



REPORT
by CIVIC IDEA



**NATIONAL ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES –
ANOTHER CAUSE OF CONCERN
IN SINO-GEORGIAN RELATIONS**

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INTRODUCTION

During the past five years of intensive work revealing the PRC's soft and hard power strategies jeopardizing Georgia's national security, Civic IDEA published two reports covering China's influence on Georgia's academic, media and CSO sectors before, during, and after the emergence of the covid-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, while measuring the Chinese leverage in research and education in our reports, the main focus was drawn on the relations established by the Georgian high-educational institutions/universities with the Chinese counterparts. Today, we suggest another monitoring report from Chinese cooperation and activities in Georgian Academia, though related not directly to the universities, but one essential institution functioning since 1941 and carrying the legal status of "[scientific advisor of the government of Georgia](#)"¹, the **National Academy of Sciences** of Georgia.

Through personal correspondence and public information available on their official website, Civic IDEA has discovered several memorandums and cooperation agreements the National Academy of Sciences has signed with both state and private Chinese entities, as well as numerous events and activities following the advanced relations with China. We came across several interesting connections that have already been established between local chapters of the Academy of Science, as well as individual scientists under the auspices of the Academy and Chinese universities, which gives us the idea that the increased research and academic cooperation will only boost and the partnership will gain even more attachment in the future.

But the following questions remain: Why do these relations threaten Georgia's national security? How can China benefit from such scientific cooperation?

It is unlikely that Chinese ties with the Georgian National Academy of Sciences would directly threaten Georgia's national security. It is also because the influence and power of their Georgian counterpart are somewhat limited for now. Nowadays, the impact of our academy and its resources are not great, but if we do not pay proper attention to its relations with the PRC, it can become a starting point for the future, transforming into a problem in the wake of the revitalization of the field. For example, if the Chinese government were to use its relationship with the Academy to gain access to sensitive or classified information, or to influence Georgia's research and development in ways that could harm our national interests, then the relationship could be seen as a potential threat to state security. Academy does have official cooperation through its wide range of institutions with various ministries, including the Ministry of Defense. Additionally, the Chinese government could use its relationship with the Academy to gain leverage over

¹ *Official website of The Georgian National Academy of Sciences.* From http://science.org.ge/?page_id=2491&lang=en

the Georgian government or to interfere in its internal affairs, which could also be seen as a threat to national security.

There have been concerns raised by various democratic countries separately about potential risks and vulnerabilities associated with China's scientific cooperation with other countries. Some have already acknowledged the dangers and generated recommendations that can be adjusted to different states as well. For instance, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) has reported that China's Academy of Sciences has been involved in a number of joint research projects with Australian universities and scientific centers.² Several projects have been in sensitive areas, such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and hypersonic technology, which have precise military applications and could raise concerns over the transfer of sensitive technology or information. Another vivid example is provided by the US Department of Justice, which charged the Chinese-national researcher at the University of Kansas (KU) with fraud and concealing ties to the Chinese government.³ The Czech organization, Sinopsis has conducted thorough research concerning the threats derived from scientific and technological cooperation with the PRC, such as cyber espionage, the politicization of science, the development of dual-use technologies exploited for defense purposes by the CCP, involvement of foreign institutions in China's military-civilian fusion strategy and so on.⁴ The Swedish National China Centre has also reported on challenges in Sino-Swedish scientific collaboration and came up with recommendations for raising awareness and avoiding the risks of potential misuse.⁵

Overall, advanced democracies assume that China can benefit from scientific cooperation with various Academies of Sciences not only to boost its reputation as a science frontrunner but also to affect the national security of other states in several ways:

- Access to advanced technology and research: By collaborating with foreign academies, China can gain access to cutting-edge technology and research that may not yet be available in China.
- Influence over research and development: If China were to use its collaboration to influence the direction of research and development in other countries, it could potentially jeopardize the national interests of those countries.
- Access to sensitive or classified information: If China were to gain access to sensitive or classified information through its collaboration with other countries, it could also harm its national security incentives.

² ASPI. (2019, 11 25). *Exploring the military and security links of China's universities*. From www.aspi.org.au: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/china-defence-universities-tracker>

³ US Department of Justice. (2019, August 21). *University of Kansas Researcher Indicted for Fraud for Failing to Disclose Conflict of Interest with Chinese University*. From www.justice.gov: bit.ly/3yqR6SG

⁴ Sinopsis, & Lipold, T. (2023). *Scientific exchanges with Chinese characteristics - Limits and pitfalls of academic cooperation with the People's Republic of China*. From www.sinopsis.cz: <https://bit.ly/3l10nhh>

⁵ Swedish National China Centre. (2021, November). *Swedish experiences of research collaboration with China: Challenges and the way forward*. From www.ui.se: <http://bit.ly/3J9A0ha>

- Leverage over governments: If China were to use its collaborations to gain leverage over other governments, it could be used to influence the foreign policies of those countries in ways that harm their national security interests.
- Interference in internal affairs: If China were to use its collaborations to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, it could potentially harm the national security interests of those countries.
- International visibility and reputation: China can enhance its reputation as a major player in the global scientific community by collaborating with leading foreign academies and exploiting their intellectual resources.
- Economic benefits: Scientific cooperation can help to promote technology transfer, joint venture, and other forms of economic cooperation, which in the end, result in China being the key financial/economic partner for a state, adding additional credits to the exploitation of the local trade market.

These examples do not imply that all cooperation between the PRC and various academies of sciences is harmful to the national security of foreign states. Still, it's necessary to be cautious and monitor the collaborations to ensure that the cooperation is mutually beneficial, the country's national interests are protected and, therefore, maintain the safety of sensitive information and technology transfer. Nevertheless, the local Academy of Sciences still needs to acknowledge the security risks of the various Chinese entities. Seemingly, the Georgian Academy is unaware and unwilling to check the reputation of those Chinese state or private bodies with which it is signing long-term and sometimes even timeless cooperation agreements. This is evidenced by the number of activities and publications coordinated with the PRC. More precisely, until now, the Georgian National Academy of Sciences has signed cooperation agreements with the following entities in China:

- **Chinese Academy of Science (CAS)**
- **Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)**
- **Shandong University of Technology (SDUT)**
- **Yantai New and High Technology Zone**
- **Yantai National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone**
- **Linyi Top Network Co., Ltd,**
- **Shandong Academy of Sciences**
- **Guangdong Provincial Association of Science and Technology**

Some of these structures and institutes carry low, medium, high and sometimes very high-security risks and are connected to military and defense research, programs and institutions. Below we discuss their memorandums and activities in more detail. We will also touch on the international cases of the PRC's exploitation of foreign scientific institutions and its deterrence policies implemented by various states worldwide.

