

# Can Georgia Defend Itself? Discussion on Georgia's Military Capabilities Amid Emerging Security Threats

Round Table Discussion

**March 09, 2022**

**17:00 – 18:10 (UTC +4)**

Languages: **Georgian | English**

**Rooms Hotel - Garden Hall**

M.Kostava street #14

## Program:

Moderator: **Shorena Lortkipanidze**, Civil Council on Defense and Security

17:00-17:05

**Welcome Remarks:**

**Prof. Kornely Kakachia**, The Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP)

17:05-17:35

**Introductory Statements:**

**Maj.-Gen.(Ret) Vakhtang Kapanadze**, Former Chief of General Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces (GAF)

**Dr. Shalva Dzebisashvili**, University of Georgia

**Prof. David Darchiashvili**, Ilia State University

**Prof. Charles Fairbanks**, Ilia State University

17:35-18:10

**Q&A**

**\*THE EVENT WILL BE HELD UNDER CHATHAM HOUSE RULES!**

## About the event:

Unlike the expectations from many, including the US intelligence that Kyiv would fall within days after the Russian invasion, Ukrainian soldiers, along with territorial defense forces offered resistance and managed to withhold the capital. Even in those town where Russian troops managed to enter, intruders were met with resistance with unarmed civilians from the local population. These developments suggest that if the Kremlin continues its military campaign it is going to be long and bloody.

In parallel, both Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region have put their military in high readiness causing concern in among some people in Tbilisi whether it was a pretext for the repetition of Ukrainian scenario in Georgia.

This roundtable discussion will address issues related to Georgia's readiness and capabilities to defend itself in case of the Kremlin's renewed aggression. Is the society ready to offer the resistance similar to the Ukrainians? And most importantly, are the Georgian armed forces prepared for another Russian intrusion? What are the conclusions that officials in Tbilisi have drawn from 2008 war? Distinguished speakers will be weighing in with their insights in the discussion focused on the following questions:

- What has changed since 2008 war? Is Georgia more resilient today?
- What lessons does the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war hold for the Georgian policymakers, army and the society?
- What are the risks for Georgia? Is the West ready to stand with Georgia?

## About the speakers:



**Prof. Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr.**- Professor of Soviet and post-Soviet systems at Ilia State University. Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C. Headquarters, was a research professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins/SAIS and a director of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. He has served as a deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of State and member of the department's policy planning staff. He was a foreign policy adviser to the Reagan campaign in 1980 and the Bush campaign in 1988. Fairbanks has served on the political science faculty of both Yale University and the University of Toronto.



**Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze** is a Visiting Professor at the Georgian Technical University, Department of Civil and Industrial Engineering. In recent years, Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze has been actively participating in a wide range of military-technical and military-political seminars, workshops, and conferences held under the auspices of NATO and the European Union. Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze has been awarded 15 orders, medals, and badges, including the Order of Honor, Vakhtang Gorgasali 3rd Degree Order, the Medal for Combat Wound, the U.S. National Guard Honorary Order, the Golden Cross of the German Armed Forces, the Gold Medal of the National Military Academy of Ukraine, and the Medal of Honor of the Danish Territorial Guard. Among his numerous merits, Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze is a member of the Hall of Fame of the US Army War College and the Honorary Doctor of the Military Academy of the Ukrainian Land Forces.

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## About the speakers:



**Prof. David Darchiashvili** is professor at Ilia State University. After graduation from the history department, Tbilisi State University in 1991, he defended candidate dissertation and started lecturing modern history of Russia. In parallel, in 1993-2004, Darchiashvili worked at the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development as a researcher. Getting interested theory of international relations and civil-military relations, he participated in numerous international projects and conferences dedicated to these fields. In 2002 he defended another Ph. D. dissertation in the field of political science. In 2002-2003 he visited Caucasus-Sentral Asia Institute, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC. As a visiting Fulbright scholar. In 2004-200 he was an executive director of the Open Society Georgia Foundation. In 2008-2016 He was a member of the Georgian Parliament.



**Dr. Shalva Dzebisashvili** is a Doctor of Political Science (Associated Professor), Head of the Political Science and International Relations Program in the University of Georgia and is the co-founder of the Georgian Strategic Analysis Center (GSAC). Since 2003 he has served in various senior defense policy and planning related positions at the Georgian Ministry of Defense. In 2008–09 he successfully completed an MA in Strategic Security Studies at the National Defense University (NDU - Washington D.C.) and consequently took over the position of Senior Civilian Representative of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (Defense Advisor) to the Georgian Mission to NATO. In September 2012, he received a doctoral fellowship (GEM) from the European Commission and was awarded a doctoral degree at the Institute for European Studies (IEE-ULB, Brussels) in January 2016. He is author of multiple academic publications, press articles, reports and reviews.

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