

# AFMUN 2025

ANTALYA FEN MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

## UNSC

### STUDY GUIDE

AGENDA ITEM:  
2024-2025 GEORGIAN PROTESTS

UNDER SECRETARY-GENERAL:  
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## 1. Letter from the Secretary General

Fellow countrymen and countrywomen;

I, as the Secretary-General of the conference, am deeply honored to welcome you, participants, to AFMUN'25. I owe each of you a gramercy for saving yourselves from the darkness of ignorance by attending such an event.

A thank must also be given to our unrelenting academic and organization teams. Without their labor, the light that we are trying to bring to our generation wouldn't have been ignited.

We live in a twilight world; wars, crimes, famines, genocides, drought, environmental crises, economic collapses, etc. The idea of organizing AFMUN was shaped around these core motivations. Our objective is to show the aforementioned aspects of the world to you, our participants, and to provide a world-class MUN experience that is organized in line with our objectives. During the conference, you will expand your horizons and change the way you see the world. Do not forget; we will illuminate the future together.

Let us bow our heads; the king is returning...

Çağan Taylan ÖZGÜN

Secretary-General of AFMUN

## **2. Letter from the Under-Secretary General**

Esteemed participants of this committee,

I would like to welcome you all to the UNSC committee of AFMUN25. It is my utmost pleasure to serve as your Under-Secretary General during the long awaited three days of the prestigious AFMUN25 conference. I would like to first address my thanks to the immaculate Executive Team of this conference. Thanks to their hard work and commitment to this conference, we are able to gather in this committee.

I would like to extend my thanks to my dearest Academic Assistant and friend, Emre Yılmaz. I am indeed very grateful that I am able to work with him in this committee, this is not the first time and I know it won't be the last committee that we are working together.

Our agenda focuses on the 2023-2024 Georgian protest that occurred from the government's decision to suspend EU talks and release controversial laws, which is a topic crucial for defending independence and human rights for tomorrows. This study guide contains highly important information regarding our agenda. I would be pleased if each and every one of you studied the entire guide. Also, keep in mind that this guide shouldn't be your only resource of information. I highly recommend conducting further research to gain more comprehensive knowledge that you can use during your debates.

You may contact me with any inquiries via email.

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Best Regards,

Gözde Ümit

### **3. Introduction to the Committee**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was established in 1945 as one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security while having the power to use international force. It was created in response to the devastation of World War II, aiming to prevent future conflicts via planned security and military interventions and responses. The structure of the council was designed to reflect the geopolitical realities of the time, granting five major World powers [China, France, the Soviet Union (now represented as Russia), the United Kingdom, and the United States] permanent membership. Since its dawn, the UNSC has played a crucial role in addressing global security challenges, including Cold War issues, regional conflicts and acts of aggression internationally. Over the decades, its authority has been expanded by the UN to include peacekeeping operations, counterterrorism measures, and the enforcement of international sanctions.

#### **A. The Functions of the Committee**

The Security Council has broad and legally binding powers under the UN Charter, giving it the power to take actions in response to threats that endanger international stability. It is responsible for authorizing peacekeeping missions, imposing economic and diplomatic sanctions and approving military interventions when necessary. The Security Council also plays a role in conflict prevention, facilitating diplomatic negotiations and recommending solutions to disputes, while acting as an arbiter power. Its resolutions are legally binding on all UN member states, giving it significant influence over global affairs. The UNSC organizes meetings when there is a need of addressing crises and its ability to act swiftly has been effective in managing conflicts in regions such as the Middle East, Africa, and Eastern Europe. However, while the Council has been successful in many instances, its effectiveness is often challenged by political disagreements among its members.

## **B. The Veto Right**

A defining feature of the Security Council is the veto power granted to its five permanent members. This mechanism allows any of these nations to block the adoption of any substantive resolution, regardless of the majority vote. The veto power was established to ensure that the most powerful states remained committed to the UN's objectives while preventing single sided actions that could undermine global stability. However, it has also been a source of controversy, as it can lead to a deadlock while decision making, particularly when permanent members have conflicting national interests. The use of the veto has been widely debated, with calls for change to make the Council more representative and effective.

A permanent member's abstention or absence does not count as a veto. A "procedural" decision (such as changing the meeting agenda or inviting a non-member to sit at a UNSC meeting) also cannot be vetoed.

## **4. Background on Georgia's European Union Aspirations**

### **A. History of Georgia–European Union Relations**

Since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia has pursued closer ties with European Countries and the European Union. The people as well as the authorities have always expressed their desire to join the European Union in order to stabilize the newly born countries economy, security and democracy.

Despite many reforms, agreements and developments made in decades, Georgia's progress towards deeper European integration has faced major challenges. Between 2017 and 2022, the EU became increasingly alarmed by democratic regression in Georgia, particularly in the areas of judicial independence, media freedom and political polarization. These problems led to cautious EU responses and warnings that political reforms were essential to preserve the credibility of Georgia's European objectives.