PRC'S LEVERAGE ON THE GEORGIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The website of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences proudly highlights that since 2015, it has developed “special relations” with the PRC. This occasion is proved by the number of MOUs and cooperation agreements signed with the Chinese scientific community. Based on the documents provided to Civic IDEA by the Academy, **there have been joint bio laboratories and research centers opened both in China (particularly in Guangdong and Shandong provinces) and Georgia within this partnership**, which has also created the ground for constant visits and staff exchange. The Georgian Academy of Sciences has also received financial income from Chinese entities. For instance, in 2019, in an annual report, the financial department of the Academy indicated that they received a payment amounting to 43 600 GEL from the PRC for providing “scientific services”.⁶ Nonetheless, the website does not indicate the security threats that some of their Chinese partners carry. Below we will go through several agreements that we believe are worth to be reviewed due to their controversial extracts. It is also true that the participating Chinese side is involved in PRC’s military research and PLA’s activities.

CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE (CAS)



One of the most vital aspects of the whole cooperation circle with China is the rapprochement of the Sino-Georgian academies of sciences. In 2019, an 8-member delegation of scientists from the state-run Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) visited Georgia and met with their Georgian counterparts, including the president of the Academy, Giorgi Kvesitadze, and other colleague academicians.⁷ At that meeting, the two participating sides decided to sign the cooperation memorandum and boost their relations. The document is timeless and entered into force on the date of signing. Its main goal is to advance the cooperation between Georgian and Chinese researchers and scientists, including exchange programs, joint research activities, participation in scientific meetings organized by any party, as well as symposia, seminars and workshops.

⁶ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2019). *Annual Report 2019*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Angarishi2019.pdf](http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Angarishi2019.pdf)

⁷ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2019, September 19). *Memorandum with the Chinese Academy of Sciences*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=5638](http://science.org.ge/?p=5638)

The memorandum covers the following fields: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, geology, agriculture, economics and engineering, informatics and environmental protection. On December 26, 2018, the Georgian Academy elected one of the most prominent CCP propagandists and the president of the CAS, [Bai Chunli](#),⁸ as a foreign member of the National Academy of Sciences of Georgia in the field of chemistry. Simultaneously with his position in CAS, he has served as a Party member from 2011 to 2020. In his multiple articles, he has been promoting the idea that the CCP's "[leadership and party-building efforts in research organizations serve as one of the most powerful driving forces for innovation](#)".⁹ In other words, he strongly endorsed the narrative that the CCP is the key to success in Science and Technology.

It is noteworthy that besides being the strategic tool in the CCP's hands used for its foreign policy interests, in the past several years, the Chinese Academy of Sciences has been involved in a number of scandals both in mainland China and abroad. The misconduct comprised fraud, faked research, plagiarism, questionable academic achievements, problematic peer review standards, and so on, which were happening in the agencies, stations and laboratories governed by CAS. In 2020, [90 scientists resigned](#) from the CAS institutions, which was an unprecedented event and engaged a special investigative group to probe this occasion.¹⁰ However, after a long investigation, the results were kept private and limited to the internal discussion, while the CAS director, blamed for the incident, remained in his position. The same year, Yang Hui, a CAS researcher, was accused of academic plagiarism. He was not the only CAS expert with similar allegations, there were others, for instance, Xu Yufen, [Pei Gang \(Chairman of the CAS research ethics committee\)](#),¹¹ and even CAS institutes showing off their technology innovations that have been found similar to those already existing.

Moreover, several cases of misuse were revealed abroad associated with the name of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. For example, Percival Zhang, an engineering professor at Virginia Polytechnical Institutes, established a research firm Cell-Free Bioinnovations, which relied solely on grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) of the United States. In 2014, Mr. Zhang simultaneously started working for the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In 2015, [he was accused of submitting fake proposals to NSF](#) and using the received funds not for the research for which the money was requested.¹²

⁸ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2018). *Annual Report 2018*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2018.pdf>

⁹ BluePath Lab. (N/A). *China's Model of Science: Rationale, Players, Issues*. From [www.bluepathlabs.com:](http://www.bluepathlabs.com) https://www.bluepathlabs.com/uploads/1/1/9/0/119002711/model_of_science_proof_final.pdf

¹⁰ Zhang, H. (2020, September 30). *The Chinese Academy of Sciences pledges to develop core technologies - Is this a joke?* From [www.theepochtimes.com:](http://www.theepochtimes.com) <http://bit.ly/3ypT7yL>

¹¹ Yanhao, H., & Jia, D. (2021, January 28). *Chinese Academy of Scientists Declines to Re-Investigate Fraud Accusation*. From [www.caixinglobal.com:](http://www.caixinglobal.com) <http://bit.ly/3JrIb9Y>

¹² Homeland Security. (2019, November 18). *Majority and minority staff report – threats to the u.s. research enterprise: china's talent recruitment plans*. From [www.hsgac.senate.gov/:](http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/) <http://bit.ly/3ZS1NKt>

PRC is very much concentrated on stimulating science and technology fusion related to the defense and security sectors. CCP has also established a separate department called “[the Talent Work Coordination Small Group](#) (“TWCSG”),¹³ which is responsible for reaching the goal mentioned above, developing strategies, policy research and coordinating [18 different agencies, including CAS](#).¹² Just like the other 18 entities, CAS plays an essential role in implementing the CCP’s Thousand Talent Program (TTP)¹⁴, financing, recruiting, and targeting scientific and technological research done by the TTP members, as well as identifying the PRC’s needs in these disciplines. The US and Canada have started [investigating the cases of stealing](#) state secrets through academic exchanges accomplished via the TTP.¹⁵ To achieve these activities, CAS has been very active in different parts of the world and even established its local research and scientific bases. For instance, [CAS founded the China-CEE Institute in Budapest and a Center for China Studies in Greece](#).¹⁶ CAS has also been very active in Germany, [using its know-how](#) gained from its foreign assets deployed there for decades and returning home with an immense knowledge critical for the CCP.¹⁷



