

PACE Members Warn of Possible Expulsion of Georgia from Council of Europe

By Liza Mchedlidze

A group of 51 members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has warned that Georgia is violating its commitments as a Council of Europe member and risks losing its place in the organization.

In a joint statement released on August 19, the lawmakers accused the Georgian government of pursuing a "path of repression and disengagement" that they say undermines democracy and human rights.

"If Georgia makes no progress in reversing its authoritarian course, we will challenge the credentials of the Georgian delegation on substantive grounds and call for the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers to begin the expulsion process," the statement read. The lawmakers said the country is in "serious violation of the basic principles of the Council of Europe mentioned in Article 3 of its Statute."

The statement recalled that PACE ratified the Georgian delegation's credentials earlier this year only on the condition that authorities free political prisoners and call new parliamentary elections. "Instead, the situation has worsened dramatically," it said, pointing to the imprisonment of opposition leaders, prosecutions of activists, and cases against journalists described as "politically motivated."

According to the lawmakers, these developments represent "a sustained campaign to eliminate democratic opposition, restrict freedom of expression and silence civil society."



The Georgian delegation has also stopped participating in the Assembly. On January 29, just hours after PACE voted to ratify its credentials with conditions, delegation head Tea Tsulukiani an-

nounced that Georgia would suspend its work in the body.

PACE President Theodoros Rousopoulos responded that membership in the Assembly is not optional. "Since

the delegation's credentials are ratified, participation in the Assembly is an obligation, not a choice," he said.

Georgia joined the Council of Europe in 1999.

Papuashvili Criticizes EU, Kobakhidze Warns of 'Deficit of Sovereignty' in Europe

By Liza Mchedlidze

Georgian Dream Speaker of Parliament Shalva Papuashvili has sharply criticized the European Union, accusing Brussels of pressuring Georgia and undermining its

sovereignty. Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze echoed the criticism, arguing that Europe itself suffers from a "deficit of sovereignty."

In a social media post, Papuashvili said Georgia's path to EU membership must not

come at the expense of peace or national identity. While the goal of joining the Union is "a safer and more secure future," he warned that the journey could be damaging if handled recklessly.

"Knowing the coordinates of a

safe harbor means nothing if, on the way there, the ship and its passengers are caught in a storm," Papuashvili wrote. "Our main concern is that, on the path to the EU, we do not damage or destroy ourselves physically or spiritually to the point that, upon entering the EU, we have nothing left to protect."

He accused the EU of demanding escalation with Russia, funding extremism, interfering in elections, slandering Georgia, and "meddling recklessly and shamelessly in the millennia-old values of Georgians." According to Papuashvili, such actions contradict the Union's identity as a peace project.

"Painted propaganda-like Europeanness is not enough," he wrote. "True Europeanness is needed, meaning integrity, fairness, strength, and restraint — exactly the kind that the founding fathers of the European Union had 75 years ago."

Speaking to journalists about Papuashvili's statement, Prime Minister Kobakhidze said European institutions are weak and

influenced by outside forces. "European bureaucracy has not proven strong enough to protect Europe's objective interests," he said. "This has one main reason: European bureaucracy is essentially controlled by external influences. As a result, they struggle to make decisions based on objective interests."

Kobakhidze described this as Europe's biggest challenge. "The deficit of sovereignty is the main issue across Europe. Only a few states within the EU remain that steadfastly defend their independence and sovereignty," he said.

He also rejected what he called a "false dilemma" in which EU membership is presented as requiring Georgia to compromise. "When they present giving up our values or peace as a condition for EU membership, indirectly hinting at all this, it is a false dilemma," he said. "We want to join the EU while maintaining peace, fostering development, and preserving traditional values. We will not deviate from these principles."

