



## Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Visits Georgia



From left to right: Parliamentary speaker Davit Usupashvili; Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople; President Saakashvili and Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church Ilia II at an official dinner in the presidential palace, January 10. Photo: President's administration.

### January 11, 2013

Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I visits Tbilisi on the occasion of 80th birthday of the Georgian Orthodox Church leader, Patriarch Ilia II, and of 35th anniversary of the Georgian Patriarch's enthronement.

Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarch Irinej and interim leader of Bulgarian Orthodox Church Metropolitan Cyril of Varna and Veliki Preslav are also in Georgia.

President Saakashvili received leaders of Orthodox Churches on January 10. He said that Patriarch Ilia II's jubilee was a "celebration" for whole Georgia.

Parliamentary Chairman Davit Usupashvili was also present whom President Saakashvili thanked for "his contribution to organize all these events with all of us."

Patriarch Bartholomew I is expected to meet PM Bidzina Ivanishvili on January 11, according to the Georgian Patriarchate.

Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople is viewed as spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, but he has no jurisdiction over other autocephalous (independent) Orthodox Churches, including the one in Georgian.

*Source:* [Civil.ge](http://Civil.ge)