It is no surprise that since CAS is a state-owned entity involving 50000 staff members and 100 research institutes and labs, the CCP government has access to all its research activities and sensitive information. Moreover, following the China Defense Universities Tracker website created by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), the [University of Chinese Academy of Sciences \(UCAS\)](#)¹⁸, founded by CAS in 1978, is placed in the [medium security risk category](#) for its inclusion in defense research and military connections. More specifically, UCAS has established Military-Civil Fusion Development

¹³ Florida House of Representatives. (2020, January 16). *Select Committee on the Integrity of Research Institutions*. From www.bakerdonelson.com:

<https://www.bakerdonelson.com/webfiles/Publications/Select-Committee-2020-01-21.pdf>

¹⁴ Thousand Talent Program/Plan (TTP) – Initially in 2008, it referred to the CCP’s “scheme to bring leading Chinese scientists, academics and entrepreneurs living abroad back to China. In 2011, the scheme grew to encompass younger talent and foreign scientists, and a decade later, the Thousand Talents Plan has attracted more than 7,000 people overall.”;

Source: <https://media.nature.com/original/magazine-assets/d41586-018-00538-z/d41586-018-00538-z.pdf>

¹⁵ Palit, P. S. (2022, February). *China’s ‘Influence Operations’ in Academia, Confucius Institutes and Soft Power: Strategic Responses of India, Bangladesh and Nepal*. From www.sandia.gov:

<https://www.sandia.gov/app/uploads/sites/148/2022/02/SAND2022-12490.pdf>

¹⁶ BRATTBERG, E., CORRE, P. L., STRONSKI, P., & WAAL, T. D. (2021, October 13). *China’s Influence in Southeastern, Central, and Eastern Europe: Vulnerabilities and Resilience in Four Countries*. From www.carnegieendowment.org: <https://bit.ly/3FduKb4>

¹⁷ Stoff, J. (2023). *Should Democracies Draw Redlines around Research Collaboration with China? A Case Study of Germany*. From www.researchsecurity.org: <https://bit.ly/3my8Wk2>

¹⁸ University of Chinese Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Official website of the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences*. From <https://english.ucas.ac.cn>

Research Centre and a base at the China Air-to-Air Missile Research Institute. UCAS is actively working on technology development, personnel training, and creating the national-level technology trading platform for military-civil fusion.¹⁹ Together with the theft of the grant funds discussed above, there is the possibility of stealing research as well for accomplishing the CCP's military goals. In 2020, the FBI reported that [1000 investigations of intellectual property theft](#) were connected to the CCP and its strategy of Military-Civil Fusion.²⁰

Overall, there is reason to think that relations between Sino-Georgian academies could also be used for military purposes. In particular, together with the possibility of research theft for military means, Georgian experts could be inadvertently involved in such technological or scientific research that directly or indirectly serves the Chinese state interests.

CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (CASS)



Another big Chinese state-wide actor is the [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences](#), a CCP-governed think tank, which signed a five-year memorandum with the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 2017.²¹ The two parties agreed on: the exchange of delegations and experts, organizing joint conferences and cultural events, conducting collaborative scientific research, free exchange of publications, and providing each other with scientific material of common interest.

CASS has also been under scrutiny many times, but not because it is very loyal to the CCP ideology, but vice versa. For the Chinese government, CASS has been politically less reliable than CAS for many decades. The officials have also revealed its [involvement in the June fourth demonstration in 1989](#).²² Nonetheless, some scholars believe that the CCP still managed to subordinate it not through ideology but through regulations. Hence, the Chinese authorities select CASS experts, scholars, and academics who are ready to obey, accept and comply with their rules and not necessarily their communist philosophy. Therefore, in the end, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is still following the guidelines of the Chinese Communist Party.

¹⁹ ASPI. (n.d.). *University of Chinese Academy of Sciences*. From

<https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/university-of-chinese-academy-of-sciences/>

²⁰ ShareAmerica. (2020, January 30). *Why the U.S. is concerned about Chinese research theft*. From <http://bit.ly/3yoQeyd>

²¹ International Science Council. (n.d.). *Chinese Academy of Sciences*. From

<https://council.science/member/china-chinese-academy-of-social-sciences-cass/>

²² Sleeboom-Faulkner, M. (2007). *Regulating Intellectual Life in China: The Case of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*. From <https://www.istor.org/stable/20192737>

In addition, the CASS graduate, Changhua Lin, recorded in his research the cases of plagiarism and self-plagiarism among the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences economists.²³ It turned out that the problem of plagiarism is very relevant not only among the CASS economists but throughout the academy, especially among high-ranking academicians. For instance, in 2019, the head of the Institute of American Studies at CASS, Mr. Wu Baiyi, was accused of plagiarizing the research and data on the origins of the US-China trade war.²⁴ Consequently, the Georgian Academy is not protected from incidents of plagiarism either while cooperating with the CASS, providing or exchanging scientific materials.

