



# GRASS Disinfo Brief

**MONITORING PERIOD:**

**June 18th – July 1st**

GRASS  
REFORMANDA





- Georgian Dream responds to Josep Borrell and Robin Dunnigan with criticism
- Georgian Dream reprimands the Venice Commission for “wanting to legalize same-sex marriage in Georgia”
- “Global War Party”, “Revolution”, “Second Front” remain prevalent in the ruling party’s rhetoric
- Pro-Kremlin groups continue accusing the West of wanting to start a revolution and a war in Georgia
- Pro-Kremlin groups voice conspiracies about US interests towards Georgia
- Propaganda paints Moscow as a savior of Georgian independence and identity

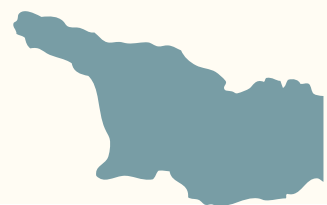
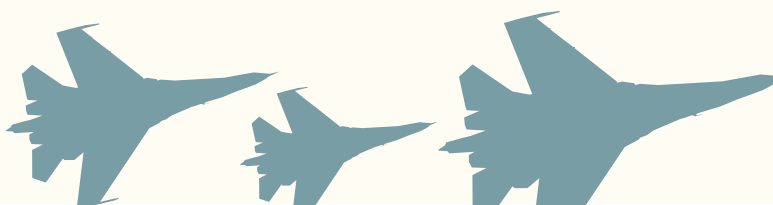
### Georgian Dream responds to Josep Borrell and Robin Dunnigan with criticism

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, the EU Foreign Affairs Council held a meeting in Luxembourg. Following the meeting, Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, expressed concerns about Georgia's trajectory in relation to the EU. Borrell asserted that the current Georgian government's actions are steering the country away from European integration. He outlined several potential short-term measures the EU could implement in response: reconsidering support from the European Peace Facility, suspending financial assistance for Georgian governmental programs, downgrading political engagement with the Georgian government.

In the same period, the US Ambassador to Georgia, Robin Dunnigan, highlighted that most of the assistance from the US and the EU is directed towards governmental institutions, infrastructure, and social projects. However, the Ambassador stated that these types of assistance are at risk if the Georgian government continues to view the US and the EU as adversaries rather than friends. In an interview, the Ambassador also questioned the Georgian government’s decision to pursue deeper relations with the Chinese Communist Party when it is one of the biggest financiers of Russia. “Why deepen economic links with a party that finances your occupiers?”, she asked.

These harsher-than-usual statements from Western officials were met with criticism from the ruling party.

- Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze assessed the US Ambassador’s position about Sino-Georgian relations as a **double standard**. He argued that Georgia faces undue restrictions on deepening ties with China, while countries criticizing these relations do not face similar limitations. Additionally, when Georgia attempts to adopt a “law on transparency”, it is labeled as “Russian,” despite **similar legislation existing in Western countries** like France, Canada, and the United States without negative connotations. Kobakhidze concluded, “We are accustomed to these double standards, which is a sad reality, but we continue to live with it.”
- The Prime Minister also addressed the criticism towards the newly adopted “law on transparency”, stating that a false narrative was created around it by labelling it as a "Russian law" to incite protests domestically and cause disturbance internationally. He emphasized that, in reality, the law strengthens Georgia’s sovereignty. Despite the continuing criticism, Kobakhidze expressed confidence that relations with the West will return to normal, noting that all indications somehow point towards this outcome.



