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ნაშა

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FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
STIFTUNG Für die Freiheit.



DISCUSSION #8
JUNE 3

COVID 19

LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES FROM DEMOCRACIES



WEDNESDAY WEBINAR SERIES BY CIVIC IDEA
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FNF — SOUTH CAUCASUS | APRIL - MAY' 2020

June 3, 12:00 Tbilisi Local Time

Join our Zoom Webinar Live

COVID19: LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES WORLDWIDE RESPONSES IN ASIA



TINATIN KHIDASHELI

Chair, Civic IDEA, Former MP
& MOD, Georgia



**HIS EXCELLENCY
TADAHARU UEHARA**

Ambassador of Japan to
Georgia



HENRIK BACH MORTENSEN

ALDE Vice President



DR. GO MYONG-HYUN

Asan Institute for Policy
Studies



NACHIKET MOR

Expert from India



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.
South Caucasus



DISCUSSION # 1

NEW SECURITY CHALLENGES BROUGHT BY COVID-19:

LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES WORLDWIDE / CASE OF ASIAN COUNTRIES

SPEAKERS:

His excellency Tadaharu Uehara
Ambassador of Japan to Georgia

Nachiket Mor
International Consultant on design of national and regional health systems, India

Dr. GO Myong-Hyun
Research fellow at the Asian Institute for Policy Studies, South Korea

Mr. Henrik Bach Mortensen
Vice President of ALDE party, Denmark

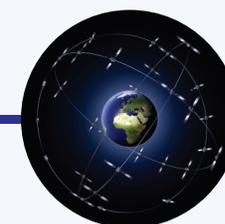
MODERATOR:

Tinatin Khidasheli
Chair of the Civic IDEA and former Minister of Defense of Georgia

Civic IDEA together with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation continues the series of webinars on liberal views and responses to COVID-19 crisis. As we have covered over 25 European democracies and the US, next several sessions will be focusing on the containment policies of the Asian democracies.

The eighth panel represents the Asian countries covering Japan, South Korea and India. "Our goal is to look through the effective internal policies of these countries in the fight against the healthcare , socio-economic and security challenges brought by the pandemic. So far, we have covered 25 countries within the European Union, the UK, the United States, we have discussed policies implemented by Georgia's neighbors and now it is the time to draw your attention to Asia, where challenges are similar, but responses proved to be very effective and interesting" - mentioned Tinatin Khidasheli..

We also hosted a vice-president of ALDE party to bring perspective not only from his home country of Denmark, but from more of a global perspective. It is important to mention that the Asian countries like Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, Singapore have been effectively coping with the crisis because of their effective and collective strategies concerning the information sharing

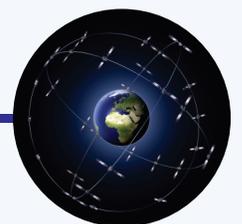


and other matters. Later on, we will touch on the issues, whether these states have become the victims of intensified propaganda from their big and powerful neighbors.

Japan

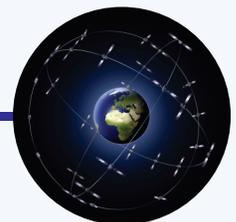
Japan is considered to be one of the successful states in terms of the crisis management policies on the COVID-19 battlefield. According to the official numbers by the WHO, there are only 16,930 cases of infection revealed in Japan and the death tolls have been kept very low compared to the total rate of the population. Ambassador Tadaharu Uehara believes that the Asian countries need to continue close cooperation and information sharing to efficiently combat not only COVID-19, but other pandemics that might transpire in the future.

As of time of our discussion, Japan has opened the businesses and released certain restrictions enforced along the emergence of the virus. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 will not completely disappear and the Japanese authorities keep monitoring the situation in order to adjust the lifestyles of the citizens while simultaneously avoiding the so-called “second wave” of the virus. The declaration of the state of emergency on the first stages of the virus spreading has justified its goal, bringing success to the country.