SHANDONG UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (SDUT)



Within the frames of the BRI, in 2019, the Georgian National Academy of Sciences signed the MoU (valid for five years after its signing) with the Shandong University of Technology (also referred to as SDUT)²⁵, a Chinese state-owned university that has been functioning since 1958. According to Unitracker, SDUT is designated low risk for its low number of defense research.²⁶ Nevertheless, in 2018 together with Shandong University, SDUT participated in defense trainings organized by the defense industry agency SASTIND, meaning that its defense research will grow in the upcoming years. Based on the abovementioned agreement, the sides have agreed on establishing several research centers and labs, including:

- **Silk Road Research Institute** – for boosted scientific research and technological cooperation;
- **The Joint Research Center for Precision Agriculture** – focusing on agricultural aviation, key technologies and intelligent equipment;
- **Academician Work Station** – carrying out scientific and technological research, project cooperation, talent training with enterprises, promoting technological innovation and industrial upgrading of enterprises in both countries;
- **The International Joint Laboratory on Microbial Cell Factories** – focusing on intergovernmental bilateral cooperation projects, exchange of visiting professors or

²³ Lin, C. (2019, October). *Young Economists' Cognition of Integrity Environment in Academic Innovation: an Investigation Based on Self-plagiarism*. From www.atlantis-pess.com: <http://bit.ly/3ZFqx8s>

²⁴ Lu, Z. (2019, June 12). *Top Chinese academic hits back at plagiarism claims over US-China trade war research*. From www.scmp.com: <http://bit.ly/3YAT51l>

²⁵ Shandong University of technology. (n.d.). *Official Website of the Shandong University of technology*. From <https://www.sdut.edu.cn/en/>

²⁶ ASPI. (n.d.). *Shandong University of Technology*. From www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: <https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/shandong-university-of-technology/>

young scientists, as well as postgraduate students, and creating joint publications.

- **The Research Center of Georgia at SDUT in China** – a Think Tank with Shandong characteristics researching the following topics: ecology, biotechnology, agricultural production, economic and trade exchanges, humanistic education and exchange policies, promoting cooperation in social fields;
- **The University Alliance between two countries** – Encouraging resource sharing, academic progress, talent cultivation, shared community of innovation and development.

We sent the official request to the National Academy to determine whether these structures have been officially created or if the cooperation stayed on paper. We have yet to receive an answer from them; thus, we are unsure whether the institutes operate based on the memorandum. Together with joint research activities, study visits, exchange of academicians and students and implementation of government projects, the memorandum encourages the Georgian side to apply actively for Silk Road Scholarship initiated by the Chinese government, more precisely by the Ministry of Education, which fully funds all student expenses while studying in China. The faculty topics covered under the scholarship remain mostly technical and include Civil Engineering, International Economics and Trade, Computer Science and Technology, Communication Engineering, Information and Computational Science, Food Science and Engineering, Applied Physics, Digital Media and Robotics Engineering.²⁷ These are the critical spheres for the PRC government to advance its technology and scientific standing in the international arena. Besides, the CCP uses various scholarships for foreign exchanges to spread its ideological propaganda among the students. For instance, Nanchang Aviation University, together with the Chinese state media conglomerate, established the “Jiangxi International Communication Research Center” “to carry out international communication by using the “overseas student resources” of the university”.²⁸

The agreement with the SDUT is particularly noteworthy since it is regulated by the laws of the People’s Republic of China. This means that “*if the dispute between the partnering sides fails to be resolved through amicable consultation, it shall be referred to the competent people’s court where the agreement is signed for resolution by litigation*”. Consequently, the Georgian side loses its legal power, while the Chinese government has full authority to conduct disputes the way it is appropriate to them. It also jeopardizes the intellectual property obtained through collaborative research, as well as the safety and confidentiality of the staff and students and may be easily exploited by the Chinese authorities.

²⁷ Scholarship. (2022, April 20). *Silk Road Scholarships 2022 in China for International Students (CSC Scholarship)*. From <https://scholarship.com/silk-road-scholarships-china/>

²⁸ Bandurski, D. (2023, January 25). *Getting Personal With State Propaganda*. From [www.chinamediaproject.org: https://chinamediaproject.org/2023/01/25/making-propaganda-personal/](https://chinamediaproject.org/2023/01/25/making-propaganda-personal/)

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE CENTER OF YANTAI NEW AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY ZONE

Another Chinese state-owned entity with which the Georgian National Academy of Sciences has signed the cooperation agreement is the International Exchange Center of Yantai New and High Technology Zone. In conformity with this partnership, in 2014, the two sides created the China-Georgia Center for International Transfer of Science and Technology located in the New and High Technology Industrial Zone of Yantai, Shandong Province. The agreement was valid for five years and automatically renewed after its expiration. As stated in the document, the following activities are carried out:

- Promotion and advertising of the results obtained in the high-tech field - through the organization of round tables, conferences, seminars, and exhibitions;
- Conducting marketing research of the supply market in the high-tech field;
- Joint implementation of scientific-technical projects;
- Sale of high-tech products;
- Support scientific-research organizations and higher education institutions in joint research.

It is essential to highlight that this cooperation did not just stay on paper but was reflected in reality. In 2014, Yantai New and High Technology Zone International Exchange Center was created in Georgia, resulting in Georgian scientists continuing their work in China. This is also evidenced by the [numerous visits of the President of our Academy, Mr. Giorgi Kvesitadze](#), to China.²⁹ In 2019, session IV of the Yantai Silk Road New and High Technology Park Association was held in Georgia under the title - "[Development of the Silk Road in the Future, One Belt, One Road](#)". Tamaz Natriashvili and Tinatin Sadunishvili gave the presentations on behalf of the Georgian Academy, while the PRC was represented by Guo Zhigang (Liaoheng High-Tech Industrial Development Zone), Zhang Shimin (Yantai Pharmaceutical Research Institute), and Wang Shichou (Precision Farming, Agricultural Robot).³⁰



YANTAI NATIONAL HIGH-TECH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONE & LINYI TOP NETWORK CO., LTD



Source: <https://on.china.cn/3JrEKz>

In 2018, the Georgian National Academy of Sciences signed a MoU with *Yantai National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone*. The main goals of the memorandum are scientific and technological visits and academic exchanges, as well as the exchange of young scientists who wish to work in China. Based on the document, Georgian Academy is obliged to recommend and provide information about high-level young experts relevant to Yantai's requirements.

This cooperation is noteworthy due to Yantai High-Tech Industrial Development Zone serving as “China's first China-Russia high-tech industrialization cooperation demonstration base”,³¹ which means that the sensitive information deriving from the joint projects will not only fall into the hands of the Chinese Communist Party but also be used and exploited by Kremlin against Georgia's national interests.