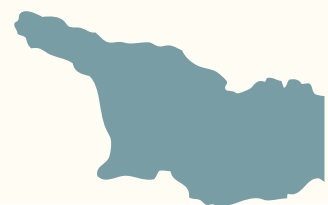
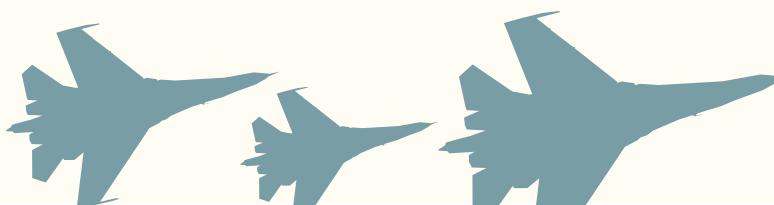
- The leader of the Parliamentary majority, Mamuka Mdinardze, in response to Josep Borrells statements, expressed concerns over the EU potentially wrongfully accusing the Georgian government, which could lead to unfounded sanctions. According to Mdinardze, the core issue lies in wrong conclusions and accusations made by the EU rather than the sanctions themselves. He stressed that the unjust treatment of Georgia is reminiscent of the **United National Movement's government**, which accused and punished innocent Georgians. Mdinardze reiterated the ruling party's traditional narrative about the US, France, Canada, and other Western democracies adopting a law on foreign influence without any issues, while in Georgia it is unfairly dubbed as "Russian".
- General Secretary of the Georgian Dream and the Mayor of Tbilisi, Kakha Kaladze, responded to Borrell's criticism with the **recurring narrative that the Georgian government has been asking for a clear argument as to why the law is detrimental, how it restricts or damages NGOs and the media, and how transparency contradicts European values**. According to him, if these entities are engaged in good activities without any intentions to incite riots, revolutions, or finance extremist organizations through hidden financial schemes, then there should be no issue in presenting financial declarations. He argued that organizations are against the law exactly because they would have to **disclose that they finance revolutions and extremism**.
- Georgian Dream MP, Irakli Zarkua, distorted Josep Borrell's statement, accusing him of wanting to "punish this country." According to him, Borrell wants to put sanctions on Georgia because of "the law on transparency", but when he is asked about a similar law being in place in France, he has no answer. Zarkua also besmirched former MEP's critical of the Georgian Dream, Anna Fotyga and Viola von Cramon, taunting them for losing their seats at the European Parliament. "Where Fotyga, where is my Viola? They were staging protests against a legitimate government demanding the release of Saakashvili," he stated, adding that the European people, of course, would not allow such unjust and biased MEPs in the European Parliament.
- According to Guram Matcharashvili, one of the leaders of the ruling party's radical anti-Western wing, the "People's Power" movement, apart from the Georgian Dream, the European community responded not only to Josep Borrell but also to any official who made unfair statements about Georgia during the **European Parliament elections**. He emphasized that the majority of citizens in leading European countries supported the Georgian Dream's stance on traditional conservative values, justice, peace, and economic development, and rejecting injustice, war, and economic collapse. "Therefore, it wasn't just us, but a **significant portion of European society that rejected everyone who made unfair statements regarding Georgia**," said Matcharashvili.
- The "People's Power" movement released a statement in response to the **US Ambassador's** remarks, according to which, up until now, the new US ambassador had largely avoided topics directly impacting the sovereignty and independence of Georgia. However, this time, **she crossed a critical red line**. This move, while understandable and expected, comes amid the current US administration's inadequate, oppressive, and insulting policy towards Georgia, the statement says. It is unlikely that Ambassador Dunnigan would be permitted to maintain a relatively neutral position without exacerbating tensions with the current government, the statement argues.



- The statement criticizes the Ambassador's questioning of the Georgian government's decision to deepen economic relations with China, ridiculing the argument that China is Russia's main financier, thus Georgia should avoid economic ties. "If that is the case, why is the US deepening economic relations with China every year? Why are the EU and its member states individually deepening economic and political ties?" According to the "People's Power" movement, the **West holds Georgia to double standards** because it views it as a **failed state and a vassal**.
- The statement also assessed the **\$6 billion US financial assistance to Georgia** as "**an illusion and a mockery of the Georgian people**" because, in reality, the assistance was only \$4 billion, and additionally, most of it was directed towards NGO's which were used to bring the United National Movement into power. Nowadays, those finances are directed towards NGOs that work to undermine Georgia's interests.
- In regards to Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the subsequent occupation of 20% of Georgian territories, the "People's Power" movement argues that the "**agent network**" **installed by the US**, orchestrated severe provocations. The statement blames the US for the Russian invasion, arguing that had it not been for the "agent network's" deliberate malice towards their own country and blind adherence to foreign powers, Georgia might have avoided being engulfed in war in 2008. Moreover, following the August events, Russia was branded an "occupier," while the US became a strategic partner, which is a narrative effectively utilized in propaganda and shaping public opinion, the statement reads. The movement attributes the US aid to Georgia after the Russian invasion to Washington's wish to save the deteriorating United National Movement government and keep it in power in order to maintain influence in the country.
- The statement concludes that if there were genuine strategic relations between the US and Georgia, Georgians would not find themselves shamefully **ranked near Afghanistan in terms of US visa issuance statistics**. "Despite years of fighting alongside American soldiers and sacrificing blood to establish democracy, Georgians receive fewer U.S. visas compared to Afghans," reads the statement.

