

CONFERENCE AGENDA

GEORGIA AT THE NEXUS OF DEMOCRATIZATION AND EUROPEANIZATION: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES



Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel, Tbilisi | 16 May 2017

09:30 Registration

10:00 Opening Remarks | **Prof. Kornely Kakachia**, Director of the Georgian Institute of Politics

10:15 Panel 1: Party Politics & Democratization | Moderator: **Prof. David Aprasidze**, Ilia State University

This panel addresses issues related to the further development and strengthening of political parties in Georgia. For nearly two decades, Georgia has been striving to develop its democratic political party system. However, until recently, political actors were not able to develop clear and viable policy profiles and coherent party policies. Following the 2016 parliamentary elections, the political landscape shifted in favor of single-party rule, which has been a recurring feature of Georgian politics since independence. Moreover, the political landscape has become more fragmented due to the United National Movement's split and the collapse of the liberal center parties. This panel asks: how can Georgia develop a more stable, sustainable system of political parties that are defined by coherent ideological programs?

Speakers

- Davit Usupashvili**, Former Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia
- David Bakradze**, Member of the Parliament of Georgia and member of the Movement for Liberty-European Georgia
- Dr. Max Bader**, Lecturer at University of Leiden
- Levan Tsutskiridze**, Executive Director of the Eastern European Neighborhood Office of the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)
- Levan Kakhishvili**, Researcher at the GIP

12:00 Coffee Break

12:15 Panel 2: Parliamentarism | Moderator: **Prof. Charles Fairbanks**, Ilia State University

This session is devoted to discussion of the role that parliament can and does play in Georgia's political system. Currently, checks and balances and separation of powers between different branches of government are poorly defined and do not function effectively. A stronger parliament is necessary to balance the power of the executive branch and ensure further democratization. Parliament can perform these functions through effective oversight of the executive branch, acting as a balancer of power between institutions such as the presidency and the judiciary, and promoting constitutional reforms that clarify the separation of powers. This panel asks: how can Georgia develop a stronger and more effective parliament?

Speakers

- Dr. Giorgi Kakhiani**, Chairperson of the Committee of Procedural Issues And Rules at the Parliament of Georgia
- Dr. Anna Dolidze**, Parliamentary Secretary at the Office of the President of Georgia
- Dr. Lika Sajaia**, Parliamentary Secretary at Transparency International Georgia
- Laura Thornton**, Resident Director in Georgia for the National Democratic Institute (NDI)
- Tornike Zurabashvili**, Editor-in-Chief at Civil Georgia

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13:45 Lunch

15:00 Panel 3: Europeanization & Democracy | Moderator: **Prof. Oliver Reisner**, Ilia State University

Georgia's relations with Euro-Atlantic partners are crucial to development of its foreign and domestic policies. Following implementation of visa liberalization with the EU, Georgia must work to articulate its next major step toward Europeanization. It appears that membership in Euro-Atlantic structures (EU and NATO) is not a short-term possibility, and the lack of a perspective toward full membership has caused growing disillusionment with the West inside Georgia. However, closer relations with Euro-Atlantic structures can still benefit Georgia. In light of this situation, how can Georgia develop a coherent strategy to guide its relations with both the EU and NATO?

Speakers **Tamar Khulordava**, Chairperson of the European Union Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia

Dirk Schuebel, Head of the Eastern Partnership Bilateral Division of the European External Action Service

Thornike Gordadze, Senior advisor for Education, Studies and Research at the Institute for Higher National Defense Studies, Paris

Kakha Gogolashvili, Director of European Studies at the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS)

16:30 Conclusion

17:00 End of Conference

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GEORGIAN INSTITUTE OF POLITICS



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