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PLENARY SESSION 2: THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

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Congress Future of the World – Georgia's Perspective for Euro-Integration

1. Last year was the real Turn of Georgia's foreign policy course. After the 24th of February when the Russian Federation full-scale aggression in Ukraine, Georgian authorities have chosen the side and started an open gamble with Russia. The Anti-western and Anti-Ukrainian Propaganda was activated by Georgia's informal Ruler Bidzina Ivanishvili's Government.

In March, the Parliament of Georgia tried to pass the very controversial Transparency of Foreign Influence Act, an Orwellian-named bill that would have curtailed free speech and would have given the authorities major leverage to persecute non-governmental organizations, free associations, and independent media agencies. Let's be clear once more, this bill was not about foreign influence.

If foreign influence was the purpose, the authorities would be going against Russia-affiliated propaganda voices like the far-right Alt-Info and its political arm, the Conservative Movement. If it was about foreign influence, the authorities would have sought to go after the dozens of Kremlin-financed organizations that have popped up in Tbilisi since 2012 or would have raised concerns about the Confucius Institute instead of electing its local leader to Parliament.

2. Georgia struggle to get Candidacy Status, which it did not acquire, because of Russian influence endorsed by the government. But instead of fulfilling the 12 recommendations GD failed and backslides everything it can. The people witnessed a direct attempt by one political party to steal an entire nation's dreams of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Of course, we all saw it happen progressively and at a rapidly increasing speed over the last year and since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but this was the last straw. Tens of thousands of people took to the street. They were from every generation because Georgia's European aspirations are of a historical and ancient nature, but the youth were particularly well-represented. Some are calling it the "Gen Z revolution", a leaderless movement of youth groups who never knew the Soviet Union, grew up in a free Georgia, and cherish freedom more than anything else. Young people with no political ambitions, with only their country at heart, managed to bring down what was clearly an operation by the Kremlin. This carries a huge historical weight that will make every enemy of freedom think twice before trampling on independence and democracy. For them, this wasn't a political fight, it

was a struggle for survival for themselves and their future, which made the violent dispersals against peaceful protesters even more shocking.

- 3. According to the latest polls, 85 percent of Georgians want to be part of Europe and Nato. The majority of Georgians see Russia as a threat, but it is not the lighthouse for GD. They openly started anti-Western propaganda even in the worse of its forms. Gharibashvili attended the conference in Budapest repeating homophobic and false narratives about Conservatives and patriotism.
- 4. The last drop in the bowl was Putin's decision to grant the visa Free for Georgia's citizens and renew flights from Moscow to Tbilisi. It was an award of Putin to GD and Ivanishvili to help with propaganda "Everybody wants to drag Georgia into the Wa
- 5. Case of Mikheil Saakashvili and Nika Gvaramia. No changes and European standard approach to transfer 3rd President of Georgia and realizing Nika Gvaramia.
- 6. Dilemma Georgian People are European, but the Government is an oligarchic pro-Russian entity. What should the West do not to lose Georgia geopolitically and Georgians do not lose the future of the country?

Recommendations:

- Personal responsibility to the people who drag Georgia to Russian orbit and promote an anti-Ukrainian Campaign;
- Different approaches oriented on Georgian National and not the Government; If Georgia will be out of the Status, it means anti-Western propaganda and repressions will throw it to Russian arms;
- Long-term Monitoring elections missions.
- Support the opposition Between UNM and GD.

A video of the speech:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faiBu9NFKaI&list=PLafTseM15bmGXfMyNS2B41zIF24U8cX6h&index=15