Why the Continued Delay in Appointing a NEW US Ambassador for Georgia?

It is all about Iran and holding in abeyance the appointment of a new Ambassador. Until recently absent from the news, this is however an issue that should have received much more attention. As one Georgian journalist asked me a few months ago, “why did Trump recall US Ambassador Ian Kelley from Georgia—and what will be Trump’s policy towards Georgia?”

Let’s first take a walk back, a bit of history. Firstly, one only needs to look at the CV of Richard Miles and how he was in Serbia before being posted to Georgia prior to the 2003 Rose Revolution. Another US Ambassador to Georgia, Ian Kelly, for instance, had proved to be no friend of Georgia.

At such time as an Ambassador is appointed, especially a high-profile name, the writing will be on the wall. It will be apparent as to what the next moves shall be. Earlier candidates proved their too close for comfort relations with the previous regime of Mikheil Saakashvili.

Basically the pool of untrained State Department career diplomats is limited. Ian Kelly was personally chosen by Obama and thus understandably he had no political future with Trump. Personal matters apart, Trump also knows of the cozy relations various US Ambassadors to Georgia have with former FBI Director Robert Muller.

Muller was also a part of a clear up team that visited Georgia several times during Saakashvili’s tenure, and that was even before that 2008 Georgian-Russian war. Many of the prepositioned weapons that the US had stored in Georgia for use against Iran had disappeared, even before the conflict started. Naturally the Georgian government at the time claimed that the weapons had been taken as spoils of war by the Russians.

Incidently some of the FBI directors visits were about the diversion of weapons for profit and using the war over
South Ossetia to cover a multitude of sins, and to help dearly departed John McCain in his 2008 failed presidential race.

It is unfortunate that Robert Mueller continues to support what is left of the United National Movement UNM, the former party of former president Mikheil Saakashvili and the propagate the agenda of the Obama and crooked Hillary administration.

But also the links with Mueller and so many others with Georgian links, especially former US Ambassadors: Richard Miles, John Bass, John Tefft, and Richard Norland). They are all in reserve for the next move. All with less than pristine track records and multi-tasking several agendas at the same time, often linked with Iraq, Syria and Ukraine.

Few in Georgia, as well as in the US, know anything about the closed-door meetings held between Mueller and top members of the Saakashvili government. The former FBI Director arrival to Georgia was only reported locally, and by some think thanks—not getting the attention it deserved in the MSM.

This is especially worrying as later visits, after the 2008 Georgian-Russian war discussed topics such as terrorist training camps on Georgia territory and how to distance Georgia from its involvement in arms trafficking. In layman’s terms, basically a cleanup operation to make sure that the US was not implicated as being a state sponsor of terrorism.

“Director Mueller underscored the solid partnership and successful history of cooperation between the FBI and Georgian law enforcement and received assurances that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice will remain strong partners of the FBI in the future,” the US embassy reported.

It is interesting that this link is no longer working. Details of these meetings, other than what was officially shared, were not covered by the international media in detail. However, all that is well documented by insiders.

Let us not forget that Trump’s enemies include members of the former US government and the United National Party, UNM. They will try to spoil relations for their own self-interests. They are not doing it out of ideology but because their own survival depends on it - as together they are implicated in many of the crimes of the former Georgian government.

**Beware of Shadows**

The only way the UNM, no matter by what name it calls itself now, can survive is by detaching itself completely from Saakashvili and his activities. It must also purge all criminals associated with it, and put all of Saakashvili’s old cohorts out to grass permanently and soon. But there is no profit in that!

Most of them are still in Georgia under the guise of NGOs and academic exchanges, working often as non-official contacts. This is not by happenstance, as now the bigger prize is in laying the groundwork for what will happen in Iran next, and to pick up on previously laid plans for using Georgia as a forward operating base.

Syria and the support provided by Russia, not to mention, the complications of Turkey over being too involved in supporting Freedom Fighters in Syria complicated matters—and all the while the oil smuggling business was being coordinated from Odessa.

Nothing is what it seems to be, and only now, since the last six months, one can see the true intentions, with a crackdown on Iranians and easy to get for property and business investments, 35,000 USD up to the current 100,000 dollars residency permits.

It is the US that has insisted on putting a plug into the leaking dam of money-laundering that Georgia specializes in, at least in its region. It has developed a regional competitive advantage in shady banking operations.

Why is it that only now the country and its financial monitoring services, are beginning to act responsibly and constructively, and work WITH the new ruling party, [supposedly] to regain the trust of the electorate and clear up its financial services? This is no coincidence. It is part of the plan: to soften up the Iranian government for the next major move—and it will be more than just sanctions.

Nothing has changed in the US policy, and it is just a matter of time as to when the decision is made to follow through with the planned military action. Drone bases are constructed on Georgian territory, and military advisors are already well embedded. The main stumbling block is the current Georgian Dream Party that is trying to find a balance.
However, UNM’s Plan, no matter what they claim otherwise, is still to bully and coerce its way back into power by bringing down the elected government by all means necessary.

The Georgian Dream has stolen the middle ground quite effectively, and is now seen as a pro-Western party, although the UNM still tries to convince the world it isn’t. That is why Saakashvili’s wife is now running for political office in West Georgia, and it is not hard to imagine who is standing behind her.

**Policy is on the level**

In terms of Trump’s policy towards Georgia, it is one in abeyance, and related to Iran and Israel. The political situation in the US has delayed plans, and Israeli elections and political corruption allegations have put things on hold.