Another cooperation agreement from Shandong province signed in 2016, is with the Sino-Indian enterprise *Linyi Top Network Co., Ltd*,³² which is part of the Shandong Linyi Economic Development Zone established in 1998 and approved by the local government

³¹ Yantai High-Tech Industrial Development Zone. (2018, September 23). *Yantai High-Tech Industrial Development Zone*. From <https://en.selectshandong.com/enwebsite/article/index/id/1375/cid/296.html>

³² Infotop. (N/A). *Linyi Top Network Co., Ltd (Infotop)*. From www.en.iamtop.net: <http://en.iamtop.net/index.php/en/>

as a provincial economic development zone.³³ In the frames of this collaboration, the Chinese and Georgian sides are required to carry out the following activities: Exchange of financial and technical information, supply equipment, develop technology, conduct joint scientific research activities, establish joint structures - laboratories, innovation and tech transformation centers, sale licenses, marketing research for innovative products, search partners for the realization of technologies, ensure the realization of technologies in companies of both countries.

Collaboration with Chinese companies seems very attractive at one glance, but it can contain security risks, wrapped with the lack of transparency or the transfer of undesired information. According to the case of Sweden, a Swedish researcher who established partnership ties with a Chinese company was requested to conduct all internal communications on the company's own platform.⁵ However, the Swedish research institute immediately identified the problem and adopted specific policies to avoid further misuse.

SHANDONG ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



Another big player from Shandong province is the Chinese state-owned Shandong Academy of Sciences, which negotiated an agreement with the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 2018, valid for five years with auto-renewal. Based on the documents, the parties agree on creating a **“China-Georgia joint laboratory for the development and processing of local bioresources”**. The purpose of the lab is a long-term rapprochement of Chinese and Georgian universities, research institutes and enterprises, combining the bio-resources of the PRC and Georgia and achieving industrial innovation and knowledge sharing by experts and specialists. The memorandum states that the governments of Shandong and Georgia, together with the Academies of Sciences, will support and participate in research and industrial projects. Already in June 2019, a delegation of 4 people from the Institute of Ecology of the Shandong Academy of Sciences visited the Georgian National Academy of Sciences, and a Georgian-Chinese round table was held, within the framework of which the **two sides discussed the project of international cooperation on the preparation of biocontrol**.³⁴ This occasion is one of the vivid examples of the realization of the agreement mentioned above.

³³ *Linyi Economic Development Zone*. (2022, January 3). From https://www.selectshandong.com/home/article_en/index/id/15443.html

³⁴ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2019, July 9). *Meeting with the Chinese Scientists*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=5111](http://science.org.ge/?p=5111)

The laboratory can also obtain additional funding in the form of research grants through cooperation with the Chinese and Georgian governments. Governments may also provide additional funds from time to time. A new and independent agreement governs any specific research and project between the laboratory and the parties. Therefore, it is the new agreement that defines its financial contributions, the nature of cooperation, the role and responsibilities of the parties, and the ownership and commercialization of intellectual property rights created on the basis of collaboration, which means that if the Chinese government commissions the laboratory with any specific research, it can also adapt its conditions to its needs under the new agreement. Nonetheless, the information about such exclusive research and projects will be unavailable to the public since, within the framework of this agreement, the parties agree that all information, knowledge and documents are internal confidential material. The parties are prohibited from disclosing confidential information without mutual understanding. The confidentiality period continues for an additional five years after the termination of the agreement.

COOPERATION WITH THE GUANGDONG PROVINCE, ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Memorandum has also been signed with the entities in Guangdong province, China. In October 2019, a delegation of 6 people from the Chinese Guangdong Council for International Scientific and Technical Cooperation led by Li Jiang visited the Georgian Academy of Sciences.³⁵ The purpose of this visit was to deepen the relationship between the Georgian Academy and Guangzhou province and to invite to the 21st scientific meeting, which envisages mutual sharing of experience between Chinese and foreign specialists. In December of the same year, seven scientists from the Guangdong province of the Republic of China paid a visit to Georgia. The scientists represented the Guangdong Provincial Association of Science and Technology,³⁶ "a people's organization under the leadership of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee of the Communist Party of China, and a bridge and link between the provincial party committee and the provincial government to connect science and technology workers."

³⁵ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2019, October 28). *Visit of the Chinese scientist to the Academy of Sciences*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=6137](http://science.org.ge/?p=6137)

³⁶ *The Guangdong Provincial Association of Science and Technology*. (n.d.). From <https://www.emedevents.com/organizer-profile/guangdong-science-and-technology-association>



Source: <http://science.org.ge/?p=6137>

According to the [MoU signed between the two parties](#), the Chinese association will establish **overseas stations in Georgia for practical cooperation**.³⁷ The purpose of the MoU is to exchange innovation and talent (delegation visits, staff visits), promote joint research and projects (financial investment, to create a win-win situation) and their implementation, and brand promotion (both parties will encourage each other's brands), better service for technology enterprises, technology production and enterprise cooperation between Georgia and Guangdong Province. **The parties agreed to protect the confidentiality and secret information, intellectual property rights, and legitimate rights and interests of one another.** Therefore, we need to be made aware of what kind of studies and projects are carried out under this cooperation, as due to these exchanges and joint research being classified, we cannot rule out the possibility of Chinese scientists taking advantage of this cooperation and gathering military and defense data. We have appealed to the local Ministry of Education and the National Academy with the request for further information about the joint activities implemented under this agreement. However, our request is still pending. According to the ASPI research, since 2008, around [2,500 PLA scientists](#) have been deployed abroad, particularly in Western countries, to collect research in the fields critical for the Chinese military.³⁸ Hence, we need to be in a position to identify whether they are stationed in Georgia or not.

