Ilya Eloshvili: "Green Alternative" always Opposes the Initiatives, which are Important for the Country

An interview with the Deputy Minister of Energy Ilya Eloshvili

- Speaking about "KhudonHPP", "Green Alternative" states that Khaishi residents have their demands and until they are not satisfied, they will not take part in the discussions. How the first public discussion of the project was held and what is the use of the project?

- "The Green Alternative" belongs to a radical wing of the NGOs. It always opposes the initiatives which are very important for the country. This meeting was very important. It’s the first time, when an investor came openly and was publicly introduced to the population. Of course, this is an important fact. As for the fact that people have certain requirements, it is natural. These people have been living in uncertainty for 30 years. They wonder what fate awaits them. Now the main is a contractor to carry out the resettlement plan in accordance with the standards of the World Bank and offer a compensation in accordance with the international standards.

- Will the scale of the project be reduced?

- We must be sure that the size of the dam, an alternative and similar issues are decided by experts. The approach is as follows: we provide the most optimal variant, where our potential will be lost less. We're doing it for future generations. That’s why we do not have the right to choose the alternative that would eliminate the possibility to use Enguri potential in full. We do not have a lot of potential, if we want economic development, and if we want to move forward as a state, this potential should be used.

DAM’S SIZE IS THE MOST OPTIMAL VARIANT.

This project is of vital importance for the state. We’ll get additional 450 million kilowatt / hours in the winter period as a result of the implementation of this project. Accordingly, it is 15 - 20 percent of the total import. This is a very large figure. This will save for the state the cost that is paid today to Russia. Imagine we have to pay 50 million each year. In addition, each year an investor will leave 20 million to Svaneti. Just imagine, this is a great figure for Svaneti. In addition, he will pay taxes, it will be exported to Turkey and so on. Consequently, we want a dialogue with the people.

- They appeal to the fact that there was talk before election that large power plants would not be built. In particular, in "Khudon HPP" case, there were promises that the project will be implemented considering the interests of the population. Has the Energy Ministry revised the policy?

- Of course, the interests of the population will be considered. "Green Alternative" attended a public consultation, his representative acted very irritable. This organization was in the group that developed the amendments to the project. All non-governmental organizations were involved, and we are grateful...
for that. As for the interests of these people, their interests will be maximally taken into account, Prime Minister says.

The fact is that this company is registered in offshore zone and has not any experience in the implementation of large projects.

- The company has already spent 28 million USD in research and each year pays 600 000 USD for the land to the local budget. We extended a term for the company to ensure that all researches are completed.

- For how long was a term extended?

- On March 1, 2014 they must obtain a construction permit. Until now, they should complete the road and accommodation plan, as well as negotiations with the local population.