Thus, Trump does not really have any policy so far, and perhaps that is the best policy, at least for now. However, I am somewhat afraid knowing about his ability to find common grounds with Putin, and the fact that he has many enemies including many former US Ambassadors. They will try to portray him as idolizing Putin’s policies and being in cohorts with Russia.

Much of Trump’s short term policy toward Georgia will be based on how Georgia acts in terms of the efforts by Kiev to ramp up the war in east Ukraine. It will be one of reaction rather than something carefully thought out. What is in place, and has been in place for nearly 10 years is still on the agenda. It is highly likely action will be planned in Georgia at the same time as one in East Ukraine to try to politically and militarily bog down the Russians with two fires to put out.

Let’s not forget Georgia’s covert involvement as illegal Georgian fighters were provided by Georgian intelligence. Such actions will not be well accepted when the details are fully revealed between Putin and Trump.

It is understood that anything discussed between Putin and Trump over Georgia will bring few benefits to Georgia. What is bound to happen, the process is already underway, as to the end game over Iran. Georgia may find itself caught between two fires, and it serves as a no man’s land between the competing interests of the United States and the Russian Federation.

It kind of reminds me of the famous World War II movie Casablanca, where an exiled American and former freedom fighter, Rick, runs the most popular nightclub in town. His bar is the meeting place for spies and all kinds of shady characters. The same can be said of Georgia, here is where competing interests meet and act as if they are the best of friends. However, that is a far cry from the truth.

In the end, Trump will prove as the loyal but still corrupt Frenchman, by killing the Nazi Major Strasser—which will symbolize what is left of the National Party in Georgia, Saakashvili’s corrupted and murderous regime.

However, there are many Nazi Majors here, including such as those involved with Admiral David Shimp. Shimp is some kind of a Professor of Government and Public Policy at Caucasus University. Here it is worth nothing who is going to become the next dean of Caucasus University: Dimitri Shashkin.

Admiral Shimp is also the president of Anderson Consulting, a security firm that many in the intelligence community, including myself, claim is a CIA front company. It were him and people around him and also various people from the former US State Department, who were providing the Command & Control in the failed coup attempt in Georgia to reseat Saakashvili..

One should take notice here a direct connection and not-too--hidden link with various Georgian ports and arms shipments, and this is linked directly to the conflicts in Ukraine and the previous war in Syria.

**Petty Side Plots**

Many in Georgia are asking whether Saakashvili will succeed in regaining power. The problem with that proposition is the UNM has split into the “European Georgia” party under Giga Bokeria and various other old faces.

The real question that should be asked is whether Saakashvili ever lost power? It is easy to see that many former members of the UNM are in government, the courts, and even regional and local government. The new government is infected with a disease that will make the Georgian people suffer for many years to come.

There is no such thing as a multifaceted – multi-party democracy in Georgia, as they are all in bed together. Just look
back at those in the party, and how when Georgian Dream first came to power they ran like rats from Georgia: Zurab Adeishvili, Murtaz Zodelava, Bacho Akhalaia, Data Akhalaia, Megis Kardava, and Dimitri Shashkin. Some of them came back and some cannot be found.

Unfortunately, some of these felons had diplomatic and foreign passports, which helped them avoid the long arm of the law and kept them out of jail. Gigi Ugulava was released from jail on the request U.S. Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC), as he is needed to help cover up the connection between them and illegal deals in Georgia, including the plot a few years ago to overthrow the Georgian government.

These Senators have been actively involved in international arms trafficking, as Jeffrey Silverman, Bureau Chief for Veterans Today, a journal of retired and active member of the intelligence community has demonstrated on many occasions. He and others have provided the documentation of various deals to the Georgian prosecutor’s office.

The UNM was a mafia organization that was top down in design. People now have greater political and economic freedom but there are few opportunities to use it as the model of government is too centralized and top-down—and that fits America’s agenda.

Politicians in Georgia are far from the people and problems they claim to be representing, they are not there for public service but only to make good for themselves, e.g., “to make hay whilst the sun shines.”

No-one yet seems able or willing to say it, but the Georgian Dream Party would have done considerably better, and fulfilled more of their promises during the past four years, if they had not also been battling against the anti-state, undermining tactics of the UNM and their foreign partners, for whom regime change and revolution are a way of life, regardless of what that means for the citizens of Georgia.

These are the people who can easily adapt to all political movements, changing political winds, especially if they have a financial interest. Georgia is a small country and its best minds have left the country or died off.

I hate to say this but “there is not much in terms of “human resources” to choose from to fill key positions. You can be overqualified and highly professional in Georgia and still you will never get appointed to a high position, or even find a normal job. Nobody here seems to want educated and skilled people. That is just the cultural reality: all depends on who you are related to, and if your politics are right, i.e., tribes and bribes.

In order to take over a country you need to do several things: take control of the media, dumb down the education, keep the new generations from developing critical thinking skills and then destroy the culture, and that includes the main religion. And that's exactly what has been happening in Georgia.

All this is being done in Georgia—and for what purpose? The lineup of possible human resources for the next moves in Georgia and the region is especially revealing. Too many things, with potential geopolitical implications are happening at once—and based on past experience, there is an end game in mind—sooner than later.

Henry Kamens, columnist, expert on Central Asia and Caucasus, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”. 