The geopolitical scene changed dramatically after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. In March 2022, Georgia, alongside Ukraine and Moldova, formally applied for EU membership. Ukraine and Moldova were both granted candidate status in June 2022, meanwhile Georgia was ordered to complete a series of reforms, initially aimed at strengthening democratic institutions, combating corruption, securing the independence of the justice system and limiting oligarchic influence.

By 2025, Georgia has made considerable progress in the implementation of the EU's twelve reform priorities. Brussels have responded positively, indicating that if Georgia continues on this path, it could soon be granted full candidate status. During this period, public support for EU integration has remained high, with a consistent poll showing between 75% and 85% of the population in support of the membership.

Despite internal political challenges and continued pressure from Russia, Georgia's commitment to its European future has remained unwavering. The journey has been neither quick nor smooth, but the steady intensification of the ties between Georgia and the EU not only reflects the aspirations of the Georgian people, but also the strategic importance of the region for Europe's security and stability. Georgia is now at a critical turning point where the successful completion of democratic reforms could finally open the door to complete European integration.

## **B. Public Sentiment Towards EU Integration**

Since the early 2000s, a high proportion of the population has been in favor of EU membership. This support, which intensified especially after the rose revolution, is active in all segments of the society. One of the primary factors for the people of Georgia, who see EU membership as a more stable country, a reliable justice system and economic improvement, is the belief that this membership will relieve the country from the intense Russian influence.

However hopeful and enthusiastic the public may be, they are not in line with political realities. The belief that slow reform processes, corruption, and inconsistent political actions

by the ruling party are slowing down the accession process is very high. This belief has led to reactions or revolts by many NGOs, organizations, groups, and individuals. the clearest example of this can be seen in the 2023-2024 protests

## **5. Background of the Situation in Georgia**

### **A. Historical Overview to the Georgian Politics**

Since the day it declared independence from the Soviet Union under the leadership of Zviad Gamsahkurdia, Georgia has gone through many different political processes and has basically remained on the same line.

Gamsahkurdia's authoritarian and repressive attitude led to his ouster in 1992. Eduard Shevardnadze took over the country during these stormy years of the newborn country. Corruption, economic difficulties and separatist groups in abkhazia and south ossetia were dealt with.

In 2003, the Rose Revolution led by Mikheil Saakashvili ousted Shevardnadze after controversial elections. Saakashvili introduced extensive reforms that reduced corruption and revitalized the economy, but was criticized for authoritarianism and mishandling of the 2008 Russian-Georgian war over South Ossetia. After the Rose Revolution, Georgia entered a new phase of political development, but continued to be characterized by polarization, international pressures and internal reforms. In 2012, the opposition coalition Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia, founded and led by Bidzina Ivanishvili, defeated Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM) in parliamentary elections. Ivanishvili became prime minister but resigned a year later, although he continued to have considerable influence behind the scenes. Georgian Dream positioned itself as a more moderate alternative to Saakashvili's combative style but it has increasingly faced accusations of oligarchic control, judicial manipulation and media pressure.



## **B. Recent Political Developments**

On November 28, 2024, Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Kobakhidze announced that Georgia would stop European Union accession negotiations until 2028 and refuse EU budgetary grants. The government cited the need to prepare economically for future negotiations and accused EU officials of blackmailing and attempting to provoke a revolution in Georgia.

This decision followed a European Parliament resolution criticizing Georgia's parliamentary elections on October 26 as "neither free nor fair", citing instances of violence and double voting.

### **Definition of European Union accession negotiations**

Accession negotiations relate to the conditions under which the country will be admitted to the EU and focus on the adoption and implementation of the EU's body of law (the *acquis*). The aim is that the candidate country fulfils the conditions for membership, often referred to as the 'Copenhagen criteria'. These criteria were defined at a European Council meeting in Copenhagen in 1993.

The Copenhagen criteria are the following:

- Political, requiring stable democratic institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities.
- Economic, requiring a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive forces in the EU.
- The ability to take on the obligations of membership.

### **Political Turmoil and Allegations of Authoritarianism**

The ruling Georgian Dream party's retention of power in the disputed October elections has been widely criticized. Opposition parties and President Salome Zourabichvili have accused the government of election fraud and suppressing independent institutions.

Zourabichvili, refusing to step down, has declared the current government "illegitimate" and vowed to oversee new elections.

The government's actions have drawn comparisons to authoritarian regimes, with human rights groups raising alarms over the detention of protesters and journalists, and the use of force against demonstrators.

### **C. Key Actors of the Current Situation**

**Bidzina Ivanishvili:** Founder of Georgian Dream; holds no official position but is considered the most influential figure behind the government.