### **Georgian Dream reprimands the Venice Commission for "wanting to legalize same-sex marriage in Georgia"**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, the Venice Commission published its opinion on the draft constitutional law on the "Protection of Family Values and Minors" initiated by the ruling party, which drastically restricts the fundamental freedoms of the members of the LGBTIQI+ community. The Commission considers that the compliance of the provisions at stake with European and international standards cannot be established and the mere proposal of adopting this text risks further fueling a hostile and stigmatizing atmosphere against LGBTI people in Georgia. "The Commission recommends the Georgian authorities



to reconsider this legislative proposal entirely and to not proceed with its adoption,” the document concludes.

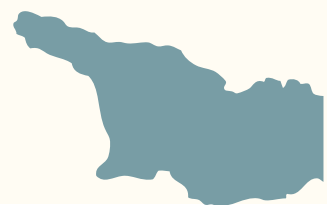
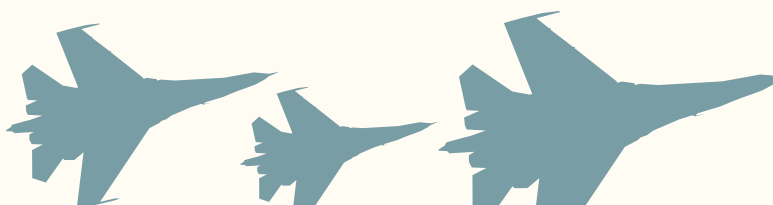
The ruling party utilized the Commission’s opinion to further its narrative about protecting traditional values, accusing opposition parties of staying silent on the matter due to “foreign demands and instructions.”

- The Prime Minister emphasized that there are **risks associated with LGBT propaganda**, citing that there are “examples from specific countries.” He underscored the importance of countering such propaganda, stating, “when the opposition fails to support the anti-LGBT propaganda bill, it implies their support for LGBT propaganda, which is categorically unacceptable to us.”
- The Chairperson of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili argued that there are “dangerous tendencies” in the Commission’s recommendations, which not only envisage the encouragement of “LGBT propaganda”, but calls for the **legalization of issues which the law aims to restrict**. According to him, while Georgian society wishes to allow marriage only between men and women, the Venice Commission recommends the legalization of same-sex marriage. He stated that in some cases, the recommendations are not based on legal considerations, but on “certain political conjuncture that may exist in particular countries”. Papuashvili claimed that the opposition is not participating in the discussion around the law because they are afraid of being **reprimanded by foreign powers**.
- The leader of the Parliamentary majority, Mamuka Mdinardze, stated that the Venice Commission’s recent recommendations to Georgia are unacceptable. Specifically, regarding the ban on LGBT propaganda, the Commission not only expresses disapproval of the proposed changes but also suggests reversing existing legislation, effectively **legalizing same-sex marriage**. He argued that the opposition parties appear to be influenced by external patrons and are scared of being disobedient towards them, which is why they are avoiding the issue.
- It is incomprehensible and unacceptable as to why the Venice Commission advises Georgia to do what the largest part of the European society voted against in the European Parliament elections, Georgian Dream MP Archil Talakvadze noted. “The law expresses the opinion and attitude of Georgian citizens regarding this issue,” said Talakvadze.
- Member of the “People’s Power” movement, Guram Matcharashvili, criticized the Venice Commission for delivering political rather than fair legal conclusions. He pointed out that the Venice Commission was purposefully put in a situation to urge Georgia to legalize same-sex marriage. The Constitution of Georgia defines a family as a union between a man and a woman, yet the Venice Commission wants Georgia to contradict its own constitution and legalize same-sex marriage. Matcharashvili challenged the opposition “with their LGBT flags” to publicly declare if they agree with the Venice Commission's opinion. “If they remain silent, silence is a sign of agreement, and that LGBT flag will fly even higher in the opposition ranks,” member of the Parliamentary majority claimed.