There were three peculiar points on Japan's fight against the pandemic:

- Japanese authorities did not see the necessity of the total lockdown of the population unlike most of the countries worldwide. Moreover, according to Japanese laws, it was not possible for the Japanese government to enforce the compulsory stay-home policies on their citizens. Considering the high sense of responsibility and the awareness of the Japanese people, the less-restrictive measures based only on advices and recommendations have validated the positive result. The Japanese government respects and protects the privacy and the individual freedom of its people, and they have proved it even during the pandemic.
- “Diamond princess – one of the largest and the gorgeous cruise ship carrying 3,700 passengers. The ship was sailing back to Yokohama city port of Japan with more than 2100 passengers over the age of 60... More than 1300 Japanese passengers were on board. During the voyage, they found several infection cases... The government of Japan quickly decided to receive the ship at Yokohama port on 3rd of February at a very early stage of growing infection. There was a lot of criticism to the handling by government of Japan of the Diamond princess. But it was clear from the beginning that urgent action was necessary and all the requirement of 2 weeks quarantine, etc. in the very small and narrow cabins should've been followed. So, we believe it was the right decision”- noted Ambassador Tadaharu Uehara.¹



- Thirdly, it is worth underling that the goal of Japan is better prevention and readiness for any future crises, if they occur.

South Korea

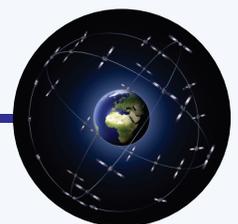
South Korea has established itself as an absolute leader in the fight against COVID-19 among the states in Asia.² "South Korean government has conducted a very active contact tracing and test program (it was called Test, Trace, Contain)... In order to find infected cases, the government has used massive testing, around million tested already. In terms of capacity, the government has been able to use up to 10,000 test a day"³- mentioned Dr. GO Myong-Hyun. Similarly, to Japan, South Korea did not have to impose a total lockdown of the economy and the society ensuring the free movement of the people. Therefore, this occasion minimized the damage to the economy. The restrictions mostly were associated with the educational institutions (the 2-month postponement of schools) and general social distancing policies like the limits on large gatherings. Furthermore, the South Korean authorities requested from companies to voluntarily move the work of their employees to online services and adjustment to the stay-home regulations. The restaurants and the shopping malls kept functioning during the whole period of crisis. The S. Korean population was kept under constant information and awareness campaign about the risks

1

2. For more information about South Korea's success read <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/05/whats-south-koreas-secret/611215/>

3. Read more about the South Korean "Test, Trace, Contain" policy at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/23/test-trace-contain-how-south-korea-flattened-its-coronavirus-curve>

Wednesday Webinar Series by Civic IDEA
In partnership with FNF – South Caucasus

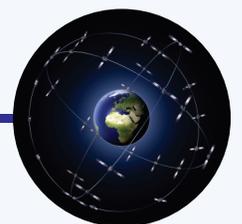


associated with the virus, as well as prevention mechanisms and they showed an exceptional responsibility while staying away from the crowded places and respectively protecting the social-distancing guidelines.

Obvious purpose of the webinar was closer look at the reasons and causes of the success of South Korea, so Dr. GO Myong-Hyun went into some of the details explaining to us:

“I would say preparedness, that is because we had the previous failure, I would say in handling infections like this one. Back in 2015 South Korea had a minor outbreak of MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), which is actually related to COVID-19. All the experience gained over the years with other types of coronavirus infectious diseases, including the largest one of SARS from early 2000s.

Back in 2015, South Korea was pretty much the only country that was affected by MERS... For South Korea that was considered to be a major failure and I think the government conducted the thorough source-searching about the reasons and root causes of failures, as well as explored ways for preventing and handling it. The process was also reflected on our new law passed aftermath the MERS epidemic in 2015. The law empowered the public health authorities to essentially conduct very aggressive contact-tracing programs, as well as usage of an old private data, and not exclusive to health care issues, but also operational for early detection and tracing the

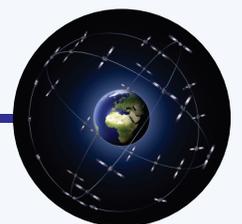


transmission of the virus, that is credit card info, usage of camera footages and so on. Those, laws have proved their efficiency and usefulness."

Additionally, the public health authorities and particularly S. Korean Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) played an immense role in combatting the healthcare emergency. They have forecasted the spread of the virus from China, as well as its biological nature. Therefore, they were ready to launch the major testing program immediately after the emergence of the COVID-19, having the massive system of PCR test equipment and shortening the testing time. The case of speedy and massive face-mask production also proved to be effective and supported the cause. In overall, all the instant and effective measures have positively reflected on the healthcare and economic sectors in South Korea making it an exemplary case to be learned by other states all over the world.

