
GERMAN, GEORGIAN DIPLOMATS DISCUSS PROBE INTO GEORGIAN CITIZEN'S DEATH IN BERLIN - TBILISI

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German Ambassador to Georgia Hubert Knirsch and Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister Vakhtang Makharoblishvili discussed during a meeting bilateral relations as well as the investigation into the death of a Georgian man in Berlin, the press service of the Georgian Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday.

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"The German side provided the Georgian [side] with information on the investigation," the press service said in a statement.

According to the ministry, Tbilisi regularly discusses the matter with Berlin at the level of foreign ministries, as well as with the ministries involved in the investigation.

"This is a German investigation, but the issue represents the common interest of both countries. I provided the deputy foreign minister with the information that, according to the German authorities, there is a suspicion that the case is a state-sponsored crime, and the investigation will continue based on that," Knirsch said during the meeting.

In August, a 40-year-old Georgian national, identified in the media as Zelimkhan Khangoshvili, was shot dead in one of Berlin's parks. According to the German Public Prosecutor General's office, the victim was a member of the Caucasus Emirate terror group (outlawed in Russia) and fought the Russian Federal troops in Chechnya from 2000-2004.

Last week, Germany stated that either Russia or government officials in its Chechen region were behind the killing. Berlin also declared two Russian diplomats personae non gratae over their suspected involvement in the death. In addition, the ministry expressed hope that Russia would engage in immediate cooperation on the investigation.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has described Germany's statements as unfounded and unfriendly. Moscow has categorically denied the accusations, pledging to respond in kind to the expulsion of its diplomats.

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