

December 9, 2021

To:

**Charles Michel, President, European Council**

**Joseph Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**

**Oliver Varhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement**

Excellences,

In light of the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit, planned on December 15, 2021, in Brussels, representatives of the opposition parties in Georgia, signatories of the political agreement, negotiated with the mediation efforts initiated by President Michel, would like to share with you our concerns regarding the recent political developments in our country.

1. On July 29 the Chairman of the Georgian Dream party, Mr. Irakli Kobakhidze has declared withdrawal from the agreement signed on April 19, 2021, after a long process of negotiations stirred by a special envoy of President Michel, Ambassador Christian Danielson. The stated reason for the withdrawal was a refusal of the United National Movement to sign the agreement. Subsequent change of the UNM's position and the decision to sign the agreement, on September 1, 2021, has not resulted in reciprocity on part of the Georgian government. It considers the agreement annulled to this day.
2. Before declaring the agreement as null and void, the GD has undermined the agreement by taking actions, which were contrary both, to the spirit and letter of the agreement. Continuing judicial appointments, stalling reforms of the judiciary, incomplete implementation of the electoral reforms, and selective reading of the agreement on amnesty law, which was meant to end the politically motivated justice concerning the violent break-up of the demonstration on June 20, 2019-are just a few of examples of this.
3. Criminal prosecutions against several opposition leaders, including the chairman of the UNM, Nick Melia, representatives of the political party 'Lelo'-Chairman, Mamuka Khazaradze, and Secretary-General, Badri Japaridze, continue to this day.
4. Due to the lack of progress on judiciary reforms Georgia has lost the EU's macro-financial assistance package year marked for 2021. Defying the EU's intentions, the Georgian Dream government, to avoid the public reprimand for lack of progress on reforms, has declared it was the government's decision to decline this assistance package.
5. The rhetoric of the official representatives of the government regarding the criticism voiced by the European friends of Georgia and European officials has become increasingly aggressive. They are often reminded by the GD representatives that Georgia is a 'sovereign nation'-in a language reminiscent of Russia's doctrine of 'sovereign democracy.'



Iago Khvichia, MP, Political Party 'Girchi'

6. In November of this year, the Ministry of Justice has refused to grant access to prison to MEP Ana Fotyga and her colleague from the Lithuanian Sejima, Mr. Raimondas Lopota. Their goal was to assess the conditions of imprisonment of the former president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, during his hunger strike in Gldani prison. While this is the discretionary right of the government, Ms. Fotyga has visited Georgian prisons on several occasions over the years to meet with various politicians serving their sentences under the GD government. This was the first case of refusal. This is particularly worrying since the public defender of Georgia has stated that placement of Saakashvili in the Gldani prison facility violated the obligation of the state to respect human dignity and Amnesty International issued a statement claiming that the case is 'political revenge.'
  
7. Constitutional reform, a key point of the April 19 Agreement, has been stalled. In an unprecedented example of political consensus both, the governing party and opposition endorsed the constitutional changes in September with the first reading of the bill in the Parliament. Now the GD has reopened the discussion about the possible changes in the adopted provisions. Revising the content of the constitutional amendments will be another significant step back for Georgia and might ensue another political crisis.

We strongly believe that these decisions of the Georgian Dream government bring significant harm to the EU-Georgia bilateral relations. They create unsurmountable obstacles for our progress towards the goal of European integration and as such, undermine the historical choice of the Georgian people-solidifying our nation's European perspective.

With this in mind, we hope that the European Union will use the upcoming EAP Summit as an opportunity to remind the Georgian government of the obligations undertaken towards the European Union. Application of the principle of conditionality, for the assistance provided to the country, as long as the Georgian Dream continues running its government, is strongly mandated. This is the only way forward to secure Georgia's democratic future and return our country to the foreign policy choice, endorsed by the Georgian voters.

Khatia Dekanoidze, MP, Chair, UNM Faction

Badri Japaridze, MP, Chair-Lelo Political Group

Zurab Girchi Japaridze, Chair, Girchi-More Freedom Party

Salome Samadashvili, MP, Former Head of Georgia's Mission to the EU

Khatuna Samnidze, MP, Chair, Republican Party

Grigol Vashadze, MP, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs

Giorgi Vashadze, MP, Chair, Party Strategy Agmashenebeli

Iago Khvichia, MP, Political Party 'Girchi'

A collection of handwritten signatures in blue ink, positioned to the right of the names of the signatories. The signatures vary in style and length, with some being quite large and sweeping, while others are more compact. The names listed on the left are: Khatia Dekanoidze, Badri Japaridze, Zurab Girchi Japaridze, Salome Samadashvili, Khatuna Samnidze, Grigol Vashadze, