

# Geocase Annual Report 2022



## Preface

We have the honor to introduce the third annual report of Geocase. As a think-tank, Geocase supports the formulation and development of policies based on the rule of law, human rights, balanced government, and a free and responsible market economy that will strengthen Georgia's regional and international roles and promote the country's national interests.

Geocase provides the Georgian authorities with analytical support to enable informed decision-making that effectively facilitates achieving goals defined by the Constitution of Georgia, and ensures stable institutional development, and further promotes its political and economic reforms.

Policy papers and other materials prepared by Geocase are based upon careful and realistic situational analyses and offer decision-makers rational, tangible, and result-oriented solutions to the challenges they may face.

In 2022 the representatives of Geocase published articles on Georgia's domestic and foreign policies as well as on critical international topics such as Russia's ongoing military actions against Ukraine, and the future of the international security system.

The Chair of Geocase and researchers have made numerous appearances in both Georgian and foreign media on Georgia's domestic and foreign policies including economic, health care system, social issues, and global, regional threats, challenges.

Geocase regularly holds discussions on political issues and Georgia's regional, international role with Georgian and foreign experts. The representatives of Geocase also participate in international discussions and conferences. They hold meetings in regions to raise awareness of critical issues of the state and contribute to strengthening public resilience.

Also, Geocase implemented the "Foreign and Security Policy" training project. Within this program, the Geocase Alumni are involved in our activities. At the same time, they can publish articles on foreign and security issues.

Geocase and the Georgian Strategic Analysis Center (GSAC) established the "Bipartisan Academic Platform for National Unity". In the framework of this platform the "Declaration of National Unity" was prepared with the focus on critical topics of Georgia's domestic and foreign policies (De-occupation, European, Euro-Atlantic integration, enhancement of democratic institutions, defense and security, economy, education, health care, and a fair policy of social protection). The purpose of the "Bipartisan Academic Platform for National Unity" is to promote reducing polarization in society and create a multilateral cooperation space, which will be based on the common values that should initially encourage civil society and academia, as well as the broader parts of the public. The project is sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Georgia.

We would like to express our gratitude for your interest in the third annual report of Geocase.

Yours sincerely,

Victor Kipiani

Chair of Geocase

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## Events and Initiatives



The importance of the Middle Corridor and the Role of Georgia

*Date: 13.12.2022*

Yet another discussion has been held within the Geocase and the Bank of Georgia joint project - Economic Forum. The main topic of the talks was "The

importance of the Middle Corridor and the Role of Georgia". Mr Levan Davitashvili, Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; Mr Victor Kipiani, the Chairman of Geocase; and Mr Giorgi Jakhutashvili, the Chairman of the Kazakh-Georgian Economic Union spoke at the event.

Mr Giorgi Abashishvili, the Geocase Director on Economic Policy, moderated the discussions. Members of the state and business sectors and the analytical and academic fields representatives also participated in the event.

The Vice-Prime Minister spoke about Georgia's new opportunities that emerged due to the increased attention to the Middle Corridor. According to Mr Davitashvili, Georgia's new agenda, in terms of connectivity with Europe, is becoming more topical and promising, and the involvement of the business sector and the analytical community in this process is very important.

"The main topic of the event was reviewing Georgia's new opportunities in light of the advantage of the Middle Corridor, discussing Georgia's new role in terms of transport, logistics, energy, and digital connections between Europe and Asia. During the discussions, the state's approach, and actions as well as opportunities for partners' involvement, current,

and planned activities, and projects were analyzed. Furthermore, the role of the business and analytical sectors in these processes was emphasized. During the discussions, taking advantage of using the Middle Corridor, the current challenges, needs, and opportunities were highlighted. We saw that there is full readiness from the state's side to cooperate on the mentioned issue" - noted Mr Giorgi Abashishvili, the Director of the Economic Policy at Geocase.

"Today's event intended to talk about practical issues of the practical economy. And when talking about practicality - transport, communications, and connections are the issues that can integrate our economy - the Georgian space - into the regional and world economy as much as possible. Thus, now and in the future, the topic of the Middle Corridor will be the basis on which, in the case of the relevant approach, we can build our economic as well as geopolitical dividends," stated the Geocase Chairman, Victor Kipiani.

"The economic forum was an important step in terms of coordination of ideas between the private and public sectors. During the discussion, we heard about the importance of the Middle Corridor and the role of Georgia, the speakers put special emphasis on the importance of discussing the needs and challenges that will contribute to the improvement of the transport logistics function of our country. This process has a lot of interested stakeholders and I wish we would frequently meet to hold similar discussions," said Mr Giorgi Jakhutashvili.

The main aim of the "Economic Forum" is to facilitate the state, analytical, and business sector representatives to analyze the current challenges and new opportunities of Georgia's economic policy.

International conference -  
Challenges and Development  
Paths for a Cooperative Identity  
in the Black Sea Region

*Date: 04.11.2022*

The Geocase Chair Victor Kipiani has been invited to speak at the



international conference - Challenges and Development Paths for a Cooperative Identity in the Black Sea Region – organized by the Global Studies Center at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (Romania).

The conference aimed to analyze the Black Sea phenomenon and identify the ways to tackle common security, geopolitical and geo-economic challenges facing the Black Sea region countries - Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

The event was held in a hybrid format and its participants included prominent analysts and experts as well as authority and diplomatic corps representatives from the abovementioned countries.

Among the distinguished speakers of the special session that opened the conference were H.E. Ms. Irina Zidaru, Director General for Strategic Affairs, MFA Romania; H.E. Mr. Ihor Prokopchuk, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to Romania; Mr Beka Chkheidze, Deputy Director of International Economic Relations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia; Dr. Hanna Shelest, Security Studies Program Director, *Ukrainian PRISM* & Editor-in-Chief of *Ukraine Analytica*; Mr Victor Kipiani, the Chairman of the Georgian think tank *Geocase*; and Dr. Igor Munteanu, Assoc. Prof., former Exec. Director of *IDIS Viitorul* and former Ambassador of The Republic of Moldova in the United States.

Ms Leonela Leca, the Senior Analyst and Mr Silviu Nate, the Director at the Global Studies Center addressed the audience with a welcome speech and moderated the discussions.

During his presentation, Victor Kipiani discussed the Black Sea security issues in the context of Russia's new strategic geopolitical approach. He mentioned that the Black Sea is becoming a fulcrum of great power competition and the Black Sea region countries should be well equipped and well prepared to deal with and tackle the existing as well as emerging challenges.

“Global Security model in a foreseeable world would be combined, unified, and united. The future of global security will be based on hub-and-spoke models. There will be more articulated regional centres. Those regional centres will be competing with each other for more security umbrellas and more investments as well, this is another incentive for us to team up, join our efforts and do our best to win in this competition. Institutionalizing the cooperation of the Black Sea nations is something that we should be looking at,”- stated Victor Kipiani.

In this regard, The Geocase Chair voiced his idea about the Black Sea Declaration which would be signed by the Black Sea like-minded nations (except Russia). According to Kipiani, the declaration, among other issues, would focus on the area free of corrupt and special influence zones, diversifying regional infrastructure, implementing socially and environmentally sustainable projects, also, setting up a regional free trade area to develop the economic potential of the Black Sea region. In terms of security, he underlined the formation of relatively small alliances between countries and cited the AUKUS (Australia-Britain-USA alliance) model as an example.

Kipiani underlined the world should understand that the Black Sea is an integral component of Eurasian security as it simultaneously has connections to Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

“The foundation of the Black Sea unity in terms of security is a common perception of risks, threats, and challenges,”- summed up his speech Victor Kipiani.

In the end, during the Q&A session, participants learned more details about the topics discussed and gained further insight into the region's developments.



Georgia's perspective of EU membership candidate status and respective issues

*Date: 19.10.2022*

Victor Kipiani, the Chairman, and Emil Avdaliani, the Director of Middle East Studies of Geocase have participated in the closed online seminar organized by The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) in cooperation with Geocase. The discussion topic was Georgia's perspective on EU membership candidate status and respective issues.

The seminar panelists included: Nikoloz Samkharadze, Chairperson of the Foreign Relations Committee at the Parliament of Georgia; Agnieszka Filipiak, Deputy Editor in Chief, Forbes Women; Emil Avdaliani, Director of Middle East Studies at Geocase; Wojciech Górecki, Senior Analyst, Department for Turkey, Caucasus and Central Asia, Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW).

Victor Kipiani and Arkadiusz Legieć, Senior Analyst at PISM moderated the sessions of the seminar. Sławomir Dębski, the PISM Director also addressed the audience.

The discussions were followed by a vivid Q&A session. In the end, it was noted that, in the frames of the Geocase and PISM cooperation, similar events will be held in the future.



Open Letter of the Representatives  
of Civil Society of Georgia on  
NATO's Upcoming Summit in  
Madrid

*Date: 27.06.2022*

Dear Mr. Jens Stoltenberg,

Dear Leaders of NATO Member States,

First, let us express our deep respect and emphasize the importance of years-long relations between Georgia and NATO.

With this letter, we, nongovernmental organizations of Georgia, representatives of analytical and research centers, experts, former diplomats, scholars, and other members of society, confirm once again that the NATO membership is a national interest of our country, the key political objective of our foreign policy and the only guarantee of the country's security, which is supported by the will of Georgia's population and enshrined in Article 78 of the Constitution of Georgia. According to this article, the constitutional bodies shall take all measures within the scope of their competencies to ensure the full integration of Georgia into North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The aim of Georgia's integration into the North Atlantic Alliance is to enhance the security of the country and the region, strengthen Georgia's sovereignty, promote stability, development, and peace, and ensure the welfare and safe future for the people of Georgia.

Georgia started its cooperation with NATO in 1992. Despite challenges throughout 30 years since regaining independence, we, with the assistance of member states of the Alliance, succeeded in transforming the defense forces of Georgia and implemented a whole number of initiatives in terms of interoperability with NATO. 20 years ago, in 2002 at the NATO

Summit in Prague, Georgia officially declared its Euro-Atlantic aspiration. The Declaration adopted at the Bucharest Summit in 2008 heralded a qualitatively new stage for Georgia on its Euro-Atlantic path, as the country received a political promise from all NATO member states that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance. As a result of the dynamic development of our relations, we, today, have very practical and result-oriented formats that include the NATO Georgia Commission (NGC), Annual National Program (ANP), and the refreshed Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP). These instruments have created possibilities for the country to undertake preparations for membership in the Alliance.

Owing to reforms implemented within the scope of mechanisms of the country's NATO integration in years and various types of assistance from NATO member states, Georgia has transformed from a security consumer country into a country contributing to Euro-Atlantic security. By participating in peace and humanitarian missions, the Georgian defense forces made a significant contribution to not only the Euro-Atlantic security but also to the process of ensuring global security. Georgia was one of the largest non-NATO troop contributors to the Peace Mission in Afghanistan. Also, Georgia's interoperability with NATO has been acknowledged in a number of official international assessments and reports.

The 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia in gross violation of all international norms and the occupation of 20% of the country's territory, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the ongoing, full-scale military aggression waged by the Kremlin against Ukraine have shown again that Russia pursues the aim to dismantle the rules-based international security system, to undermine the efficiency of international institutions and to regain its influence over post-Soviet space. In this regard, Russia uses all illegal methods and ignores fundamental norms.

Against the backdrop of ongoing aggression in Ukraine, it is obvious that Georgia which aspires for membership in the Alliance may become the next target of Russia.

Today, as never before, the international community needs, on the one hand, to take prompt and effective steps to stop the war in Ukraine and on the other hand, to take firm decisions regarding the instruments deterring Russia to ensure that the Kremlin will not be able in future to undertake aggressive actions against sovereign states, including Georgia.

The existing situation has made the issue of enhancing the security of the Black Sea region even more urgent. In this context, Georgia, as the Black Sea littoral state, can make a significant contribution in terms of security as well as economy.

We believe that in the light of changing geopolitical reality, the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid should become a format of major political decisions. This is critically necessary for the containment of Russia's aggression and protection of the Euro-Atlantic as well as global security.

We believe that decisions should be taken regarding new security guarantees to Georgia, strengthening its defense capability and fulfilling the political promise made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit. As a result of the analysis of the existing situation, we think that Georgia's NATO membership is a real security guarantee that has no alternative, especially, considering that Georgia possesses all practical instruments of NATO membership and can contribute to the enhancement of the security of the Black Sea region. Without the stability of the Black Sea region, hardly can the security of the entire Europe be ensured and defended in the future.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters.

<https://geocase.ge/en/news/767/samoqalaqo-sazogadoebis-ertoblivi-ghia-tserili-nato-s-madridis-samittan-dakavshirebit>



The event aimed to explore the challenges and the new set of regional security in the Black Sea region because of Russia's military invasion of Ukraine, as well as the possibilities for economic and energy cooperation between Georgia and Romania.

Nikoloz Khatiashvili, a Research Fellow on Foreign Policy at Geocase, moderated the discussions.

Distinguished guests and speakers included Dr. Nikoloz Samkharadze, Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, Parliament of Georgia; Mr. Lasha Darsalia, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia; Mr Victor Kipiani, Chairman of Geocase; Mr. Iulian Fota, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania; Dr. Silviu Nate, Director, Global Studies Center, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania; Dr. Antonia Colibășanu, Senior Analyst & COO at Geopolitical Futures, USA, and Lecturer at SNSPA, Romania; Dr. Leonela Leca, Senior Analyst at the Global Studies Center, Lucian Blaga the University of Sibiu (LBUS), Romania.

The participants discussed the new security threats to the Black Sea region that emerged due to Russia's military aggression towards Ukraine as well as the beginning of a new era in international relations.

During the webinar, the Chairman of Geocase emphasized the importance of creating new security mechanisms for the purpose of further strengthening the Black Sea security architecture, providing that it is a significant part of European security.

"From the Georgian perspective, we say, and Ukrainians will also agree, that when we speak about new European or Euro Atlantic security design there would be no proper design by leaving Georgia and Ukraine out of that new order. If we would continue to reside in the same geopolitical vacuum and if European leaders continue to remain in the same comfort zone taking security as granted, which is not granted anymore, I think that speaking about the quality of new the European security order would be just cheating ourselves and getting just temporary relief pacifying aggressor before another full-scale aggression erupts" - he stated.

At the end of the webinar, the participants stressed the role of such discussions and dialogue in promoting and bolstering relations between Georgia and Romania, to achieve common goals and objectives. They also expressed readiness to hold similar events in the future.



### Russia's Demarche: Political and Military Implications

*Date: 04.03.2022*

Geocase has organized the online discussion entitled 'Russia's Demarche: Political

and Military Implications'.

Distinguished guests and speakers included: Mr Rich Brady, CDFM, CGFM, CMA, Chief Executive Officer, American Society of Military Comptrollers, the Geocase Advisory Board Member; Mr Dakota Wood, Senior Research Fellow, Defense Programs, Center for National Defense, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy, the Heritage Foundation; Mr Vakhtang Kapanadze, Doctor of Military Sciences, Major-General (retired), Advisor, Geocase. Mr Victor Kipiani, Chairman of Geocase moderated the discussions.

The event aimed to discuss the Russian invasion of Ukraine and tensions between Russia and NATO/USA. The speakers discussed NATO's eastern flank and shared their views on how the current crisis in Ukraine could impact security and geopolitics in Eurasia as well as the political and military implications of the war.

Mr Rich Brady reviewed the changing nature of warfare and the security policy of the countries through the years as well as the deterrence factors against military aggression. According to him, there is a lot of opportunity at the tactical and operational level for increased engagement between United States forces and the Georgian armed forces given

their history, background, and warrior ethos, although all depends on the strategic desire of the parties.

During his presentation, Mr Dakota Wood underlined how the Russian assault on Ukraine has made many governments reassess the risks and expectations that accompany a real war on real terrain. With regards to alliances, he noted: “Countries that live in tough neighborhoods have to make do for themselves and then bring strength and be a net contributor to whatever group they want to join. To be stable economically, politically, militarily and be as independently strong as possible is in the best interest of Georgia’s future.”

Mr Vakhtang Kapanadze reviewed the Russian military strategy and stressed the importance of more technical support from the West and NATO to Ukraine. “The best combat system is a human being. I believe that today’s Ukrainian armed forces are much different than in 2014. The strategic center of gravity for Ukraine is the support of ordinary people as it is of very high resistance,” - he noted.

Mr Victor Kipiani summarized the webinar and emphasized reinforcing the Black Sea regional security. ‘Conflict in Ukraine is a litmus test in many respects. It is a very critical point in time. The world looks like moving more into a hub-and-spoke security model. The Black Sea could be a very strong united factor in addition to NATO, and a stand-alone example in terms of boosting Georgian defence security and the US potential and interests in the region,’ - stated Mr Kipiani.

Watch the webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTwpJ7q5V1E>

Georgia's 30 Years from Regaining  
the Independence:  
Accomplishments, Challenges, and  
Opportunities

*Date: 23.02.2022*



At the invitation of the RUCARR platform at Malmö University (Sweden), Victor Kipiani, the Chairman of Geocase conducted an online seminar on "Georgia's 30 Years from Regaining the Independence: Accomplishments, Challenges, and Opportunities".

The seminar aimed to overview the main topics of Georgia's political and economic developments since regaining its independence as well as to give the audience an insight into the challenges and the opportunities the country is facing in terms of the current geopolitical, or geo-economical global developments.

The event was attended by Swedish and Georgian academic representatives, diplomatic circle members as well as individuals interested in the topic.

Victor Kipiani's presentation covered Georgia's international and regional posture as well as domestic matters including Georgia's political system, resilience, and sustainability of the Georgian economy.

While speaking about Georgia's international positioning, Mr Kipiani underlined the country's Euro-Atlantic aspiration and noted that one of the priorities of Georgia's foreign policy is getting closer to Europe and the Euro-Atlantic community, however, the path should be implemented in a very responsible manner realizing that the process is always a two-way street and depends how Europe and Euro-Atlantic community will react to Georgian matters, appreciates the challenges the country is facing.

"Georgia's reforms and aspirations, its success story is all-inclusive, it's all about us. It's not just about Georgia making a success, it's also a litmus test for the European community: how receptive they are, how perceptive they are, and how knowledgeable they are of the

region, and especially of the small nation which is the Georgian nation faced with many turbulences as well as opportunities”, - he said. According to him, the biggest challenge in this path is occupation and the fact that quite frequently western pundits and scholars in their articles and researches speak about ethnic conflicts (Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts) in Georgia while in fact, by their profound characteristics, they are geopolitical conflicts because the eruption of those conflicts in Georgia was a direct destructive response to Georgia’s foreign policy objectives'.

Victor Kipiani highlighted Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) as constitutional agreements regarding Georgia’s partnership with the European Union.

Evaluating Georgia’s political system, he named several challenges which according to him are typical to Georgia like any other transition economy country – insufficiency of political culture and standards, non-inclusivity; zero-sum game - having a philosophical impact on the quality of Georgian political life.

“There is a quest among Georgian voters for new political camps, new political forces, and leaders. When I say “new” it’s not just about faces, it’s about quality, standards, and criteria. For the last years, we at Geocase advocate improving the quality of Georgian political life, we are speaking about the standards, criteria, and approaches. Personified politics is a very vicious circle which has to be broken down for once and ever.”

Mr Kipiani also outlined the lack of responsible opposition, radicalized media, and politicized non-governmental organizations among the grave challenges of the country.

He also briefly overviewed Georgia’s judicial system, highlighted some positive and negative points, and stated that the recent process of the Supreme Court appointments had become very politicized, it needs to be changed in terms of merit-based appointments, otherwise, there will be no efficient and reliable judiciary in the country.

‘Getting closer to Europe means supreme objectives, as well as having a reliable foreign and domestic policy. Georgia, as a soft power in the region, with any viable toolkit, has to position itself as a regional leader. A sound political system that is and will remain our geopolitical, or even geo-economical business card. Something which is not just for the benefit of the Georgian audience but could have a ripple effect on the region as well,’- noted Victor Kipiani.

The event ended with the Q&A session held in a closed format.

Watch the recording of the public part of the seminar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJjUVo3cnIc>



Geocase Hosted a Webinar on the South African Experience of Transition from Apartheid to Democracy

*Date: 20.01.2022*

Geocase hosted a webinar on

‘The South African Experience of Transition from Apartheid to Democracy: achievements, ongoing challenges, and lessons to learn for global community’ conducted by the distinguished guest Mr Roelf Meyer, Founding Director of South African organization In Transformation Initiative (ITI), former South African Minister, politician and Chief Negotiator in the historic process that ended apartheid.

The webinar was moderated by Mr Victor Kipiani, the Chairman of Geocase. He welcomed the guest and introduced him to the audience. The moderator noted that the webinar was the very first ever event offered to the Georgian audience and the community of experts which portrayed South Africa not only in terms of ending the apartheid but its internal politics, and external ramifications.

Mr Roelf Meyer briefly overviewed the history of the apartheid regime in South Africa and shared his own story of how the person with a very conservative background raised in a family supporting apartheid experienced a fundamental change in his standpoint and later entered politics with one purpose: to make a change to end apartheid. And when he was elected in the parliament as a member of the that-time ruling party – the National Party, he started working for change from within. “People say it’s impossible to bring about change, I’m saying from my own experience: I know it is possible if you work from within on a dedicated basis and full commitment”, stated Mr Meyer.

During his speech, he particularly emphasized the historical merit of Nelson Mandela, South Africa’s first black president, Frederik Willem de Klerk, President of South Africa from 1989 to 1994, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who played an enormous role in favor of peace and reconciliation of the South African people after the demise of apartheid.

“You need inner conviction if you want to stand up as a leader under such circumstances. You can’t lead and persuade others just by being an opportunist. So many times, I’ve observed politicians who might have had good intentions, but they were opportunistic in their approaches with no inner conviction”.

Speaking about ending political violence after the regime change Mr Meyer underscored that it was the civil society along with labor unions, the business community, and others who were unified to work towards a peace agreement, and the National Peace Accord was adopted which helped to control the political violence and helped to start constitutional negotiations. The concept of this inter-communal dialogue has now been started to be exported to the countries where there is conflict at the local level.

According to Mr Roelf Meyer, there were three factors that made negotiations successful: the inclusiveness of the process, building trust, taking ownership, and responsibility. Successful negotiations led to a smooth transition from apartheid to democracy. He also stressed that the process was very transparent, and the role of the media was crucial as it was very constructive and interested in progress.

However, as Mr Meyer pointed out, the socio-economic transformation of the country was humble thus the economic model of the country needs to be redefined.

In the end, Mr Victor Kipiani summarized the event, thanked the guest for the outmost insightful webinar, and noted that it was a great opportunity for the Georgian audience to look closer at the South African experience of peacebuilding, reconciliation, and compromise, as well as learn some very practicable lessons from the person of such high authority and interesting background.

## Participation of Geocase representatives in various activities



Nikoloz Khatiashvili was elected for the third term as the member of the board of the US Government Exchange Program Alumni Association of Georgia (EPAG).

*Date: 28.12.2022*

Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase was elected for the third term as the member of the board of the US Government Exchange Program Alumni Association of Georgia (EPAG).

### Participation of Geocase in international events

On December 12, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher, and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase participated in the Berlin Security Conference.



Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/884/nikoloz-khatiashvili-berlinis-usaftrtkhoebis-konferenciashi-monatsileobda>

On October 31, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher, and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase participated in the international EU disinformation conference organized by EU DisinfoLAB as well as in the round table held by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation dedicated to the impact of Russian disinformation in the current war and crisis in Ukraine.

Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/852/nikoloz-khatiashvilma-monatsileoba-miigho-q-briuselshi-gamartul-saertashoriso-konferenciebshi>

On October 5-6, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase participated in the Warsaw Security Forum. He, as a member of the Warsaw Security Democratic Network, was involved in a workshop dedicated to the ongoing war in Ukraine, as a result of which relevant recommendations were developed.

In addition, in October, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase participated in the Riga Conference and the Riga Conference Future Leaders' Forum, which covered the ongoing war in Ukraine, threats from Russia and current challenges, as well as the Black Sea security, hybrid threats and the future of the European security architecture.

Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/920/nikoloz-khatiashvilma-rigis-konferenciasa-da-rigis-konferenciis-momaval-liderta-forumshi-miigho-monatsileoba>

On September 9, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the Geocase research fellow, held meetings in London with Ian Bond, the Director of Foreign Policy, Centre for European Reform, and the founders of the Great Britain Council on Geostrategy - James Rogers and Viktorija Starych-Samuolienė. During the meetings, discussions touched upon the strengthening of Georgian-British ties, the ongoing war in Ukraine and Russian aggression, the current situation in the occupied territories of Georgia, Georgia's foreign policy priorities and challenges, as well as the security of the Black Sea and Russian disinformation. Special attention was paid to the potential of establishing new formats of cooperation between Georgia and Great Britain, and the importance of the involvement of academia in this process.

Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/813/nikoloz-khatiashvili-didi-britanetis-tsamyvani-analitikuri-organizaciebis-tsarmomadgenlebs-shekhvda>

On June 28, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, the foreign policy researcher and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase participated in the Black Sea Security Forum organized by the George Marshall European Security Center in Bucharest.

Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/774/nikoloz-khatiashvili-buqarestshi-mimdinare-jorj-marshalis-usaftrkhoebis-evropuli-centris-mier-organizebul-shavi-zghvis-usaftrkhoebis-forumshi-ighebs-monatsileobas>

On June 4, Nikoloz Khatiashvili, a research fellow on foreign policy at the think tank Geocase participated in the GLOBSEC Global Security Forum in Bratislava as well as several roundtable discussions.

Read more: <https://geocase.ge/ka/news/754/nikoloz-khatiashvili-globsec-is-bratislavas-globaluri-usaftrkhoebis-forums-afasebs>



Major General (retired) Vakhtang Kapanadze participated in the European-American Security Dialogue

On 22-25 September 2022 Major General (retired) Vakhtang Kapanadze participated in the European-American

Security Dialogue in Romania.

The event was organized by NGO "New Strategy Center" (USA), "New Generation Warfare Study Center" (Romania), and the Ministry of Defense of Romania.

Victor Kipiani met with the  
Innovative Training Network  
“MARKETS” Participants

*Date: 02.12.2022*

The Geocase Chairman Victor Kipiani met with the participants of the EU's Horizon 2020 Fund financed project - Innovative Training Network "MARKETS".



In the framework of the project, the participants including PhD scholars from leading European universities held meetings and workshops as well as conducted various lectures for the network members in Georgia.

Victor Kipiani provided the project participants with some insights on the current developments in Georgia and region-wide in light of political, economic and security domains.

The meeting was finalized by the Q&A session during which Victor Kipiani answered the questions from the Innovative Training Network participants.

Innovative Training Network "MARKETS" studies the influence of both formal and informal factors that impact foreign investment in the former Soviet republics and develops sustainable training programs for future analysts, providing them with an essential practical understanding of the region.



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze delivered a public lecture on cybersecurity for youngsters

*Date: 02.12.2022*

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze delivered a public lecture for youngsters within the project “Digital Education for

Cybersecurity”. The representatives of American Corner Tbilisi have implemented this project with the support of the U.S. Embassy in Georgia.

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze spoke about the importance of the protection of critical information systems and tools for ensuring cybersecurity. She paid special attention to the international legal notion of cyberattacks and cyberwarfare.

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze underlined: “Because of the rapid technological changes we need to develop new initiatives for the enhancement of cybersecurity capabilities. Due to cyber threats, establishing a permanent cybersecurity platform is essential. This platform would aim to strengthen cyber resilience in Georgia by improving coordination between the public and private sectors. Also, we should continue to conduct international cyber exercises and training in cooperation with partners”.

“General and higher educational institutions should develop cyber hygiene and cybersecurity learning courses to raise awareness on cyber challenges and improve professional skills for the protection of data including personal data in digital space by using appropriate technical measures and considering legal standards,”- added Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

Kakhi Kenkadze, the Geocase Research Fellow spoke at the International Conference entitled "War and Migration"

*Date: 25.11.2022*



Kakhi Kenkadze, a research fellow of the think tank Geocase and Harvard

University spoke at the Student's International Conference - "War and Migration" held at the University of Eastern Europe.

The conference aimed at promoting general discussion on the management of forced migration caused by war, sharing students' views and knowledge of the impact of the war on the economy and politics and the role of states in this process.

The speakers reviewed the causes and consequences of forced migration caused by war, security challenges and response steps by the international community, as well as the current immigration situation in Georgia because of the war in Ukraine.

Researchers and students from different universities worldwide also participated in the conference.



Amb. David Apstiauri has conducted an Online Seminar at the Malmö University

*Date: 22.11.2022*

At the invitation of RUCARR platform at Malmö University (Sweden), Amb. David Apstiauri, a Member of the

Advisory Board of Geocase, has conducted an online seminar on China's policy towards the countries of the South Caucasus.

The topic of the lecture was - Specifics of China's policy towards the countries of the South Caucasus during a continuing global crisis.

Amb. Aptsiauri's presentation was based on consideration of the current trends in the development of cooperation between China and countries of the South Caucasus, its influence on the region's economic growth and security environment, particularly in the context of continuing pandemic crisis and war in Ukraine. The cooperation of the countries of the South Caucasus in the frame of the Chinese "Belt and Road Initiative" was an important part of the analysis.

During the lecture, David Aptsiauri also discussed the role of global and regional players in the politics and economics of the South Caucasus. Furthermore, the attendees had the opportunity to receive updated information on the current developments in the region.

Baqar Palavandishvili, moderated the Competition Policy and Sustainable Development Session of the First International Conference on Competition and Consumer Rights

*Date: 17.11.2022*



Head of Competition Practice at MKD

Law and Deputy Chair of Geocase, Baqar Palavandishvili, moderated the Competition Policy and Sustainable Development session of the first International Conference on Competition and Consumer Rights held in Georgia during November 16-17.

The speakers of the secession were María Pilar Canedo Arrillaga, Commissioner of the Spanish National Markets and Competition Commission, Mammad Abbasbeyli, Head of the State Service for Antimonopoly and Consumer Market Control of the Republic of

Azerbaijan, Levan Kalandadze, First Deputy Chairman of the Georgian National Competition Agency, Giorgi Pertaia, President of Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Teona Zhizhiashvili, Legal manager, PWC Georgia. The speakers covered the role of competition law and enforcement in sustainable development.

During the session, Baqar Palavandishvili discussed the relationship between the goals of competition law and other legal fields, mentioned the risks associated with incorporating sustainable development in competition law enforcement, and referred to the UK and US cases in the context of competition law and sustainable development.



Victor Kipiani met with the Ambassador of Republic of Armenia to Georgia

*Date: 10.11.2022*

Victor Kipiani, the Chair of Geocase met with H.E. Ashot Smbatyan, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of

Armenia to Georgia.

At the meeting, the parties discussed the current developments in the region and talked about the importance of good neighbourly and partnership relations between Armenia and Georgia.

They also discussed the advantage of deepening cooperation between the representatives of various institutions and analytical circles of Georgia and Armenia.

Victor Kipiani met with the New EU Ambassador to Georgia

*Date: 09.11.2022*

Victor Kipiani, the Chair of Geocase, participated in a limited format introductory meeting with H.E. Mr Pawel Herczynski, the new EU Ambassador to Georgia.



Representatives of a few other Georgian analytical organizations also attended the meeting.

The participants discussed the EU-Georgia relations and Georgia's perspective of joining the European Union, as well as shared views on how efficiently the country is following the twelve recommendations for granting EU candidate status to Georgia.

The importance of holding working meetings on a regular basis was also emphasized.



Victor Kipiani met with the Ambassador of Israel to Georgia

*Date: 04.11.2022*

Victor Kipiani, Chairman of Geocase met with H.E. Hadas Ester Meitzad, Ambassador of Israel to Georgia.

The parties talked on the friendly relations between Israel and Georgia and how to facilitate its enhancement and further strengthening. Special emphasis was given to the importance of fostering ties between cultural circles and academia as well as establishing and developing cooperation between Israeli and Georgian think tanks to exchange expert knowledge and diverse experience.

During the meeting, H.E. Hadas Ester Meitzad and Victor Kipiani discussed current local and regional developments and considered prospects for the development of cooperation in various fields.

Giorgi Abashishili and Nikoloz Khatiashvili are involved in the project "Build Georgia" of the International Republican Institute (IRI)

*Date: 22.10.2022*



On October 22, the opening event of the project of the Republican Institute - "Build Georgia" was held.

According to the International Republican Institute, the new 2-year project of the International Republican Institute (IRI) aims to involve successful leaders and young people in Georgia in the current process in order to jointly develop ways to solve the problems in the country.

Giorgi Abashishvili was named a member of the advisory board of the "Build Georgia" project of the International Republican Institute. In addition, Nikoloz Khatiashvili the foreign policy researcher and international secretary of the analytical center Geocase was involved in the event.



Through evidence-based discussion and compromise, the process will pave the way for a focus on consensus-building in an informal setting.

The project involves 60 participants from the following target groups: business,

civil society, academia, youth, and religious organizations.

Victor Kipiani met with the  
Ambassador of Turkey

*Date: 12.09.2022*

Victor Kipiani, Chair of Geocase hosted the new Ambassador of Turkey to Georgia, H.E. Mr Ali Kaan Orbay at the Geocase offices. It was



the first introductory meeting that Mr. Orbay held with the Georgian think tank since his designation as an ambassador.

During the meeting, Mr Kipiani acquainted His Excellency with the think tank activities and the projects implemented. They talked over the current regional and global developments and discussed the perspectives of strengthening strategic partnership ties.



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze participated in the Georgian-French International Conference

*Date: 02.08.2022*

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze participated in the Georgian-French International Conference. She spoke about

international legal aspects of Russian aggressive actions. Dr. Khatuna Burkadze underlined: “The issue of the use of force became even more crucial after the war in August of 2008 when Russia conducted an act of aggression against the sovereign state of Georgia. The international legal system was incapable of preventing the states to use force against each other, due to the lack of an effective means to protect and enforce international legal norms”.

She noted: “In contemporary international law legal regulations on the use of force derive from the UN Charter and norms of international customary law. Russia’s use of force was not authorized by the United Nations Security Council and cannot qualify as a lawful exercise of the right of self-defense. The Russian Federation forces invaded and occupied Georgian territory in violation of numerous international legal norms”.

“Russia invaded and occupied Georgia in the absence of an international legal justification for the action. According to international law, this was a typical act of aggression. Russia did not have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Georgia and use military force. The UN General Assembly resolution on the principles of International Law declares: “states or groups of states have a duty not to intervene in matters within the internal or foreign affairs of any state”. Interference in the internal or foreign affairs of any country is considered a violation of international law,” emphasized Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze highlighted: “The 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia in gross violation of all international norms and the occupation of 20% of the country’s territory, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the ongoing, full-scale military aggression waged by the Kremlin against Ukraine have shown again that Russia pursues the aim to dismantle the rules-based international security system, to undermine the efficiency of international institutions and to regain its influence over post-soviet space. In this regard, Russia uses all illegal methods and ignores fundamental norms”.

Victor Kipiani has been invited to present at the Inaugural Georgia-Oxford Forum



*Date: 12.06.2022*

### **Inaugural Annual Georgia - Oxford Forum**

**10 June 2022**

Mr Victor Kipiani, Chairman of Geocase has been invited to speak at the Inaugural Georgia-Oxford Forum



to be held in hybrid format on June 10, 2022, at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford.

The forum is organised by the Embassy of Georgia to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in collaboration with the Oxford University School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) and Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia.

The event marks the 30th anniversary of re-establishing diplomatic relations between Georgia and the United Kingdom and its special theme, reflecting recent developments and leading-edge research, will focus on “Georgia in Europe and the wider world”. The forum will gather a diverse group of high-profile figures from academia joined by key participants from politics, diplomacy, culture, civil society and the private sector. Among the forum speakers will be Mr Ilia Darchiashvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and Ms Sophie Katsarava, Ambassador of Georgia to the UK. The participants will discuss and debate Georgia-UK relations, opportunities and challenges and the prospect of joint responses to key European, regional and global challenges and trends.

Victor Kipiani will conduct his presentation at the opening panel entitled ‘Georgia as the UK’s Strategic Partner’. The discussions will concern strategic and regional security concerns and the key role that the UK and wider international community can play in contributing to the stability and security of the region.

The event aims to strengthen and deepen partnership initiatives between the two countries and to promote a comparative understanding of the developments across various areas in Georgia and the wider Black Sea region.

## Interviews and Articles

Victor Kipiani - Chairman, Geocase



Crisis Economy: Trends,  
Features, and Possible  
Development

*Date: 10.12.2022*

According to Victor Kipiani,  
after the global economic crisis  
of 2008, a number of critical

problems remain unresolved. The list of these macro and microscale problems is quite extensive. However, despite this abundance, it is still possible to formulate several general characteristics of all of them: (1) due to the (voluntary) reduction of the role of the state - as an impartial arbiter - the healthy principles of the market economy gradually atrophy; (2) under the influence of uncontrolled egoism, oriented to super-profit, social synergy is broken; (3) due to the resulting inequality and, in some places, lack of perspective, vices appear that threaten not only the order within the state but also the stability and order necessary for the global system of international relations.

Victor Kipiani underlined: “The peculiar synchronization of crises of different nature or content in the current regime (the global pandemic, significant damage to the pre-pandemic supply network, the recession of major economic centers, the war in Ukraine, the decline of China's export potential, etc.) draws attention: that is, if not all, then several crises explode in one particular geography, in one particular time, simultaneously and with equal force”.