³⁷ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2019, December 16). *Memorandum with China Guangdong Provincial Science and Technology Association*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=6820](http://science.org.ge/?p=6820)

³⁸ Alex Joske, A. (2018, October 30). *The Chinese military's collaboration with foreign universities*. From [www.aspi.org.au: https://www.aspi.org.au/report/picking-flowers-making-honey](https://www.aspi.org.au/report/picking-flowers-making-honey)

GEORGIAN ACADEMICIANS INVOLVED IN BOOSTING SINO-GEORGIAN SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

All the documents negotiated by the National Academy of Sciences of Georgia with the Chinese entities are signed by the President of the National Academy of Sciences, **Giorgi Kvesitadze**. According to the website of the Academy, the latter is responsible for expanding the Academy's international ties giving the example of the [opening of the research and joint technology transfer center](#) of China and Georgia in the city of Yantai.³⁹ Mr. Kvesitadze himself [visited Yantai in 2018](#) and participated in foreign experts' projects.⁸ He also greatly contributed to deepening relations with [the Chinese Academy of Sciences](#).⁴⁰ In 2021, with other public figures and Georgian officials, Mr. Kvesitadze participated in an international conference dedicated to the [founding of the Communist Party of China](#).⁴¹ The event was organized by the Chinese Embassy in Georgia and the media holding "Georgian Times", entitled - "[Let's share positive experiences and create together a better future](#)".⁴² The same year he attended the [2nd international exhibition](#) in Yantai, where he spoke about the Academy's relations with the PRC and technology exchanges.⁴³



Please see more information about the conference at: <https://bit.ly/3LdNiMy>

³⁹ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2022, June 2). *Academician Giorgi Kvesitadze 80*. From [www.science.org.ge](http://science.org.ge): <http://science.org.ge/?p=11030>

⁴⁰ Chinese Academy of Sciences. *Giorgi Kvesitadze, Georgian National Academy of Science*. From https://english.cas.cn/Special_Reports/70_Birthday_Wishes/201911/t20191101_222311.shtml

⁴¹ Ivaniadze, M. (2021, June). *China's Activities in the South Caucasus*. From www.gfsis.org.ge: <https://gfsis.org.ge/publications/view/3000>

⁴² GTimes. (2021, June 08). *The conference will be held on the theme "Let's share positive experiences with each other and create a better future together"*. From www.geotimes.com.ge: https://geotimes.com.ge/index.php?m=5&news_id=95615

⁴³ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2021). *Annual Report 2021*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ang2021.pdf>

But from where does Giorgi Kvesitadze have such close ties with the PRC? In his biography, we read that since 2018, Mr. Kvesitadze has been an honorary professor of the Shandong University of Technology. Moreover, in 2017, he was awarded the Quli Friendship Award by the People's Government of Shandong Province. This is the province with which the Georgian National Academy of Sciences has established special ties and has signed various cooperation memorandums. Mr. Kvesitadze also gives speeches and interviews with [various Chinese tv broadcasters](#) in China.⁴⁴

Academician (with a strong emphasis on agro, bio, nano and information technologies in the Agrarian sector) [Avtandil Korakhashvili's name](#)⁴⁵ is also bound to the development of Sino-Georgian scientific relations. He actively [cooperates on behalf of the Academy](#) with the People's Republic of China Yantai High-Tech Utilization Technopark, giving consultations on the modern problems of cultivating crops and their solutions.⁴⁶ Because of that, from 2018 to 2020, [he was invited multiple times to the aforementioned technological center](#) for a period of 1 month. Furthermore, it was Mr. Korakhashvili who represented the Georgian Academy in the celebration dedicated to the CCP's 100th anniversary. His welcome speech was broadcasted on [China Central Television](#) with subtitles in Chinese and English.⁴⁷



⁴⁴ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Giorgi Kvesitadze CV*. From <http://science.org.ge/wp-content/cv/კვეციტაძე%20გიორგი.pdf>

⁴⁵ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Avtandil Korakhashvili CV*. From <http://science.org.ge/?team=avtandil-korakhashvili&lang=en>

⁴⁶ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2021, February 1). *"Silk Road" High and New Technologies Utilization Zone*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=8552](http://science.org.ge/?p=8552)

⁴⁷ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2021, June 21). *Participation of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?p=9169](http://science.org.ge/?p=9169)

In 2015, while serving as a Deputy Director of the Georgian Agricultural Research Center, Mr. Korakhashvili held meetings with the representatives of the Chinese Embassy in Georgia and the Chinese government largely.⁴⁸ In 2016, Mr. Korakhashvili participated in the international forum organized in the Hunan province of China, made a presentation on agricultural nanotechnologies, and provided expert consultations to local scientists and commercial structures.⁴⁹ He has also been a visiting professor at Shandong and Ludong Universities. Avtandil Korakhashvili gave a course of lectures on bioremediation technologies and various topics of food safety at both universities mentioned above. In 2020-2021, he also co-authored the article “The Case of Georgian National Plant Germplasm Exchange with East China’s Shandong Province”.⁵⁰

Unitracker lists Shandong University in a high-security risk category since the latter is famous for research and production of weapons and defense technology and cooperates with the defense industry agency SASTIND.⁵¹ It also established a national defense research institute and five defense labs. As for Ludong University, it has recently come under the attention of the international press due to the expelling of the MA student, Sun Jian. The latter has been very active on social media platforms, protesting the university’s covid-19 response policies, resulting in his dismissal.⁵² The security bureau warned and later detained him while boycotting with placards in front of the university. As the case went viral, the “Scholars At Risk” Academic Freedom Monitoring Project got concerned and interested in the rights of the freedom of expression of scholars, students and academic staff at Ludong University. They claim that “the expulsion of a student for peaceful expressive activity undermines academic freedom and democratic society generally”.⁵³

Academician **Bezhan Chankvetadze** (with a strong focus on separation methods (liquid chromatography, nano chromatography, capillary electrophoresis, capillary electrochromatography), chiral detection and its mechanisms, chiral analysis, pharmaceutical and biomedical analysis) New high-tech materials.⁵⁴ – In 2019, he was elected as an honorary professor of Xi’an Jiaotong University (China).⁶ According to

⁴⁸ Ministry of Commerce PRC. (2015, April 6). *Liu Bo, Commercial Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Georgia, met with Kolesaridze, First Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Georgia*. From [www.ge.mofcom.gov.cn: http://ge.mofcom.gov.cn/article/c/201504/20150400933630.shtml](http://ge.mofcom.gov.cn/article/c/201504/20150400933630.shtml)

⁴⁹ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2016). *Annual Report 2016*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2016.pdf](http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2016.pdf)

⁵⁰ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2020). *Annual Report 2020*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/სწავლობა-2020.pdf](http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/სწავლობა-2020.pdf)

⁵¹ ASPI. (n.d.). *Shandong University*. From [www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/shandong-university/](https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/shandong-university/)

