it is found that they have enough support to overcome the 5% threshold, they will independently participate in the elections. If not, they will also be united with “Lelo” and President Zourabichvili.

Overall, the statement claims that virtually every party that tried to emerge as an alternative of the Georgian Dream and the United National Movement, as a third choice, was supported by the “Global War Party”. “Society should stay vigilant and observe the situation so that neither of the pseudo-third powers overcome the threshold”, reads the statement.

### **Irakli Kobakhidze says opponents deliberately attack the Georgian Church and are capable of dragging Georgia into a war with Russia**

- Before taking up the post of Prime Minister, Irakli Kobakhidze appeared on Imedi TV where he [stated](#) that “vandalism in the Holy Trinity (Sameba) Cathedral” and issue of celebrating Christmas on January 7<sup>th</sup> were deliberately launched to discredit the Church. Kobakhidze referred to Giorgi Kandelaki, representative of “SovLab” who posted the video of Stalin’s icon on social media, and Nata Peradze, the activist who threw paint on it in protest. According to Kobakhidze, “these people” dislike that the Georgian Church has high public trust and are aiming to erode the Georgian national identity, much like the Bolsheviks did a hundred years ago. “Bolshevism cannot have any success in Georgia”, he stated, adding that the ruling party feels the responsibility to protect the Church and its interests.
- During the same appearance on Imedi TV, Kobakhidze [said](#) that the only thing that the Georgian Dream’s political opponents are capable of doing is putting Georgia in the same situation Ukraine is currently in. “Society should make a choice not in favor of “the war



party”, but in favor of peace and economic development”, he stated. Moreover, Kobakhidze claimed that if the United National Movement and “its satellites” had come to power before the war in Ukraine started, they would “do what they were asking from us” and impose sanctions, allow volunteers to go to Ukraine and fight against Russia, and have harsh rhetoric towards Moscow, which would lead to “the Ukrainization” of Georgia.

### Pro-Kremlin propaganda assesses Kobakhidze’s appointment as Prime Minister as a hit on conservative values

- A propagandist on Alt Info [claimed](#) that Bidzina Ivanishvili does not need political figures oriented on conservative/national interests, which is why he made Irakli Gharibashvili resign and appointed Irakli Kobakhidze as the Prime Minister, who is more or less associated with liberal values as he was one of the ruling party members in charge of the EU’s recommendations. Therefore, Ivanishvili “betting on him” means that Government of Georgia is not planning to act in accordance with national conservative interests.
- The same propagandist [stated](#) that appointing Irakli Kobakhidze is part of the deal made between Bidzina Ivanishvili and Brussels leadership/the US embassy in order to neutralize the conservative wing in Georgia. According to the propagandist, this is also proven by the fact that no one in the West talks about “deoligarchization” anymore even though Ivanishvili remains as a prominent leader of the Georgian Dream and continues to hold no official governmental position.
- One of the hosts on Alt Info’s broadcasts [recalled](#) that few years ago, during the “cohabitation” Irakli Kobakhidze stated that the Georgian Dream must bear the United National Movements on its back because it was instructed to do so by the West. Therefore, she asserts, since Irakli Kobakhidze is obedient to the West, his appointment as Prime Minister was order by the West in order to establish a liberal agenda in Georgia.
- During the Alt-Info broadcast, a member of the Conservative Movement [asserted](#) that the Georgian Dream will replace the United National Movement in establishing the liberal agenda as Ivanishvili fired conservative figure Gharibashvili and appointed person who does not understand national identity at all.
- Another propagandist on Alt Info [stated](#) that the conservatives in Georgia do not hate Europe, but the laws and norms that they advocate for, meaning their pro-LGBTQI+ and pro-immigration policies, which according to him are weakening Europe itself.
- Sezoni TV broadcaster and prominent pro-Russian propagandist, Nikoloz Mzhavanadze [stated](#) that the West has declared a war to “powers with national values” in Georgia, including the Conservative Movement. He illustrated this by pointing at “attempts to shut down Alt Info and Sezoni TV, freezing their bank accounts and designating the Conservative Movement as a terrorist organization”.
- In an article published on pro-Kremlin propagandist website Isari, the author [assessed](#) the 30-years long relation with the West as the cause of ruining factories, industrial



enterprises, agriculture and many more in Georgia. To illustrate how Georgia has degraded since breaking from the Soviet Union and establishing relations with the West, the author states that the exemplary higher educational institutions that operated during the Soviet Union are now teaching young people how to become waiters/waitresses, and the unique building of the Ministry of Agriculture has been destroyed in order to construct the Hilton Hotel in its place.

