

“At the 19th Congress of China’s Communist Party, Significant Emphasis was Placed On the Economic Development of Georgia”

Malkhaz Gulashvili

The 19th Congress of China’s Communist Party was held in the city of Beijing between 18 and 21 November.

China’s Communist Party is the biggest in the world, with 90 million members. 2,950 delegates participated and journalists were invited from many countries.

Malkhaz Gulashvili, political expert, Founder and President of The Georgian Times, was amongst them.

Malkhaz Gulashvili:
“Journalists from post-Soviet countries attended. Epoch-making decisions were made and covered by the media. Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan were represented.”



Our reception in Sichuan Province was hosted by the provincial leadership. 1 million people live in Sichuan, which is in southwest China and represents a key link in the Silk Road concept – “one road, one belt”. The Silk Road is a well-thought-out marketing-communication-economic concept which will further boost the influence of China across the world.

We met the heads of tourism, employment, state planning and economic reform. They spoke at length of their plans and allowed

us to view almost all the institutions and state agencies which are the economic axis of Sichuan. We also visited the new railway station, where a high level hub and container carrier system has been created. This has been open a year and already receives 500,000 containers; this number will increase to 1,500 000 next year.

Cargo is transported by train in three directions :

1. China – Kazakhstan – Russia – Belarus – Poland.
2. China – Kazakhstan – Azerbaijan – Georgia – Turkey (Bulgaria-Romania).
3. China – Kazakhstan – Turkmenistan – Iran – Turkey – Bulgaria.

This hub stimulates the economies of China and transit countries. China supports Georgia through this project, which will bring further success in future. The Government of Georgia takes appropriate steps in this regard and actively cooperates with China, having signed a free trade treaty which will boost the Georgian economy by 30%. China is one of the most powerful countries, with a budget of 11 trillion US Dollars. Only Georgia in the post-Soviet space has a free trade treaty with China.

We also visited a number of enterprises, including a cabbage plant where the Chinese produce a special cabbage which yields 500 million profit”.

Mr. Lui Bin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of China for Eurasian Issues, also met media representatives.

“The meeting was productive and we addressed many issues,” Malkhaz Gulashvili told The Georgian Times.



"Lui Bing gave us an overview of China's main priorities. He told us that China's economy is developing at incredible speed, by 8.3% in 2016-2017 compared to the global average of 2.5%. China accounts for 30 percent of the global economy and attracts 170 billion in foreign investment, the highest total of any country. China has invested 130 billion in other countries, the third highest total".

Malkhaz Gulashvili talked with Lui Bing personally regarding the modernisation of two enterprises

and it is just a dream to supply billion 700 million people with wine. It would be great to set up a coordinating board of Georgian wine-making companies in China. This would allow the sales coordination of Georgian companies, which, in most cases, compete with one another on the Chinese market. I want to stress, that last week Georgian Government Welcomed Tbilisi Belt and Road Forum. This biennial Event, part of topical Forum series, carries forward a tradition of Tbilisi Silk Road



in Georgia and, most probably, Georgia will receive a big investment in the near future. Bilateral economic relations, in particular wine export, were also discussed:

"Today China is one of Georgia's most active wine import partners and plans to expand links even further. After Lui Bing found out that most of the wines imported from Europe had been produced in Georgia he decided to trade with us directly. Now you see many Georgian wines in China.

However this market is huge,

Forum held in 2015 to provide a platform for discussions of various important issues related to trade facilitation in the region and beyond." – Malkhaz Gulashvili stated.

"China plans to make an active investment in Georgia. It had invested 50 billion in 59 different projects in Kazakhstan and issued a 50 billion loan which has yielded 100 billion dollar income for Kazakhstan. China hopes to create a hub in the region.

The Silk Road goes in three



directions: via Kazakhstan-Russia, via Kazakhstan-Georgia and via Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran. In order to activate the Georgian direction, ferries need to run between Bulgaria and Romania. The Ministry of Commerce addresses issues like these, and I spoke to him about this" – Malkhaz Gulashvili told "The Georgian Times".

Leader of China Xi Jinping made a speech at the meeting and remarked that "it is necessary to build peaceful cohabitation and cooperation with other parties in China". He also explained that a wide network of high tech enterprise and strong agriculture should be developed. "In order to develop the Chinese market it is necessary to restrict monopolies, make tax, bank and currency re-

forms, encourage investment in China and vice versa. A law to protect investors is needed and the ports need to be expanded" Xi Jinping stated.

According to Xi Jinping China is not getting ready for war but will face any challenge. He noted that the global political role of China has grown significantly.

"China's Communist Party builds socialism with a Chinese nature and characteristics. Our economy is growing despite the global crisis, and we have set up banks and foundations which will revive the economy through investment in our partner countries".

"We will also modernise our military forces. The project "one road, one belt" is our new policy. We also need to modernise Chi-

nese socialism to make the Chinese people even more prosperous. By 2050, the centenary of the Chinese Communist Party, China must be the most powerful democratic country," he stated.

At the end of this interesting and productive visit, Malkhaz Gulashvili announced a vital development for Georgia.

"Chinese energy company Deki has expressed a desire to finance the projects and cooperate with Georgia. The company manufactures gas turbines and electrical appliances and atomic and hydro power stations. Deki plans to supply Georgia with its products and visit our country in the near term," Malkhaz Gulashvili stated.

Tamuna Dughashvili