⁵² AsiaNewsDay. (2022, April 15). *Growing defiance of Covid-19 curbs in China brings wave of arrests*. From [www.asianewsday.com: https://www.asianewsday.com/growing-defiance-of-covid-19-curbs-in-china-brings-wave-of-arrests/](https://www.asianewsday.com/growing-defiance-of-covid-19-curbs-in-china-brings-wave-of-arrests/)

⁵³ Scholars At Risk Network. (2022, March 31). *Protecting scholars and the freedom to think, question, and share ideas*. From [www.scholarsatrisk.org: https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2022-03-31-ludong-university/](https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2022-03-31-ludong-university/)

⁵⁴ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Bezhan Chankvetadze CV*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?team=ბეჰან-ჭანკვეთაძე](http://science.org.ge/?team=ბეჰან-ჭანკვეთაძე)

Unitracker, this university operates three major defense labs and partners with the People's Liberation Army since 2017. Xi'an University is suspected of being involved in cyber espionage. Therefore, [it carries high-security risks and secret security credentials](#).⁵⁵ Also, in 2019, Mr. Chankvetadze participated in a Research Seminar, "[Recent Advances in Enantioselective Capillary Electrophoresis](#)," at Jilin University (JLU), Guangzhou, China.⁶ The latter is designated a very high-security risk due to its association with China's nuclear weapons program. JLU holds [secret-level security credentials](#) and contributes to classified weapons and defense technology projects.⁵⁶ Earlier in 2016, Mr. Chankvetadze took part in [international conferences and presented the following reports](#):

- "New advances in drug enantiomer separation" (27th International Symposium on Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Analysis, Guangzhou, China);
- "New Trends in Separation of Enantiomeric Mixtures by High-Performance Liquid Chromatography" (Tianjin Academy of Agriculture, Tianjin, China);
- "New Trends in Separation of Enantiomeric Mixtures by High-Performance Liquid Chromatography" (University of Macao, Macao, China).⁴⁹

In the past few years, other distinguished scientists/experts and members of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences have notably integrated with Chinese academic and scientific entities. This is evidenced by the scholarly works, books, and articles created by Georgian scientists, both independently as well as jointly with their Chinese counterparts. Together with creating intellectual property, scholars from the Georgian Academy pay visits to the PRC and participate in various events. Here is a list of Georgian Academicians, their activities, and publications produced and coordinated under the Sino-Georgian Scientific cooperation:

- **Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili** (with a [strong focus on](#) highland vegetation, biodiversity, ecology, and geography)⁵⁷ – In 2019, he delivered a report: "[Vegetation diversity of Georgia](#)" (at the Kunming Institute of Botany, Yunnan Province, China, and participated in a scientific expedition to the highlands of Yunnan Province);⁶
- **Giorgi Japaridze** (with a [strong focus on](#) the theory of strongly correlated quantum systems with low spatial dimension)⁵⁸ – In 2019, He was [sent to the Institute of Physics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences](#) to prepare a memorandum of cooperation. While in Beijing, Mr. Japaridze conducted two seminars: one at the Institute of Physics of the Chinese Academy and the other at the Beijing Computing Science Research Center.⁶

⁵⁵ ASPI. (n.d.). *Xi'an Jiaotong University*. From www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: <https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/xian-jiaotong-university/>

⁵⁶ ASPI. (n.d.). *Jilin University*. From www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: <https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/jilin-university/>

⁵⁷ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili CV*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/?team=გიორგი-ნახუცრიშვილი>

⁵⁸ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Giorgi Japaridze CV*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/?team=გიორგი-ჯაფარიძე>

- **Tamaz Shilakadze** (with a strong focus on studying the problems of improving and developing road transport systems)⁵⁹ – In 2019, he was on a business trip with the Academy's delegation to participate in an international conference in Guangzhou province, China. At the conference, he delivered a report, "Problems of road transport systems in mining conditions".⁶

- **Guram Aleksidze** (with a primary focus on agriculture) – In 2018, on behalf of the Academy, he attended the meeting "Invasive species and the fight against them in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus" organized by British organization CABI in Beijing, China. During the meeting, ways of further communication with the China Plant Protection Institute and CABI were established. Mr. Aleksidze also cooperated with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences.⁸

- **Aleksandre Meskhi** (since 1997, a scholarship holder of the National Academy of Sciences of Georgia with a focus on mathematics)⁶⁰ – In 2019, he published a joint research paper with professor Qingying Shue of Beijing Normal University⁶ (The university carries low-security risks)⁶¹. Earlier in 2018, he visited the School of Mathematical Sciences of Beijing Normal University. With Prof. Shue, he started the investigation of Feffermanstein-type inequalities.⁸

- **Vladimer Papava** (with a strong focus on the economy) – He is one of the co-authors of the article „China-Georgia Economic Relations in the Context of the Belt and Road Initiative” published by the Georgian National Academy of Sciences in 2018.⁶² The paper reviews the China-Georgia economic relations and their activation, facilitated by the Belt and Road Initiative.⁸ Earlier in 2017, his research "Belt and Road Initiative: Implications for Georgia and China-Georgia Economic Relations" was published by China International Studies.⁶³

- **Giorgi Tavadze** (with the main focus on metallurgy) – In 2016, he co-authored the book "Preparation of advanced materials by self-propagating high-temperature synthesis" published by Huazhong University of Science and Technology⁴⁹ (designated a very high-security risk), Wuhan, China.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Tamaz Shilakadze CV*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/?team=თამაზ-შილაკაძე](http://science.org.ge/?team=თამაზ-შილაკაძე)

⁶⁰ National Library of the Parliament of Georgia. (n.d.). *Alexandre Meskhi*. From [www.nplg.gov.ge: http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00016841/](http://www.nplg.gov.ge/bios/ka/00016841/)

⁶¹ ASPI. (n.d.). *Beijing Normal University*. From [www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/beijing-normal-university/](https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/beijing-normal-university/)

⁶² Charaia, V., Papava, V., & Wang, F. (2018). *China-Georgia Economic Relations in the Context of the Belt and Road Initiative*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/bnas/t12-n1/25_Charaiia.pdf](http://science.org.ge/bnas/t12-n1/25_Charaiia.pdf)