India

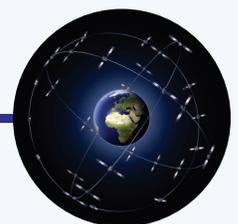
India, second largest country in the world proved to have impressive results as well. As of now it has only 157 cases per million population and only 5 death per million. Though it is to be mentioned, that so far, the numbers of identified infected cases are rising on a daily basis and the cri-



tical phase of the pandemic is still on-going in India. Nevertheless, most of the cases are concentrated in specific geographic areas (i.e. Mumbai), not covering the whole country.

Unlike Japan or South Korea, the Indian population was not prepared for the lockdown and it especially reflected on those citizens whose workplace and the residence were situated in big cities. However, the government managed to effectively gather the necessary Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). "We have good engineering capacity, so if you saw the number of tests they were doing when the crisis began, we were able to run up that capacity very fast..."- says Nachiket Mor, panelist from India with over two decades of experience in designing and dealing with Indian, as well as regional health care policies. In addition, the Indian authorities have been assisted by the private sector in rapid building hospitals for infected patients. One of the reasons for relatively moderate numbers of infection and diseased people is the India's high number of young people, while as states proved premier victims of COVID 19 were elderly. From the very beginning, the Indian government specifically targeted people above 60 and their treatment and care were made a priority.

Regarding the economy, despite the rising number of cases, India started to reopen. There is general understanding that "the economy cannot tolerate anymore of lockdown pressure. We have lost 60 or 70% of the jobs and It is going to take time to get them back."- Nachiket Mor.

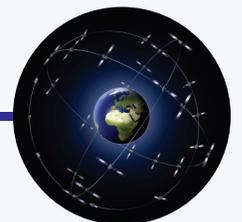


In conclusion, Indian people are slowly adapting to the existing reality and the changing lifestyle. It is still early to tell what is going to happen in India, as they say "jury is still out", but with balanced approach we try to keep pandemic under control.

Denmark

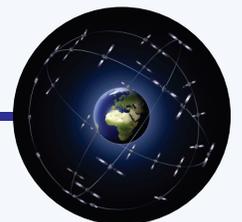
"The world, for the first time, had to learn how to fight the enemy that we cannot negotiate, it was a tough challenge everywhere. Denmark is no exception"- says Mr. Henrik Bach Mortensen, vice president of ALDE Party. Denmark like other liberal states had to learn how to balance the restrictions with the need to fight the disease. Currently, the situation in Denmark is flattening since, the government with the unanimous support of the parliament was very quick in deploying the necessary measures. Different from its neighbor Sweden we have discussed during one of our Webinars with the vice-speaker of Swedish parliament, Danes were quick and extremely strict with lockdown policies.

"All companies and the public sector more or less accepted the complete shutdown within hours... Professional sector shut down very quickly. Basically, everybody stayed at home during this lockdown. Most of the schools shifted to skype and other online applications, public transport has been functioning but not much of customers were using services, all restaurants, sho-



pping centers, beauty salons were shut down and public gatherings were completely banned. If to be identified, the border closure has been especially stressful for the local population as many people used to travel from Denmark to other countries (i.e. Sweden) for work."

Regarding the economic situation, private consumption has not gone low despite closing the restaurants and the shopping malls. "My own personal expectation is that within a year or so given that we can control the epidemic, the economy will be back more or less to where it was. Of course, lots of companies have encountered significant losses, but overall, things should be moving forward. There was also unanimity in the parliament about relief packages for companies where the government took over the weight of bills of the people who were sent home from companies. We can say that for over two months now, government is paying most of the salaries for the working population"- explains Mr. Mortensen. Though there is an understanding that these payments will be halted once people will be back to their workplaces. Currently, the Danish government is trying to initiate certain strategies concerning the complete opening of the economy, as well as of borders. What we already know, is that, Danes can travel freely to Norway 🇳🇴 Iceland 🇮🇸 and Germany 🇩🇪 , but not to the Sweden 🇸🇪 , that is probably the strangest thing for most Danish nationals.

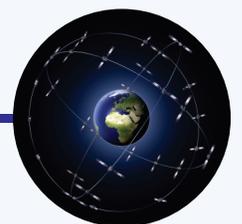


"The development of the disease has been very different in Sweden and in Denmark. Sweden was relatively slow to react. They have had very modest lockdowns compared to Denmark which means that the number of deaths in Sweden has been much higher. That is the reason that the government gives for keeping the borders closed to Sweden. We have been pursuing different strategies"- Mr. Mortensen explains the reasons for prolonged border closer with Sweden.