**Georgian Dream Party (GD):** The governing party since 2012. Key figures include:

*Irakli Kobakhidze* - Prime Minister.

*Shalva Papuashvili* - Speaker of Parliament.

They officially pursue EU integration but have been criticized for democratic backsliding.

**United National Movement (UNM):** Main opposition party. The party strongly advocates pro-Western reforms but has been struggling with internal divisions.

*Levan Khabeishvili* - current president.

*Mikheil Saakashvili* - Jailed former president, still a symbolic leader.

**Giorgi Gakharia and the “For Georgia” Party:** Former GD Prime Minister, Gakharia now leads a center-leaning party that proposes a moderate, pro-European alternative.

**Civil Society and Independent Media:** NGOs, youth movements (such as the Shame Movement) and media outlets such as TV Pirveli play a pivotal role in advocating for democracy and European integration.

**The European Union and the United States of America:** These international partners have been strongly influencing and encouraging Georgia's reforms and European engagement, while at the same time maintaining pressure for democratic advancement.

**Russia:** Continues to destabilize Georgia by occupying Abkhazia and South Ossetia and promoting anti-Western propaganda inside the country. Also through corruption and internal confusion, the country has a strong impact on the Georgian legal system.

## **6. Protests and Domestic Political Involvement**

### **A. Government Crackdowns and Response to Protests**

The first mass protests in Georgia started on March 7, 2023 with the foreign agents bill. This bill, which would classify non-governmental organizations and media outlets that receive more than 20% of their funding from foreign forces as foreign-interested entities, was met with harsh opposition. One of the most important reasons for this situation was that this law was both against the EU accession process and too similar to Russia's federative laws. In addition, since the main source of income of about 90% of NGOs in Georgia is from abroad, the situation would also cause democratic difficulties.

Thousands of people who rebelled gathered in front of the parliament building in Tbilisi and started protesting. The Georgian government assigned many police officers who reacted harshly to the protesters. Many human rights and laws were violated by using tear gas, plastic bullets and other defensive methods against the protesters. The protests became more crowded and widespread with the participation of students, citizens and civil organizations. At the same time, the EU, the US and various international organizations that warned about EU membership also declared that they did not support the law, thus fueling the protests.

On March 9 2023, after two days of the protests, the government finally relented on the law. The Georgian Dream Party's leader Bidzina Ivanishvili announced that the bill would be withdrawn and meetings will be taken with the opposition parties and civil society groups to find a middle point. After the withdrawal of the bill, the government promised to rethink the law and establish a developed version in order to fit the European Union values and standards. Many opponents believed that this movement was just to relieve the tension at the moment. Protests continued during this period. In 2024, this bill was amended and put into effect again in a different way, but it was still not seen as democratic enough.

On November 28, 2024, the prime minister Irakli Kobakhidze announced that EU accession negotiations would be suspended until 2028, which intensified the protests more than at any time in a year. Many students, civilians, vulnerable people, journalists and police were injured. Actions on both sides have become more violent and fearless. Despite mass arrests and repression by the Georgian government, protesters did not leave the protests for a long time. After this determined stand, the prime minister was forced to announce that the negotiations would be reconsidered.

## **B. Legislation Targeting “Foreign Agents”**

The legislation requires nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and media outlets that receive more than 20% of their funding from foreign sources to register as organizations "pursuing the interest of a foreign power." . It has the power to shut down NGO's and label activists to the government. This law was used in early 2024. The main verdicts consisted of labeling media elements and NGO's by their fundings, forcing them to declare themselves publicly as “foreign agents” on their publications. The restrictions on “foreign agents” were listed like this:

### **Prohibitions on public roles**

“Foreign agents” are prohibited from holding public office, participating in elections commissions, serving on public advisory boards and nominating candidates for prison monitoring boards. They are also banned from making political donations, organising public events and supporting election campaigns.

### **Restrictions in education and media**

Designated individuals and entities are prohibited from educating minors, holding positions in state or municipal educational institutions and producing content for minors. They are also ineligible for state financial support or arts grants, and cannot participate in public matches.

## **7. Major Issues and Challenges**

### **A. Human Rights Concerns**

Since the announcement in November 2024, to halt EU accession talks, Georgia has witnessed mass protests met with severe government crackdowns. Human rights organizations have documented many violations. Security forces have employed tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets and physical beatings against largely peaceful demonstrators.

Reports indicate that over 500 protesters have been detained, with many of them being subjected to torture while in custody. Media personnel covering the protest have been targeted resulting in injuries and the leak of press freedom. Despite widespread reports of abuse, there has been a notable absence of accountability, with no significant investigations of law enforcement officials implicated in these violations.