Please read the full version: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/881/krizisis-ekonomika-tendenciebi-taviseburebebi-da-shesadzlo-ganvitareba>

Modern Security Dilemma:  
Georgian Polyhedron (Part 1)

*Date: 24.09.2022*

“It is extremely difficult to find a truly reliable and effective response formula to challenges that exist in the conditions of (dis)order existing in the world. Separate periods and separate individual-pragmatic



solutions are, however, determined by the coincidence of a given moment and circumstance. To illustrate the evolution of security and transformation of static, so-called status-quo patterns, it is sufficient to bring examples of the recent decisions taken by Finland and Sweden to reject their non-aligned status, frequented debates in Austria about its post-World War II status, revision of the neutral status, the “historical” decision taken by Switzerland to join the sanctions imposed on Russia, and the readiness of separate political circles in Denmark to join common defense initiatives of the European Union, etc.,” noted Victor Kipiani in his article.

Victor Kipiani mentioned: “According to the current version of the country’s constitution, the integration into Euro-Atlantic structures is the key course of the internal and external policy of the country. In recent times, expectations for membership of the Alliance have been discussed with new vigor, especially before and after each NATO summit”.

Please read the full version: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/823/tanamedrove-usaftrtkhoebis-dilema-qartuli-mravaltsakhnaga-pirveli-natsili>



Victor Kipiani: “Protracted Disputes Pose Challenge to Business, Which Needs to Be Tackled”

*Date: 18.08.2022*

“When talking about an attractive investment environment we must consider two factors: the first is the legal environment in the country. In

this regard, I think, our legislation provides all prerequisites for the implementation of foreign as well as domestic investments in the country. However, the legislation alone is not a sufficient prerequisite. It is important to what type of image is created by the country and how it is promoted to a potential investor. In this regard, despite already implemented measures, there is a need for additional work, especially when numerous other countries, like Georgia, are seeking investments too,” - highlighted Victor Kipiani in his article.

“Another factor is the so-called operational code of the country, which consists of a whole set of elements and formally has nothing to do with business. For example, the geographic location of the country, which is one of our main assets and allows us to benefit from it. Georgia is a Black Sea littoral state and the Black Sea, along with a security element, is a link connecting us with the external world as well as our transit potential for countries of Central Asia. This is a circumstance that we can use, especially against the war waged in Ukraine,” emphasized he.

Please read the full version: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/809/victor-kipiani-protracted-disputes-pose-challenge-to-business-which-needs-to-be-tackled>

## Dr. Khatuna Burkadze - Director of Foreign Policy Studies



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze:

“Proactive foreign policy will promote to achieve Georgia’s European goals”

*Date: 13.12.2022*

“Interpressnews” discussed foreign policy issues with Prof. Dr. Khatuna Burkadze,

Director of Foreign Policy Studies at Geocase, an alumna of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and the Harvard Program on Negotiations.

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze noted: „The Black Sea region has become an arena of Russian aggressive actions. The repeated, unprovoked, illegal, and violent attempts aim to expand territories and control the Black Sea. Russian imperialistic goals represent a threat to the U.S., European, Euro-Atlantic, and the entire international community.

The 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine challenged the international security system. The rules-based international order should be protected by all actors of the international community. Littoral states of the Black Sea including Georgia are critical in contributing to the collective security of Euro-Atlantic space. We should continue to work with the U.S., NATO, and EU to enhance security capabilities and develop new initiatives for democratic resilience and economic prosperity. “

„The Russian large-scale aggressive actions against Ukraine have demonstrated that diversification of transit routes and the creation of alternative energy sources are key priorities to address challenges of energy security. In cooperation with partners, we can strengthen transport, energy, and digital infrastructure connectivity which will promote the development of new transit routes. In this regard, the “Agreement on Strategic Partnership in the field of Green Energy Development and Transmission between

Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania, and Hungary” can increase transit opportunities. The Black Sea cable project will allow us to become a significant energy security partner. This process alongside other large-scale projects will enhance Georgia’s strategic role in the region,“ – mentioned Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze underlined: “Proactive foreign policy will promote to achieve Georgia’s European goals. Simultaneously, decreasing political polarization is essential. The existing polarization not only impedes the development of the country but also threatens the historical opportunity of Georgia's integration into the EU and poses serious threats to our national interests”.

“Georgian society takes a unified and consolidated position on the constitutional priority of joining the European Union. This fact should be taken into consideration by political parties. Politicians should realize the importance of depolarization. We need to reach a consensus for consolidating efforts to create a common agenda to implement the twelve priorities. This process will accelerate Georgia’s European integration which is our civilizational choice,” – added Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

Read the interview here.

<https://geocase.ge/en/publications/883/khatuna-burkadze-proaqtiuli-sagareo-politikit-partniorebis-mkhardatcheris-gazrdasa-da-evrointegraciis-procesis-dachqarebas-shevdzlebt>



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze: “NATO will enhance its support to partners affected by Russian threats including Georgia to strengthen their defense capabilities”

*Date: 13.07.2022*

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze noted: “NATO Leaders met in Madrid at a pivotal time for international security. They changed the Strategic Concept for the Alliance and adopted the new concept. According to this document, the Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Euro-Atlantic security and stability. The Allies highlighted that the Russian Federation has violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order. The Alliance will continue to respond to Russian threats and hostile actions in a united and responsible way. NATO will significantly strengthen deterrence and defense for all Allies, enhance resilience against Russian coercion, and support partners to counter malign interference and aggression”.

“NATO will deepen cooperation with partners that share the Alliance’s values and interest in upholding the rules-based international order. NATO will enhance its support to partners affected by Russian threats including Georgia to strengthen their defense capabilities”, - added Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

She underlined: “Regardless of Russian ultimatums, NATO leaders invited Sweden and Finland to join the Alliance. This historic decision has demonstrated that the NATO enlargement process is irreversible. Maintaining an open-door policy is significant for Georgia which aspires to become a member state of the Alliance. This precedent allows us to convince the allies that Georgia can join NATO without granting Membership Action Plan (MAP). Furthermore, because of the dynamic development of NATO-Georgia relations, Georgia has very practical and result-oriented formats that include the NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC), Annual National Program (ANP), and the refreshed Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP). These instruments have created possibilities for the country to undertake preparations for membership in the Alliance”.

Read the interview here.

<https://geocase.ge/en/publications/782/dr-khatuna-burkadze-nato-will-enhance-its-support-to-partners-affected-by-russian-threats-including-georgia-to-strengthen-their-defense-capabilities>

Dr. Khatuna Burkadze: “Lend-Lease Act is a significant instrument for defending Ukraine and winning in Russia’s brutal war”

*Date: 11.05.2022*



“The U.S. reaffirmed its strong support towards Ukraine by

the adoption of the “Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act of 2022”. The Ukrainian people are fighting against Kremlin’s aggressive actions. They protect not only their territory, and democracy but also key values of the modern international system. Defenders of rules-based international order stand with Ukraine and the U.S. has a leading role in the process of maintaining international security,” - said Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

“Lend-Lease Act” was used during World War II. In 1941 President Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease bill to give aid to the allies. The Lend-Lease program made a valuable contribution to the victory during that time. Unfortunately, in the 21st century, the world faces a similar threat. To overcome this threat, 81 years later, President Biden signed the “Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act of 2022”. The Act aims at streamlining the process of getting military aid to Ukraine. Lend-Lease Act is a significant instrument for defending Ukraine and winning in Russia’s brutal war,” – underlined Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

“In the extremely changing security environment, Georgia needs to enhance strategic ties with the United States and strengthen its defense, and security capabilities,” – added Dr. Khatuna Burkadze.