### **Propaganda praises Moscow, claims Georgia is better off as Russia's ally**

- Sezoni TV anchor and pro-Russian propagandist Nikoloz Mzhavanadze [claims](#) that the resignation decision of Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili was preconditioned by the Georgian Dream delegation's meetings in China, which Georgian Dream Party leader Irakli Kobakhidze led. According to the propagandist, since the Georgian government has no official communication with Russia, they must have engaged in dialogue with Russia through a third party. From now on, according to him, the Government of Georgia will shift its course away from the West.
- Sezoni TV propagandist also [emphasized](#) that Russia is the only country in the world that opposes same-sex marriage and protects the Orthodox Church. He argues that Georgia cannot avoid following US directives, even if it means going against the Georgian church.
- The same propagandist [claimed](#) that Georgia should reject Western aims and directives and actively work with Russia instead, or risk gaining nothing.
- [According](#) to Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, the Soviet education system in Georgia was not as negative and anti-Georgian as it is often portrayed. To prove this, he suggests comparing the way national teachings were carried out during the Soviet era in Georgia to how it has been done in the past 30 years.
- [According](#) to reports from a propaganda source, Russia's economic growth rate has exceeded 3.5%, as calculated by world financial organizations. Russia's industries, agriculture, technology, auto industry, housing, and other sectors are now based on domestic production instead of imports, which means that Russia continues to prosper despite the attempts by the West to undermine it. The propaganda source claims that Georgian citizens are unaware of these recent developments due to the government's ban on Russian television programs, which negatively affect Georgian citizens' education, common sense, and knowledge.

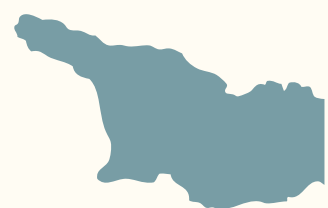
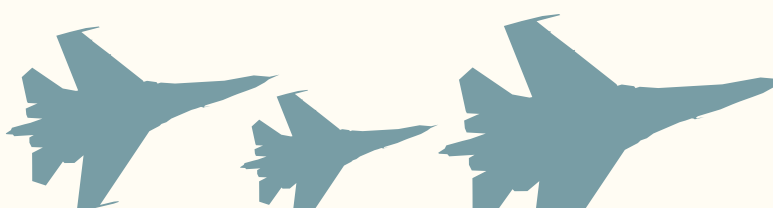
### **Pro-Russian propaganda piggy-backs off the ruling party's rhetoric, says USAID funds programs aimed at undermining Georgia**

- Based on a statement made by the Chairperson of the parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, [according](#) to which "USAID has found itself in a centre of another scandal for funding an organization that is known for religious intolerance", one of the leaders of the Conservative Movement and the Alt Info group, Zurab Makharadze, [claimed](#) that USAID-funded civic



programs deliberately aim to create a civil society that goes against Georgian national interests and the Georgian Orthodox Church.

- Makharadze also [argued](#) that the US Department of State finances hostile NGOs in Georgia with intentions to provoke war in the country and force it to follow “Ukraine’s path”.
- A member of pro-Russian Alt Info also [claimed](#) that the US provides financial support to the enemies of the Georgian Orthodox church. According to propagandist, USAID finances the children's deprivation, organized riots in March in Georgia, and still finances destructive powers in the country.
- A frequent guest on Sezoni TV and a pro-Russian propagandist [argued](#) that a former interpreter at the US embassy in Georgia used to distribute the salaries of Georgian agents of the American special services. According to him, the interpreter allegedly took money out of the embassy and gave it to members of the Georgian opposition parties, including Tina Khidasheli, Davit Usupashvili, Giga Bokeria, Giorgi Margvelashvili, Batu Kutelia, and others.
- An article on pro-Russian “GeWorld” [argues](#) that the US participates in forming the Georgian Government and appointing new ministers. According to the narrative, Bidzina Ivanishvili has a good record of choosing good business partners, but has a history of appointing people who act against Georgia’s interests and national values. This is due to the fact that Bidzina Ivanishvili and the Georgian Dream are not free to choose who they appoint as government officials as the US issues specific instructions in this regard. If this were not the case, Ivanishvili would not adopt the anti-discrimination law, would outlaw LGBTQI+ events, arrest the members of the previous government, transfer former President Saakashvili to a prison, and establish friendly relations with Russia. However, he is hindered by the US from doing so.
- Sezoni TV anchor and pro-Russian propagandist Nikoloz Mzhavanadze has [raised concerns](#) about the friendly relationship between the US and Georgia. He claims that as the US governmental organization finances hostile parties and creates provocations in Georgia, it cannot be considered as an ally.
- Mzhavanadze [claimed](#) that since a civil war is allegedly starting in the US, Georgia should not take a course toward the West. According to him, the US is in a difficult situation because of the confrontation between Texas and the federal government, illegal immigration, mass shootings, and criminal activities. Therefore, close relations with the US cannot be beneficial to Georgia.
- Based on a fake quote by Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, pro-Kremlin social media profiles [propagated](#) that a civil war is about to break out in the US. According to Abbott’s fake quote, “Texas is ready to engage in a military confrontation with the federal government”.



- A guest on Alt Info's broadcast [stated](#) that the West knew Caucasian people could not be enslaved by weapons and military power, so made them dependent on financial institutions. During the "Americanization and democratization" of Georgia in the 1990s, banks were quickly established to make Georgian society reliant on them. As a result, people's priorities shifted from taking care of their homeland to paying bills and loans. According to him, the US embassy introduced a capitalist way of life, claiming it would benefit Georgians, but trapped them instead.