⁶³ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (2017). *Annual Report 2017*. From [www.science.org.ge: http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Ang2017.pdf](http://science.org.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Ang2017.pdf)

⁶⁴ ASPI. (n.d.). *Huazhong University of Science and Technology*. From [www.unitracker.aspi.org.au: https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/huazhong-university-of-science-and-technology/](https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/universities/huazhong-university-of-science-and-technology/)

- **Avtandil Silagadze** (with a strong focus on the economy)⁶⁵ – In 2016, he wrote an article, “Aspects of China’s Economic Development,” published by the International Journal Ecoforum. His piece envisages the aspects of China's economic development. He shows PRC to be a unique example of successful economic reforms that have led to rapid economic development and accelerated growth in living standards.⁴⁹

- **Ramaz Shengelia** (with a strong focus on molecular anthropology, culturology)⁶⁶ – In 2017, he participated in various international conferences in China.⁶³

- **David Lortkipanidze** (with a strong focus on anthropology, paleoecology, hominid evolution and archaeology)⁶⁷ – In 2017, he presented a paper at a workshop organized by the Templeton Foundation and the Stone Age Institute in China.⁶³

To what extent are Georgian researchers protected from becoming a tool in the CCP toolkit for accomplishing its malign foreign policy incentives? External experience shows us that even leading democracies can barely ensure the safety of their intellectual capital. Under the TTP mentioned above, the CCP has aggressively recruited foreign scholars to steal innovation and technology.⁶⁸ A Harvard professor and a famous chemist, Charles Lieber, fall under the category of foreign scientists recruited by the Chinese Communist Party. Mr. Lieber was accused of hiding his affiliation with the Wuhan University of Technology,⁶⁹ his participation in the TTP, and his generous income from the Chinese university.⁷⁰ The US Department of Justice claims that dozens of other scientists, similar to Mr. Lieber, have been attracted to the lavish Chinese funds.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Australian Sandia National Laboratories recorded 16.2 percent of scientific papers co-authored by Chinese and Australian scientists.¹⁵ Their research collaborations enable the CCP to gain access to critical technology applications that later can be used for military means. Accordingly, we cannot exclude that within the framework of joint or individual research, Georgian experts knowingly or unknowingly can be involved in the CCP’s wide range of machinations.

⁶⁵ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Avtandil Silagadze CV*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/?team=ავთანდილ-სილაგაძე>

⁶⁶ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *Ramaz Shengelia CV*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/?team=ramaz-shengelia&lang=en>

⁶⁷ The Georgian National Academy of Sciences. (n.d.). *David Lortkipanidze CV*. From www.science.org.ge: <http://science.org.ge/?team=დავით-ლორთქიპანიძე>

⁶⁸ NORMILE, D. (2022, January 20). *China aggressively recruited foreign scientists. Now, it avoids talking about those programs*. From www.science.org: <https://bit.ly/3YBQLHF>

⁶⁹ U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts. (2021, December 21). *Harvard University Professor Convicted of Making False Statements and Tax Offenses*. From www.justice.gov: <http://bit.ly/3yq663t>

⁷⁰ Barry, E., & Kolata, G. (2020, February 7). *China’s Lavish Funds Lured U.S. Scientists. What Did It Get in Return?* From www.nytimes.com: <http://bit.ly/424TIDF>

CONCLUSION

The memorandums of cooperation and the research and activities carried out within the partnership framework discussed above are based on the official information derived from the Georgian National Academy of Sciences' official website and private correspondence. Considering the increased Sino-Georgian cooperation in science since 2016, a logical question arises regarding how much the Georgian side has understood the national security perils that Chinese state entities carry. What we have seen so far from this cooperation is that two parties are actively developing connections with universities and university-associated research centers that carry high-security risks. In addition, joint research and exchange programs, as well as scholarships, are encouraged by both sides. The Georgian staff of the Academy is actively involved in Chinese activities, conferences, and lectures and co-authors various publications with Chinese scholars for the Chinese media and academic journals. The Georgian Academy even grants academy membership to Chinese experts and CCP propagandists. We should also note that those Chinese entities cooperating with the Georgian side are directly or indirectly connected to the Chinese Communist Party serving its foreign political and economic goals, which does not complement Georgia's national interests. However, the Georgian Academy of Sciences did not say a single word about the existing security risks. Thus, up to now, they have developed no deterrent policies to ensure the safety of their research data and the Georgian academicians.

Meanwhile, democratic countries have raised concerns about intellectual property theft, censorship, and the potential for the Chinese government to manipulate research results to further its own political or economic incentives. Based on foreign examples, we can deduce that the growing reliance on Chinese funding and technology for its scientific initiatives may lead to an over-dependence on China, limiting its scientific independence. Moreover, there may exist fears about protecting scientific innovations and technologies in light of the potential for Chinese companies or institutions to misappropriate these developments. Accordingly, developed democracies have come up with various strategies first to acknowledge the threat, raise awareness and develop effective resilience.

It is true that Georgian science is still in the developing phase and, therefore, is limited in capabilities. However, understanding the problem and taking appropriate measures on a state level should be completed at the growing stage to avoid the hazards already clearly visible in foreign countries.

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ABOUT CIVIC IDEA

Civic Initiative for Democratic and Euro-Atlantic Choice – Civic IDEA is a non-governmental organization based in Georgia, covering global issues.

The mandate of the organization serves the realization of Democratic and Euro-Atlantic choice, institutionalizing it and bringing to every citizen.

Democratic and Euro-Atlantic choice means the formation of free and fair state based on equality, where citizens equipped with the rule of law feel safe and secure.

Civic IDEA has been actively monitoring China's growing influence in Georgia.

Civic IDEA case study Georgia, however, the reports are written with a comparative perspective of similar practices in other countries.

Today, China's activities in Georgia do not pose a direct, visible and immediate threat, but the ignorance of respectable and authoritative organizations, security services of our partner countries, numerous EU studies, recommendations and decisions by the Georgian government is another clear example of the disruption of foreign policy incentives and a vague vision concerning Georgia's long-term success and the development.