
Interview: Vladimir Kilasoniya

Leading economist: Georgia can contribute to Europe's development

On Jan. 7, EIR correspondents in Dusseldorf, Germany interviewed Dr. Vladimir Kilasoniya, head of the finance and economics commission of the National Congress of Georgia, the umbrella organization for all opposition groups in Georgia. Dr. Kilasoniya is also a member of the National Democratic Party, Georgia's oldest and largest party. An accomplished economist and scientist, he could assume a senior economic post in a potential future civilian government in Georgia. Dr. Kilasoniya had been met by a Schiller Institute delegation that had visited Georgia in August. At the turn of the new year, he made his first visit to Germany, at the institute's invitation.

The interview was conducted one day after news had come from the Georgian capital Tbilisi, that the presidential palace had been stormed, and that strongman Zviad Gamsakhurdia had fled the country. For the two weeks before that dramatic event, the center of Tbilisi had been the scene of bitter struggle between forces loyal to Gamsakhurdia and military forces opposed to him.

EIR: It is very confusing for many outside Georgia to understand who has been fighting whom, and for what reason. Can you explain the background to, and reasons for, the recent fighting?

Kilasoniya: You may have heard that the official government of Georgia was created last year, and during this year, the official government made policies which amounted to a declaration to fight against the opposition party, using many methods, including guns. Gamsakhurdia's government became like a dictatorship in our country. So this is why the opposition forces started to fight against Gamsakhurdia with meetings, and with other methods and forms. But some part of the official National Guards, some parts of the official troops, started to fight against the official government, and this continued more than two months, and then, something like civil war started—but civil war not around my country, but only around the building of Parliament. All opposition parties are fighting together. Some of them fight with guns, and others, like our party, take part in this fighting only with words, with some peaceful methods, and so on. Of course, we are around the opposition forces who fight against Gamsakhurdia, but we do not believe that these methods

should destroy buildings, and kill men, and so on.

EIR: As we speak, the information is that Gamsakhurdia has fled Georgia. Do you think he is really now defeated and finished, or do you expect that we are only now seeing the prelude to a widening conflict?

Kilasoniya: It is a prelude, a start of, a small civil war. It is very important to explain the Georgian phenomenon. So maybe this will continue in other regions, and I heard of many examples of terrorist acts, because Gamsakhurdia has many people who gave him their votes. So, it is a very difficult period now in the country. And if Gamsakhurdia is not in Georgia, this means nothing, because Gamsakhurdia has many many people in our country who may try to do something like terrorist acts.

EIR: Could you tell us something about your own political party, its goals?

Kilasoniya: Our party, the National Democratic Party, was founded in 1911, and now our party is the strongest and most important party in Georgia. Our party founded the National Congress of Georgia, and every meeting, political step in Georgia, good political steps, are being made by our party. Our party has more than 5,000 members, in all regions of Georgia. And also, we have many friends, members of our party, in foreign countries, for example, the United States, or in Germany, and we have also, a kind of embassy in Moscow, and also in the Baltic countries, in Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaidzhan, and so on. Our program is based on liberalization of social aspects and privatization of industry, including agriculture. We aim to build a human and democratic society in Georgia.

EIR: What is your party's view of the current crisis in Tbilisi?

Kilasoniya: In this moment, as I told you, all opposition parties took part in this fighting. You may know that a defense society has been created, but our party is not included in this society. We try to help, for stabilization of the situation in Georgia. What can we do? We do not like these methods. We have many meetings, many discussions in our capital, in other regions, in which we explain to people that this is not

the right method, but that Gamsakhurdia's regime is also [using such methods]. We must help the new government, and defend society, to make a stabilization, as much as possible, in the shortest possible time. Then to organize a campaign to make a new parliament, with all parties and societies in Georgia.

EIR: What would you like the West to do vis-à-vis Georgia?

Kilasoniya: You can see that now I am in Germany. I had many meetings here with, for example, members of the Schiller Institute. I think that the Schiller Institute is the highest institute, to create a human society all over the world, because this is an international institute. But it is one. I also had many discussions with officials in Germany, for example with the Foreign Ministry. I hope that the West, not only the West, but taking the West as an example, can take part, to build my country, like another country in the Third World, to make a more humanist, more independent, and stronger country.

EIR: What positive European and global role could you foresee Georgia playing, were there to be adequate political resolution there, given its history, culture, agro-industrial capabilities, infrastructure, etc.?

Kilasoniya: Of course, I could answer you that we can take part, because we have many raw materials, and our geopolitical place in the world is very interesting, most important for relations between West and East. And of course, I could answer you that Georgia, if it were a real democratic society, can take part in a movement that continues this process. But first of all, I want to see my country as a sovereign country, which is strong, because we have high potential. Georgia has only 5 million people, but we can take part, because we have professionals, so I wish that the West can understand our role in this moment of history—Georgian raw materials, or for example, the Black Sea, or the idea of building a canal between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. It is really the case that Georgia can take part in the world like a real member of world society.

EIR: You have had a chance to review the LaRouche "Productive Triangle" proposal for European infrastructural development. What role could you foresee Georgia playing in the context defined by the LaRouche concept?

Kilasoniya: I understand that Mr. LaRouche is aware of my idea to build a canal between the seas, and something about the idea to build from North Caucasus to Turkey, a South Caucasus railway, and so on. First of all, I want to say that the idea of Mr. LaRouche for a productive triangle, and then continued by [spiral] arms, using high-technology, from West to East—I hope maybe through Georgia also—is a very important thing for us, for me, as an economist, a scientist, and I intend to elaborate further the relation of my ideas to his Productive Triangle concept.

Gaidar says reforms will topple Yeltsin

by Denise Henderson

The widely acknowledged author of the "shock therapy" plan for the Russian Federation, Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, in an interview on Russian television Jan. 1, was asked, "What would you like to wish yourself in the new year?" Gaidar, the patsy for Harvard Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, made the startling reply that he should like to see his own government, headed by President Boris Yeltsin, ousted: "I should like to wish that our government quietly resigns some time by the end of the next year, after financial stabilization has been achieved, to the deafening and angry shouts of indignation from the people and Parliament and amid the general lack of confidence in the government. . . . Resignation in Parliament, resignation after a vote of no confidence. This is how I would put it: No confidence in the budget for 1993 in parliament. This is my dream."

Gaidar's "reform" was implemented with a vengeance on Jan. 2, when price controls were lifted, sending the prices of all consumer goods up through the stratosphere. His cynical view of the democracy in whose name he is now supposedly governing, is apparently much like that of the Trilateral Commission: namely, that it does not work. "It is well known," he shrugged, "that the first government that starts a price liberalization almost always has to resign. There is nothing terrible in this fact by itself, because it is quite obvious that something has to be done and somebody has to pay a political price for this. Somebody has to begin. . . . But I am not concerned about this, nor are my friends. A price will have to be paid anyway, but we need support in our efforts."

Gaidar is thus stating that the first democratically elected government in 74 years is to be sacrificed to free market economics, to implement the shock therapy program being recommended by 13 foreign economists of the same stripe as Harvard's Sachs. Gaidar went one step further, anticipating that his reforms could bring in an "undemocratic government" which would complete phase two of the shock therapy plan.

Price reform called 'suicide'

It is unclear whether Gaidar's willingness to sacrifice himself on the altar of free trade reforms is shared by Yeltsin