**“Global War Party”, “Revolution”, “Second Front” remain prevalent in the ruling party’s rhetoric**



- The Prime Minister stated that too often, during recent years, specific unfair statements were made on behalf of European and American institutions. This was done, for example, by MEPs, US senators, congressmen, and other government officials. According to Prime Minister Kobakhidze, the ruling party talks about the “Global War Party” because, it has serious influence on Western institutions. Additionally, as Kobakhidze claimed, **the “Global War Party” narrative allows the ruling party to protect the reputation of our Western partners in the eyes of the Georgian people by attributing the unjust treatment of Georgia to the “Global War Party” rather than Western institutions as a whole.** “The EU and the US require deoligarchization and I hope that the processes will go in this direction. Accordingly, the pressure on Georgia will decrease,” said the Prime Minister.
- The Prime Minister reiterated the narrative that specific forces have been shaking the country and disturbing peace in Georgia since 2020. As he argued, the Georgian Dream acquired 90 seats in the Parliament after the 2020 elections. However, based on falsified parallel vote tabulation results, the opposition boycotted the Parliament, which led to a political crisis and the subsequent agreement mediated by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, in 2021. Kobakhidze assessed the agreement as “a temporary detraction from the constitutional framework and unfair”, and claimed that there was “artificially created crisis” throughout the year. In 2022, the opposition and its affiliated organizations were calling on the Georgian government to join sanctions against Russia and send soldiers to fight in Ukraine, which would ultimately drag Georgia into the war. Kobakhidze argued that this was followed by more artificially created disturbances in 2023, until Georgia was granted EU membership candidate status.
- The Georgian government expects pragmatic steps from the EU, the Prime Minister stated, adding that “ultimately, **no valid arguments were presented** against the law on transparency”. He noted that despite repeated offers for public discussion with European and American partners, they were consistently rebuffed, which demonstrates that the criticism was unfounded. Against this backdrop, he emphasized the need for a pragmatic approach towards Georgia by the EU to strengthen relations.
- The Chairperson of the Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, argued that had the United National Movement been in power in February 2022, it would have sent soldiers in Ukraine and joined sanctions against Russia, which would have led to the physical and economic destruction of Georgia. He emphasized that “some Europeans” were also involved in the plot to drag Georgia into the war. “These Europeans still appear on TV. Has anyone of them apologized for almost **dragging us into the war with their reckless advice** and recommendations?” he expressed.
- Leader of the Parliamentary majority, Mamuka Mdinaradze, claimed that the EU “**told us [the ruling party] to do some things and we did not do it**”, **but still managed to get EU candidate status by fighting for it and standing firmly on two legs.** He continued “some people will threaten us



[the ruling party], some things will happen, but nothing can stand in the way of truth – we will become **EU members with dignity and pride.**”

- “We explain to our partners, Europeans, Americans, once again, that it is **not worth angering this brave nation,**” Georgian Dream MP, Irakli Zarkua expressed. He stated that **Georgia does not want war, LGBT propaganda, polarization,** and has the right to **defend its sovereignty.** He called on Georgia’s European partners to sit at the negotiation table and find common ground, adding that war, erasure of Orthodoxy, and the promotion of LGBT propaganda should be excluded from the negotiations, suggesting that Georgia’s Western partners have these issues on their agenda.

#### **Pro-Kremlin groups continue accusing the West of wanting to start a revolution and a war in Georgia**

- The host of the pro-Russian Sezoni TV broadcast, Nikoloz Mzhavanadze, claimed that the West will force Georgia to **open a second front,** which will result in most of the Georgian **population turning into cannon fodder,** as winning a war against Russia is impossible.
- The founder of the government-supported NGO “Former Political Prisoners for Human Rights,” Nana Kakabadze, argued that the **West wants to overthrow the Georgian Dream** government with force as the ruling party refuses to obey the West’s demands. She foretold that the **West would not acknowledge the upcoming elections as legitimate** as it is the only way to get rid of the Georgian Dream.
- Mikheil Zghenti, a member of the Solidarity for Peace party, emphasized that Western-funded NGOs held protests and opposed the “law on transparency” as they were paid for it. The West wants to maintain its grip on influence in Georgia and the law contradicts that plan, which is why it tasked Georgian NGOs to oppose it by any means necessary. If they fail to do so, they will be deprived of their funds.
- A clergy on Alt Info’s broadcast also underlined that the **West wants to start a war** between Georgia and Russia. Washington and Brussels are **not interested in Georgia’s welfare** and development; they rather want to **weaken Russia and continuously create destabilization in its neighboring countries.**
- Another propagandist on Alt Info asserted that Europe and the US are the number one enemies of Georgia’s independence. The West aims to undermine the independence, values, and identity of small nations.
- One of the hosts of Alt Info’s broadcasts, Aleksandre Palavandishvili, repeated the ruling party’s narrative that the West is groundlessly threatening Georgia and its high-ranking officials for adopting a law similar to those already in place in France, Canada, and the US.
- A propaganda source asserted that the internal and external forces will try to **cause serious political upheavals in Georgia** shortly before or after the elections, and will use the “**blinded Georgian youth**” as a tool, which unfortunately might lead to serious confrontation.

