

Saakashvili: 'Each House should be Fortress to Resist Enemy'

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- 'Very painful reforms in the army'
- 'Very correct regrouping of forces'

Each and every citizen of Georgia should be ready for defense and each family and house should "become a fortress of resistance" in case of enemy's attack, President Saakashvili said on December 26.

Speaking at a meeting with National Guard personnel in Tbilisi in presence of Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia and chief of staff of the armed forces, Devi Chankotadze, he said "war is ongoing against Georgia" and "daily threats are heard against our country."

It will be "a tragic mistake" to ignore these threats, Saakashvili added.

"But the enemy should not have an illusion either," he continued. "Any new wide-scale adventure will come across a fierce resistance of each Georgian soldier, officer and entire Georgian people."

He said that protection of Georgia should not be only up to its regular armed forces.

"When this moment comes; if this moment comes - and we should do all our best avoid this moment, but every country should be ready for that, especially those which are in the situation similar to us - each Georgian man and woman will be fighter for Georgia; they should be ready to fight for Georgia," Saakashvili said.

"Each Georgian family, each of our street, region, village, city, each settlement and neighborhood, each house and family should become a bastion, a fortress of resistance," he added.

Saakashvili also said that Georgia was preparing for peace and "we want peace as never before."

"We are winning peace and that irritates our enemy - it threatens peace because we are winning it. Our enemy should know that although it is losing the peace, it will also lose the war and therefore it should not launch a war," he said.

Saakashvili said that along with level of training and adduction, "the massiveness of our armed forces" was also an important aspect.

“100,000; 200,000; 300,000 and if needed half a million people should stand with arms in their hands. We have enough automatic rifles for that and we have ammunition more than enough,” he added. “Each person and each family, which can fight for Georgia, should be ready to struggle and defend their country. Without it nobody will serve us on a tray either long-term guarantees of freedom or economic development and success.”

In a concept paper presented in October by the National Guard, the building of a [new system](#) of Georgia’s reserve troops should be “oriented on quality, instead of its size”. The target on the first stage will be having of 3,000 well-trained reservists in four years, according to the document.

‘Painful Reforms’

In the speech Saakashvili also spoke briefly about “painful reforms”, which he said were carried out recently in the armed forces.

“In recent months a very painful reforms, also involving army personnel, were carried out quietly,” he said.

“Serious assessments [of the personnel] have been conducted; level of readiness and training has increased seriously of each soldier; and new replenishment is coming in our armed forces,” Saakashvili added without giving further details.

The Georgian daily, Rezonansi, reported this week that about 150 officers were dismissed from the armed forces. According to the newspaper, the Ministry of Defense although declined to comment on reported dismissal of officers, but confirmed that the process of “optimization” was ongoing.

Saakashvili also said that “a very right regrouping of our armed forces” had been conducted recently.

The regrouping of the armed forces was carried out in late November, reportedly involving concentration of forces in Tbilisi and its surrounding, in particular, relocation of the 1st infantry brigade and the artillery brigade from the town of Gori.

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