Cooperation Against common Challenges

It was identified multiple times during our webinars, that one of the challenges, world is facing today, including in Europe is the development of semi-authoritarian attitudes, as a key to successful containment of the crisis and this is one area where more intensive cooperation and action is necessary.

The virus has affected the whole world putting in jeopardy not only the lives of the nations, but the global economy and global cooperation platforms among the states. During the previous webinars, we have talked a lot about the real tests, pandemic put post II World War order through. Therefore, it is interesting to understand the approaches and the strategies of Eastern democratic countries for the further enhancement of the collaboration.

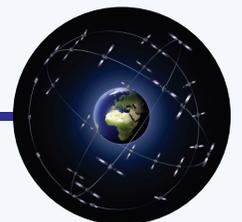


"There is a lot of skepticism about states becoming more self-centered rather than open to the way of globalization as we knew it. What will be your assessment of the situation from today's perspective? Are we going to have more unity or we are going to have more self-centered decisions from the developed world, more integration or disintegration for the time to come?" - asked Tinatin Khidasheli.

It is early to make certain predictions, but the international community should discuss those issues intensively. The cooperation needs to be based on transparent information, as long as the states learn from one another's experience. This occasion might contribute to establishing the more forward-looking views on democracy.

"Before the next pandemic, we have to prepare ourselves. The preparedness is also a balance between cost and loss. So, we need to discuss what is the good point to strike the balance. After the pandemic, disaster-risked finance is a very important thing for us to discuss globally. Every country especially the developing countries are experiencing the hard times in the finance sector. The other countries also have the big burden of placing the economic situation back on its feet...

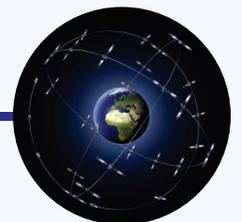
That agenda is not a one country's agenda, this is a global agenda."- noticed Ambassador Tadaharu Uehara.



Hence, the world democracies, no matter in the west or in the east have to face the common challenges, conduct series of discussions on shared areas of concern, hereafter opening the broader cooperation platform for collectively overcoming the difficulties.

Naturally, populists and nationalists are going to try to hinder the new collaborative projects and agendas. During the pandemic, we have seen the certain skepticism of Danish citizens regarding the responsible politicians, which was effectively used by the populists to boost their policies forward. This is the issue we need to keep an eye on.

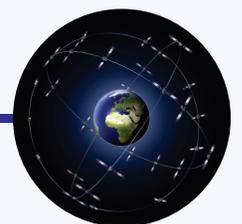
Henrik Bach Mortensen addressed the issue from the perspective of problems and diversions we are witnessing in Europe: "It is extremely sad that we have seen the European countries fight each other over medical supplies... I find it embarrassing that for instance, my own country kept many more ventilators than needed, but which would have been useful in Italy, where people cried out for help and nothing was supplied from my country. We really should have had the common, united European response to an issue like this. But it is exactly this experience that proves demand for more Europe and not less Europe". Simultaneously, there is a rising danger of more protectionism and nationalization of essential health products which will harm the European economic perspectives.



The objective of transparency in Asia, China's hidden or not so hidden hand

As we have broadly discussed during the previous panels, China-Russia disinformation apparatus has been completely directed towards the disposition of failing democracies in the fight against the pandemic. Asian democracies like, South Korea 🇰🇷 or other have not been an exception. Nevertheless, South Korea has led the transparent path of exposing all the information about their strategies and policies to the world. While the Chinese 🇨🇳 authorities have enforced the strict lockdown on their population, which caused the discontent among its citizens. They also hid containment strategies, together with the general pandemic data and their people's sentiments from the whole world.

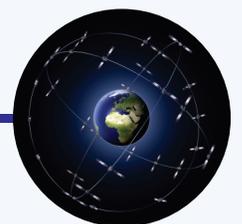
Hence, China has been faking the information about the costs of the crisis, the tensions transpired within the Chinese people. On the contrary, "South Korea has been democratic state for the last 30 years, the government tried really hard to introduce the rule of transparency and the openness. I think each failure that South Korean government experiences, not just with handling of the MERS... but with other public scandals... also major accidents and so on, the government translated into invaluable knowledge and used it for success. They did really good job first of all by being transparent about it and keeping people informed"- tells us Dr. GO Myong-Hyun.



