DIALOGUE BETWEEN GEORGIA AND RUSSIA IN PRAGUE TO CONTINUE, SAYS GEORGIAN OFFICIAL

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Regular meetings in Prague between Georgian Special Presidential Representative for Settlement of Relations with Russia Zurab Abashidze and the Russian side will continue regardless of whoever Moscows representative will be. Abashidze said about it on Wednesday in an interview with the Georgian TV company Imedi, commenting on Grigory Karasins dismissal from his position of Russian State Secretary - Deputy Foreign Minister. The dialogue in the Czech Republics capital had been carried out between Abashidze and Karasin before.

"This is the format of Georgian-Russian dialogue. It may be called the Prague format. Karasin, Abashidze, Gambashidze or any other person may be a negotiator. This is a format which mostly studies such issues as trade-economic ties, transport problems and certain humanitarian issues," Abashidze said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on Karasins dismissal from position of state secretary on Tuesday. In his other decree, Putin appointed Yevgeny Ivanov as State Secretary - Deputy Foreign Minister. Ivanov has served as Deputy Foreign Minister since 2017.

The press service for Valery Limarenko, who, according to preliminary information of the Russian Central Commission won the Sakhalin Region gubernatorial election, earlier reported that he intends to nominate Karasins candidacy to the post of senator from the region.

Last time Abashidze and Karasin met in Prague on June 13. There are some unsettled issues in relations of the two states after the August 2008 events. The restoration of diplomatic relations and the abolishment of visas for Georgia, that were launched in 2000, remain a priority. The Abashidze-Karasin negotiation format was created in 2012, after a power shift in Georgia and the coming of the coalition headed by billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili.

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