<https://geocase.ge/en/news/741/khatuna-burkadze-lend-lizis-aqti-khels-sheutsyobs-rusetis-agresiastan-pirispir-mebrdzoli-ukrainis-dacvas-da-saboloo-gamarjvebis-mopovebas>

Emil Avdaliani - Director of Middle East Studies



Russia's Dying Eurasian Dream

*Date: 21.11.2022*

Russian multilateralism is unraveling. Cracks that were always visible within the Kremlin-dominated Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) groupings are now becoming ever more explicit. The immediate cause is Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has laid bare and further exacerbated the inherent weaknesses and self-interest within its regional initiatives. The geographic scope of these organizations is staggering — from the Caucasus to the Tajik-Kyrgyz border — but the sheer size of the area concerned merely highlights Russia's dissipated strength and focus.

Read the interview here. <https://cepa.org/article/russias-and-the-caucuses-a-dying-eurasian-dream/>

The EU Returns to Central Asia

*Date: 06.12.2022*

2022 will go down in history as a watershed moment in EU-Russia relations. The invasion of Ukraine was a primary cause, but it may well be that future historians will agree that



the breakdown of bilateral ties was long in the making. With Russia intent on rebuilding its territorial empire through brutal, old-fashioned hard power, and the EU offering to

spread its soft power influence of governance norms and economic development, the clash of the two geopolitical orders was inevitable.

Read the interview here.

<https://cepa.org/article/the-eu-returns-to-central-asia/>



As Russian Influence Plummetts,  
China Capitalizes in Central Asia

*Date: 15.11.2022*

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has finally initiated its highly anticipated railway project to Uzbekistan. On the

sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit held in September 2022, the official decision was made to begin actively working on the railway. This fits into trends across Eurasia over recent months, which signal that Russia is quickly losing its grip over the South Caucasus and Central Asia due to its re-invasion of Ukraine. The Central Asian states are especially vulnerable to repercussions from Moscow's disastrous war, with the region already reeling from the negative economic and political consequences.

Read the interview here.

<https://jamestown.org/program/as-russian-influence-plummetts-china-capitalizes-in-central-asia/>

## Implications of an Armenia- Azerbaijan Peace Deal

*Date: 26.07.2022*

Many questions remain about a possible Armenia-Azerbaijan rapprochement. A peace deal would have wide-ranging effects on the geopolitics of the



South Caucasus, changing all paradigms governing the balance of power in the region since the 1990s. A new order will emerge where Russia will continue to play a critical role – alongside an increasingly influential Turkey. The EU, despite distancing itself following the 2020 war, will regain the initiative. Iran’s position will be most vulnerable among large powers neighboring the region.

Read the interview [here](#).

<https://newlinesinstitute.org/state-resilience-and-fragility/implications-of-an-armenia-azerbaijan-peace-deal/>

Nikoloz Khatiashvili - Research Fellow on Foreign Policy, International Secretary



Georgia was, is and will always remain devoted to European aspirations and values

*Date: 02.12.2022*

In his interview, Nikoloz Khatiashvili discusses Georgia's foreign policy priorities. Attention is focused

on the role of the Eastern Partnership in the process of Georgia's European integration, Georgia-Russia relations, the occupied territories of Georgia and Russia's destructive actions towards those territories, the Georgian government's peace policy towards the occupied regions of Georgia, the importance of de-occupation, granting Georgia the status of a candidate country of the European Union, Georgia's role in the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, the regional importance of Georgia and Georgia-China relations.

Read the interview here.

[https://hypeandhyper.com/georgia\\_nikoloz\\_khatiashvili/](https://hypeandhyper.com/georgia_nikoloz_khatiashvili/)

Nikoloz Khatiashvili: "This factor may become a catalyst for our rapprochement with NATO and the European Union"

*Date: 01.12.2022*

In the interview, Nikoloz Khatiashvili talks about the



importance of Georgia as a state promoting stability and peace in the South Caucasus region, the international importance of the Middle Corridor, the need to strengthen defense and security cooperation with the US and NATO member states and the possibilities of Georgia's mediation in Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. The interview focuses on the role of Georgia in Europe's future security architecture and the need to reduce Europe's energy dependence on Russia, as well as the importance of international political support for Georgia.

Read the interview here.

<https://accentnews.ge/en/article/76544-xatiashvili-es-paktori-shezazloa-katalizatori-gax>



Expert: Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway - connecting bridge between Europe & Asia

*Date: 27.10.2022*

In an interview, Nikoloz Khatiashvili discusses the importance of Georgia as a country connecting Europe and Asia. Particular attention is focused on the transport and energy transit potential of Georgia. In this context, Nikoloz Khatiashvili talks about the importance of such projects as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzrum, and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. In addition, he focuses on the importance of implementing future infrastructural and energy projects as means of stability and sustainable development in the region. He discusses the role of Georgia in the process of normalization of relations between Armenia-Azerbaijan as well.

Read the interview here.

<https://report.az/en/foreign-politics/expert-baku-tbilisi-kars-railway-connecting-bridge-between-europe-asia/>

Salome Bladadze - Junior Research Fellow



Robbed Childhood: The Practice of  
Child Marriage

*Date: 31.10.2022*

Every child deserves an opportunity to fully develop their potential, enjoy their childhood, and grow up in a healthy environment. Unfortunately,

the well-known phenomenon of child marriage stands in the way. Child marriage often compromises a girl's development, poses a great risk to their health, and leads to isolation from family, friends, and communities. Ending child marriage is essential to enable millions of adolescent girls the opportunity for a better life and to realize their full potential. Child marriage is any formal or informal union (when parties live as if married) where at least one of the couples is under 18 years of age. This practice disproportionately affects girls globally although child marriage among boys is also widespread in some parts of the world. The prevalence of child marriage among boys is just one-sixth that among girls. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), at least 12 million girls are married before they turn 18, yearly. This is 28 girls every minute. Throughout recent years, actions to eliminate child marriages have been increased on international and national levels. Despite the progress, it remains far too common.

Read the article here: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/851/robbed-childhood-the-practice-of-child-marriage>



In the Name of Liberty: In the Name of Mahsa Amini

*Date: 06.10.2022*

Thousands of Iranians have taken to the streets in protest following the death of Mahsa Amini. A 22-year-old

girl from Saez was visiting Tehran on 13 September. She was arrested, brutally beaten, and murdered by Iran’s so-called “Morality Police” for not wearing her hijab in accordance with government standards.

Read the article here: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/831/in-the-name-of-liberty-in-the-name-of-mahsa-amini>

A Monopoly Over Georgian National Identity: Unfair to Georgian Muslims?

*Date: 21.03.2022*

Although a notable number of Adjarians, especially the ones from the younger generation, are reconfiguring their religious identity



to better integrate into Georgian society, there remains a great number of populations that want to preserve their Muslim identity. These people are loyal to the Georgian nation. Yet are repeatedly suspected of disloyalty. There must not be any contradictions between Muslim belief and Georgian identity. It is time for effective civic integration and the development of civic nationalism that is not based on religion.

Read the article here: <https://geocase.ge/en/publications/697/a-monopoly-over-georgian-national-identity-unfair-to-georgian-muslims>

## Projects



### GEO Intel Project

The research platform “GEO Intel Project” is to be implemented within the memorandum signed between the think tank Geocase and the Georgian Intelligence Service.

The project aims to strengthen cooperation between the Georgian Intelligence Service and academia. It will facilitate the development of intelligence as a scientific domain, representing the best practice of the Western countries.

In this respect, it is planned to conduct unique research, which envisages studying the periods of Georgian history, when intelligence activities were actively applied. The historical process of the development of intelligence activities in Georgia, which led to the formation of the modern Georgian intelligence service, will be reflected in the mentioned research.