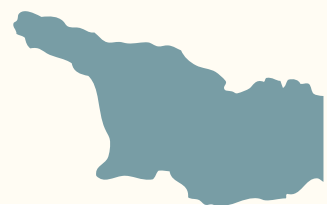
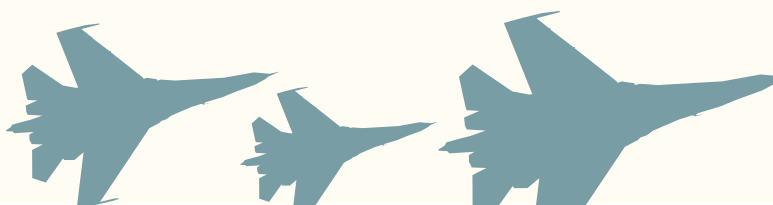
#### **Pro-Kremlin groups voice conspiracies about US interests towards Georgia**



- Dzvelaia, one of the hosts of Alt Info's broadcasts, argued that if China is considered a financier of Russia due to its economic ties, as suggested by the US Ambassador, then the same logic could be applied to the US and EU, which continue to engage in trade with Russia. He claimed that the US Ambassador and Western officials as a whole think that Georgians are not familiar with the ongoing global developments and thus can be easily lied to.
- The same propagandist propagated that relations with the US have caused severe economic problems and poverty in Georgia. He speculated that the US has done this deliberately because it is easier to establish **an agent network in a poor country**. "It is easier to **sell the idea of European integration to hungry people**," he argued.
- Another host of Alt Info's broadcasts, Aleksandre Palavandishvili, claimed that while on an official visit to the US in the 1990s, unspecified Georgian government officials were told by the Americans that **Georgia should engage in a conflict with Russia** and start having a tolerant policy towards homosexuals.
- A propaganda source argued that Georgia can never be a sovereign state while it has a strategic partnership with the US because, in the framework of the partnership, Georgia is in the position of a vassal, a satellite state. He claimed that the US has the right to use Georgian territory for its military and that there were demands at the beginning of Russia's war in Ukraine for Georgia to use military force in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region.
- A propagandist on Sezoni TV speculated that when Mikheil Saakashvili came to power in 2003, he dismissed people from public office in the name of fighting corruption. However, in reality, the **list of people to be dismissed was created by the US embassy** to throw out patriotic people from Georgian governmental institutions.
- A clergy who often appears on Alt Info's broadcasts stated that even if the Georgian Dream gets 70% of the votes in the Parliamentary elections, **pro-Western powers in Georgia will declare the elections as rigged**, and with the support of the US and "the collective West," will start a **Maidan-like revolution**.

### **Propaganda paints Moscow as a savior of Georgian independence and identity**

- A propagandist on the pro-Russian "Solidarity for Peace" broadcast stated that the Georgian government will be forced to restore diplomatic relations with Russia reintegrate in the Post-Soviet economic space as it is the only way for Georgia to advance its economic development. He added that the restoration of relations with Russia carries a security dimension as well **since Russia has historically saved Georgia's identity and sovereignty multiple times throughout history**.





- Another propagandist on the same broadcast reiterated this narrative and claimed that if Russia were to dissolve, Georgia would follow as **Russia is the only guarantee of its independence.**
- A propagandist on Alt Info argued that the West will issue sanctions and impose restrictions on Georgia, but will ultimately be forced to normalize relations with Georgia after Georgia stabilizes relations with its neighbors, first of all with Russia. According to him, **Georgia is more important for Europe than Europe is for Georgia**, and therefore, **restoring diplomatic ties with Russia is a recipe for stabilizing relations with the West.**
- Propaganda sources on Alt Info continued to claim that the **EU and the US cannot help Georgia in restoring its territorial integrity**, as the issue cannot be resolved without Russia's involvement.
- Pro-Russian Sezoni TV host, Nikoloz Mzhavanadze propagated that the **West wanted to incite coups in Kazakhstan, Belarus, Syria, and Turkey**, but Russia stopped these malign plans in its tracks.
- Mzhavanadze also repeated his traditional narrative about Russia reconquering Guria, Adjara, and Javakheti and giving it back to Georgia. He also stated that the Georgian population reached **5 million during Soviet rule** and the economy was thriving, which is a testament to **how close ties with the Kremlin are beneficial for Georgia.**
- Guram Palavandishvili, a prominent pro-Russian propagandist who often appears on Alt Info's broadcasts, claimed that homosexuality has permeated the West, which has rejected god and is attempting to spread this "ideology" throughout the world, including in Georgia. According to him, Orthodox Christianity has saved Georgia so far, but in the case of Greece, the majority of the population of which is Orthodox Christian and has legalized same-sex marriage, demonstrates that Georgia should remain wary. Palavandishvili concluded that in this scenario, **being a neighbor of Russia is letting Georgia maintain its faith and identity.**