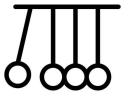


TURKEY'S UNHEARD VOICES

What Do Georgian Protests Represent?

POLITICS

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Introduction

Since the early 2000s, Georgia has been an important case study for the Caucasus. Following the 2003 Rose Revolution, which led to large-scale reforms, and the liberal, pro-EU/NATO policies of the Georgian Dream party elected in 2012, it was predicted that the country would enter an era of prosperity. Yet today, Georgia is grappling with significant protests, and its political instability continues to deepen. This article examines Georgia's journey from the early 2000s to the present, offering a sociopolitical evaluation of its current unrest.

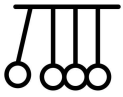
Historical Background

After electoral irregularities in the parliamentary elections of November 2, 2003, massive protests erupted in Georgia. When opposition leaders called people to the streets, tens of thousands marched on Tbilisi, stormed the parliament building, and interrupted the ongoing session, forcing the prime minister to resign. This process became the first of the “color revolutions” that swept through post-Soviet states in the early 2000s and marked the beginning of Georgia's westernization efforts.

In December 2023, Georgia was granted candidate status by the European Union. However, the joyful winds of freedom did not last long: the spy law passed in early 2024 severely restricted the freedom of the press and civil society organizations. As a result, Georgia's EU candidacy was officially frozen in the summer of 2024.

Protests that had already begun earlier that year did not stop; instead, they grew like a snowball effect. In the autumn 2024 elections, the Georgian Dream party again declared victory and announced that negotiations with the EU would be suspended until 2028. After Kavelashvili won the presidential elections in December, many figures, including former Georgian presidents, declared the results illegitimate, leading to the most intense wave of protests yet.

In January 2025, parliament restricted the right to protest. Throughout the spring, allegations of human rights violations and unfair dismissals illustrated the extent to which the Georgian government was willing to violate its own laws to suppress demonstrations. By the summer, the closure of EU and NATO information centers prompted the EU to officially reject the election results and call for a rerun.



Current Situation and Conclusions

When Bidzina Ivanishvili stated his desire for Georgian Dream to hold a three-fourths majority in parliament to legally eliminate the opposition, and considering the active sabotage of parliamentary functions and the still-contested legitimacy of the 2024 elections, public anger and unrest have reignited ahead of the upcoming general elections.

The unlawful sanctions imposed on popular figures such as artist Andro Chichinadze because of their public statements demonstrate that Georgia's rapid transformation from a country once dreaming of EU membership into an authoritarian dictatorship is not merely a political crisis, but a societal catastrophe that leaves everyone on edge and crushes dissenters beneath the boots of the regime.

Today, even the question of who the president of Georgia truly is remains an agenda up to debate. The current situation serves as a powerful reminder within political science that status quos are fragile and depend on the preservation of proper conditions.

As the protests continue to intensify, the depth of public outrage becomes clearer; and it can finally be said that, for the first time in a long while, Georgia's fate lies in the hands of its people.