Accordingly, it is not surprising that the public trust towards the state institutions has been rising during the past several decades in South Korea. "The key factor that separates the Chinese regime from liberal democratic system like one in South Korea, is a resilience and I think the democratic system is really well functioning as it can handle the whole shock in a much more effective way, because each member of the system, trust the government and trust the people who handle the policies"- added Dr. GO Myong-Hyun.

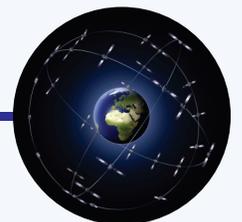
The rise of COVID-related disinformation campaigns, Conspiracy theories about Bill Gates & Elon Musk, etc.

"There are new myths coming along the pandemic and new propaganda waves that we are witnessing, i.e. in Georgia 🇧🇪 Bill Gates now is probably the most mythologized person. What he does or what he says is very often given a completely different context with the completely different understanding. The propaganda machinery is trying to create new enemies, trying to create new trouble-makers in the world who later they can put finger on and blame for all the suffering that the world has gone through. We see massive waves of demonizing people, manipulating news and information, lying about the data or experiments and developments in the west. What are the new myths that came along with the pandemic in your



countries? Are there new stories developing in Japan, in Denmark, in South Korea or in India?"
– asks the moderator, Mrs. Khidasheli.

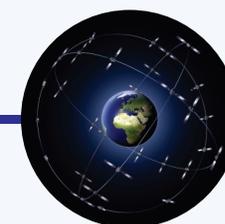
China has been blaming South Korea  in being a vector of transmitting the virus. At the initial phase of the pandemic, there was a phobia within the S. Korean population regarding the Chinese people visiting and spreading the virus in S. Korea. But later the fear was gone, since the government started to raise the awareness of its people about China and its maneuvers. Therefore, it did not become the major target of either Chinese or Russian propaganda apparatus. Dr. GO Myong-Hyun believes that liberal democracies should not be the victims of such disinformation and fake news campaigns because of their freedom of the press and the free environment of discussion. According to him, smaller or medium size liberal democracies are vulnerable to become the victims of such propaganda flows or ideological conflicts, rather than bigger entities like the European Union or the United States. The most effective measures to combat the challenges are related again to the intensified international discussions and the development of media freedom in vulnerable democracies.



There has been less blame put on China in Denmark  concerning the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and there has not been much room for the conspiracy theories, because of the high level of awareness in the Danish population. Likewise, in India  people are more focused on internal issues, like the distrust towards their own government, than on external hybrid challenges such as disinformation campaigns of the authoritarian states.

In summary, we can highlight several important aspects of today's panel.

- Asian states, like Japan and South Korea appear to be leaders in combatting the healthcare and economic crisis, because of their vast experience from the previous years. They know well how to treat the virus and at the same time maintain the economic welfare.
- Moreover, the high awareness and responsibility of their population justifies the means and portrays the state institutions' work as more effective, which overall instigate the positive results.
- Even though these states effectively manage the crisis on the national level, they are ready to share their experience, exchange the information with different states, whether it is India or other states, to make the democratic world stronger and initiate new efficient strategies on future matters.
- Indeed, boosting the international cooperation and the strengthening of such international bodies as the WHO could later prevent the further crisis and make the liberal democracies sturdier towards the up-coming challenges.



WEBINAR #1



MR. TEDO JAPARIDZE
FORMER MFA OF GEORGIA



MR. EDVINAS KERZA VICE
MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE OF LITHUANIA



MR. ROMAN JANKO
FORMER MOD OF SLOVENIA



MR. SEBASTIAN VAGT
PNF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS MANAGER



HEAD OF CIVIC IDEA
FORMER MOD OF GEORGIA

NEW SECURITY CHALLENGES BROUGHT BY COVID-19 AND RESPONSES BY DEMOCRACIES



15 TH OF APRIL
10:00-11:30



ALEXANDR VONDRA
MEP, FORMER MINISTER OF DEFENSE
OF CZECH REPUBLIC

WEBINAR #2



IVANNA KLYMUSH-TSINTSADE
CHAIR, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON
UKRAINE'S INTEGRATION INTO THE EU



KEIT PENTUS-ROSI-MANNUS,
MEMBER OF ESTONIAN PARLIAMENT,
FORMER ESTONIAN MFA



KERSTIN LUNDGREN
DEPUTY SPOKESW OF THE RIKS-DAG



GIORGI KANASHVILI
SENIOR POLICY ADVISER AT CIVIC IDEA

ARE RUSSIA AND CHINA CAPITALIZING ON COVID 19 CRISIS ?