<https://geocase.ge/en/news/870/declaration-on-national-unity>



### Bipartisan Academic

### Platform for National Unity

Geocase and the Georgian Strategic Analysis Center (GSAC) established the “Bipartisan Academic Platform for National Unity”. In the framework of this platform the "Declaration of National Unity" was prepared with the focus on

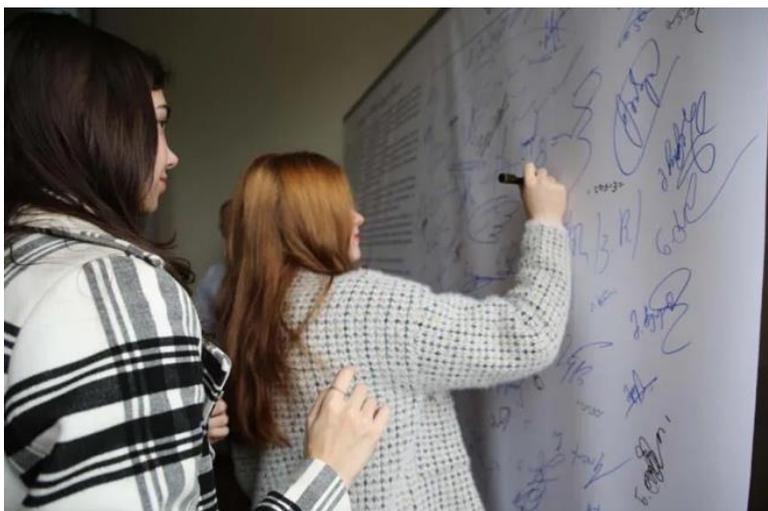
critical topics of Georgia’s domestic and foreign policies (De-occupation, European, Euro-Atlantic integration, enhancement of democratic institutions, defense and security, economy, education, health care, and a fair policy of social protection). The purpose of the “Bipartisan

Academic Platform for National Unity” is to promote reducing polarization in society and create a multilateral cooperation space, which will be based on the common values that should initially encourage civil society and academia, as well as the broader parts of the public. The project is sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Georgia.

The representatives of Geocase and the Georgian Strategic Analysis Center (GSAC) – Dr. Khatuna Burkadze, Ambassador Valeri Chechelashvili, Major General (retired) Vakhtang Kapanadze, David Kapanadze, Giorgi Antadze, and Prof. Tornike Sharashenidze introduced the "Declaration of National Unity" in regions including in Batumi, Zugdidi, Akhaltsikhe, Gori and Kutaisi.



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze and Amb. Valeri Chechelashvili presented Academic Platform of National Unity and the Declaration in Zugdidi.



Dr. Khatuna Burkadze and Amb. Valeri Chechelashvili presented Academic Platform of National Unity and the Declaration in Batumi.



Giorgi Antadze and Tornike Sharashenidze presented Academic Platform of National Unity and the Declaration in Gori



Vakhtang Kapanadze and Davit Kapanadze presented Academic Platform of National Unity and the Declaration in Akhaltsikhe and Kutaisi

### The "Declaration of National Unity"

We, the representatives of Georgian academia and civil society, are aware of the great challenges facing Georgia and at the same time, the unique historical chance to acquire a full-fledged place in the European community. We believe that the existing polarization impedes the development of the country.

All this will lead to disappointment among Georgia's partners and friends, which threatens the historical opportunity of the country's integration into the European Union and the Euro-Atlantic space. Moreover, the current polarization poses serious threats to our national interests and security. Russia's aggression in Ukraine revealed new threats for Georgia and the entire region, and highlighted, once again, the need to consolidate the Georgian society. Against the background of the risks arising from the war and occupation of Georgian territories, the current

political polarization and the challenges facing democratic institutions increase the likelihood of failure to deal with these risks.

Despite significant differences and political diversity, Georgian society takes a unified, consolidated position on key issues, based on the constitutional priorities of joining the European and Euro-Atlantic space. This factor creates an opportunity for real depolarization as well as the introduction of high standards of political culture in society.

Today, it is hard to imagine the end of political polarization between the main political parties and the introduction of the principle of power distribution. Therefore, there is no alternative to the leading role of academic and civil society in this process. This cooperation should set an example for the political forces and the society as a whole to achieve depolarization and national consensus on the most important issues for the country through compromises.

Considering the mentioned circumstances, we, members of the academic and civil society of Georgia:

- Agree that Georgia should firmly continue to develop as a democratic state, where democratic institutions function properly, media freedom and judicial independence are guaranteed, and the rights, security, and prosperity of citizens are protected, regardless of their political, ethnic, religious or other affiliation and development prospects are ensured;
- Believe that it is necessary for the democratic development of the country to refuse polarization and aggressive rhetoric;
- Consider that in order to ensure the de-occupation of our country and facilitate the integration of our citizens remaining behind the dividing line into a single state, it is necessary to develop a national strategy. The mentioned strategy will be based on the principle of peaceful restoration of territorial integrity;
- Believe that after the European Union has granted Georgia a European perspective, in order to obtain the status of a candidate for EU membership, which is a prerequisite for Georgia's accession to the European Union, it is important to implement relevant reforms, and in this way, we confirm the necessity of unswervingly fulfilling the conditions (12 conditions) set by the European Union. We understand that missing this chance will only distance us from the near prospect of integration into the European Union;

- Consider that joining NATO is a constitutional choice of our people and an effective mechanism for ensuring Georgia's security and defense;
- Agree that the Georgian Defense Forces are the basis of national security. The stability and development of the defense sector should become the main concern of the state and society. It is important to reach a common national consent to identify the challenges facing the defense of Georgia and to respond to them;
- Consider that Georgia should continue building an open market economy and ensure the rapid development of the sectors of the economy, which will lead to increased welfare for each citizen;
- Believe that in order to increase the level of education, it is necessary to fundamentally reform all levels of education, taking into account modern requirements and challenges. Development of the education system is a necessary prerequisite for the democratic, economic and social progress of Georgia;
- Agree that the quality and availability of public health care should be ensured for all citizens of Georgia and a fair policy of social protection should include those vulnerable groups and people who are most in need of state assistance.

We hope that the spirit and essence of the declaration are acceptable to all representatives of organizations and civil society, as well as to individuals for whom the future development of Georgia constitutes the primary focus of activities.

<https://geocase.ge/en/news/870/declaration-on-national-unity>

### Training Program: "Foreign Policy and Security Issues"

The three-month Geocase training course - "Foreign Policy and Security Issues" - aimed to raise awareness of foreign and security matters among youngsters and promote their involvement in public activities.

The training course enabled beginner researchers and young people interested in analytical activities to deepen their knowledge and skills in areas such as Euro-Atlantic and European integration, human rights, policy analysis, defense and national security, crisis management, Russian policy in the South Caucasus, hybrid challenges, Covid-19 and eHealth.

During the training course, 7 modules were conducted, which were led by Geocase researchers. Also, during the course, participants had the opportunity to meet and discuss with other highly qualified experts in the field, public officials, and representatives of the diplomatic corps.

## Infographics



A Free Trade Agreement: much more than a law order, much more than just a trade. Any new free trade agreement with new partners offers some further opportunities for Georgia's integration with the European, Euro-Atlantic, and global economic structures.

**Victor Kipiani**  
Chairman, Geocase



Georgian society takes a unified and consolidated position on the constitutional priority of joining the EU. This fact should be taken into consideration by politicians. We need to reach a consensus for consolidating efforts to implement the twelve recommendations. This process will accelerate Georgia's European integration which is our civilizational choice.

**Dr. Khatuna Burkadze**  
Director of Foreign Policy Studies