## **B. Russian Involvement and International Reactions**

The political turmoil in Georgia has been exacerbated by concerns over Russian influence. The October 26, 2024, parliamentary elections, which resulted in a victory for the ruling Georgian Dream party, have been marred by allegations of fraud and Russian meddling. President Salome Zourabichvili and opposition figures have accused the party of facilitating a Russian agenda to consolidate power in Georgia. The European Union and the United States have expressed deep concern over Georgia's democratic backsliding. The EU has suspended accession negotiations and frozen funds, while the US has paused its strategic partnership with Georgia. The Kremlin has denied any involvement in Georgia's internal affairs, dismissing allegations of interference as unfounded.

## **C. Internal Political Instability and Democratic Reforms**

Georgia's internal landscape has become increasingly unfirm. The President Salome Zourabichvili has refused to give up his seat and talked about the government being unstable and assured that the new elections will be overseen. Because of these acts a constitutional crisis occurred.

The ruling party has been accused of being reckless about democratic institutions, including juridical and electoral elections. Changes to electoral laws have raised concerns about lack of transparency and trustability of future elections. With the new laws targeting Non-Governmental Organizations and media, the concerns of the term "getting labeled", has led to bigger protests and international criticism.

## **8. International Involvement**

The international community has expressed concern over Georgia's political direction. The European Union has suspended accession negotiations, citing the government's democratic backsliding. The States have also condemned the government's actions, even though they have good relations. Several Georgian diplomats have quit in protest and lots of diplomats have signed open letters criticizing the government's suspension of EU talks. UN Secretary General António Guterres urged all parties in Georgia to exercise restraint and resolve disagreements through dialogue. He emphasized the importance of respecting freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly and called for prompt and transparent investigations into all reports of human rights violations.

In December, 2024 United Nations human rights experts condemned a pattern of repression and human rights violations in Georgia. They highlighted daily violence by state security forces against peaceful protesters, mass arbitrary arrests, and a smear campaign targeting protesters, particularly young people, civil society, and human rights defenders. The experts expressed serious concern about the suppression of dissent and the potential escalation of repression ahead of the presidential elections scheduled for December 14, 2024.

### **A. European Union and NATO Involvement**

#### **European Union**

The European Union has taken several actions in response to Georgia's suspension of EU accession talks and the subsequent crackdown on protests:

Condemnation of Government Actions: The EU condemned the Georgian government's handling of the protests, deploring the repressive actions and calling for the immediate release of all detained individuals. The EU emphasized the need to uphold fundamental rights, including freedom of peaceful assembly and expression, and urged credible investigations into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment.

Suspension of Visa-Free Travel for Officials: On December 20, 2024, the European Commission proposed suspending part of the EU-Georgia Agreement on visa facilitation. If adopted, Georgian diplomats, officials, and their families holding diplomatic and official passports would require a visa to travel to the EU for short stays. This proposal was a response to the violent repression by Georgian authorities against peaceful protesters and recent legislation undermining fundamental rights.

EU Envoy's Statement: The European Union's ambassador to Georgia, Pawel Herczynski, expressed disappointment over Georgia's decision to delay its EU accession bid until 2028. He condemned the use of police violence against protesters and highlighted that EU membership is widely supported in Georgia with lots in favor.

## **NATO**

NATO has reaffirmed its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In March, 2024, NATO Secretary General visited Tbilisi and met with the President and Prime Minister of Georgia. He emphasized that Georgia is one of NATO's closest partners and fully supported Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Stoltenberg called on Russia to reverse the recognition of Georgian territories South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states and condemned Russia's organization of elections in occupied parts of Georgia and Ukraine as completely illegal.

## **B. Role of Neighboring Countries**

Russia has blamed foreign forces for trying to destabilize Georgia amid the protests. The Georgian government's decision to suspend EU accession talks and the subsequent crackdown on protests have been viewed by some as a shift towards a more pro-Russian stance, raising concerns about Georgia's alignment with Western institutions. There have been no significant public statements or actions from Turkey, Armenia, or Azerbaijan regarding Georgia's suspension of EU accession talks and the ensuing protests. The regional dynamics



remain complex, and the positions of these neighboring countries may evolve as the situation develops.

## **9. Questions to be Addressed**

1. How has the suspension of EU accession talks contributed to political instability in Georgia, and what steps can be taken by Georgian leadership to restore public trust?

2. Considering the human rights violations that occur during protests, what reforms could the Georgian authorities implement to strengthen accountability and protect citizens rights?

3. What strategies could international organizations like the United Nations and the European Union employ to effectively support democracy and human rights in Georgia without escalating tensions?

4. What measures can be taken in order to increase transparency and security of the democratic processes, considering the current status of the election system?

5. Considering Georgia's geopolitical position, what diplomatic strategies can Georgia follow to balance external pressures, while preserving its democratic development and accountability?

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