22 APRIL, TBILISI 12:00 LOCAL TIME

LANGUAGE - ENGLISH



EMEL KIRAZIS
FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF
LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL



TINATIN KHIDASHELI
HEAD OF CIVIC IDEA
FORMER GEORGIAN MOD



ANDREY PIVOVAROV,
OPEN RUSSIA

WEBINAR #3



FILIP LIPOW:
SINOLOGIST, RESEARCHER AT SIMPO-SIS,
PRAGUE



EKA AKHARA
DEAN OF SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
AT CHUGOSKY UNIVERSITY, GEORGIA



MARTIN HOLIK
DIRECTOR OF SIMPO-SIS,CZ



FRANCOIS GODELEMENT,
EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
DIRECTOR, ASIA AND CHINA PROGRAMME

WEBINAR #3

COVID 19 - Responses from Democracies
France, Germany. What about China?

29TH OF APRIL,
AT 12:00 TBILISI TIME



TINATIN KHIDASHELI
HEAD OF CIVIC IDEA
FORMER MOD OF GEORGIA



INA KRISTEN TIETLOW
SENIOR FELLOW, BERLANN COUNCIL
ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, BERLIN

WEBINAR #4

May 6, 18:00 Tbilisi Local Time
Join our Zoom Webinar Live

COVID19: LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES WORLDWIDE UK / US RESPONSES



TINATIN KHIDASHELI
Chair, Civic IDEA, Former MP
& MOD, Georgia



AMBASSADOR
TEDO JAPARIDZE
Former MP & MFA, Georgia



AMBASSADOR
JOHN HERBST
Eurasia Center Director, at
Atlantic Council



LIEUTENANT GENERAL
BEN RODGES
Former Commander of US Army Europe,
Parishing Chair in Strategic Studies at
CSA



DR. NEIL MELVIN
Director of International
Security Studies at RUSI



JAMIE KIRCHICK
Visiting Fellow in the Center
on the United States and
Europe, at Brookings



HEATHER CONLEY
Senior Vice President for
Europe, Eurasia, and the
Arctic, at CSIS



WEBINAR

May 13, 12:00 Tbilisi Local Time
Join our Zoom Webinar Live

COVID19: LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES WORLDWIDE HOW TO LIVE WITH A BIG NEIGHBOR



TINATIN KHIDASHELI
Chair, Civic IDEA, Former MP
& MOD, Georgia



JULIUS VON FREYTAG
Leningradsk Russia and Central
Asia programmes at the Friedrich
Naumann Foundation, Russia



GIORGI KANASHVILI
Liaison for Georgia



MR. AHMAD ALILI
Head of Caucasus Policy Analysis
Center (CPAC), Azerbaijan



INESE VOIKA
Member of the Saeima, Latvia



WEBINER #6

May 20, 12:00 Tbilisi Local Time
Join our Zoom Webinar Live

COVID19: LIBERAL VIEWS AND RESPONSES WORLDWIDE RESPONSES FROM EUROPEAN UNION



TINATIN KHIDASHELI
Chair, Civic IDEA, Former MP
& MOD, Georgia



DAVID USUPASHVILI
Liaison Georgia, Former
Chairman of the Parliament
of Georgia



TORSTEN HERBST
member of the German
Federal
Parliament (Bundestag), FDP



NADIA KOVALCIKOVA
Program Manager at the Alliance for Securing
Democracy (ASD) at GMF, Brussels



DR. MIKA AALTOLA
Director of the Finnish Institute
of International Affairs



FATMA CAREN YAZGAN
Ambassador of Turkey to
Georgia



HANS VAN BALEN
former president of ALDE



WEBINAR #7

27 მაისი, 12:00
შემოგვიერთდით Zoom-ის ვებინარზე

კოვიდ-19 როგორ შევხვდა ქართული დემოკრატია პანდემიის გამომწვევებს?



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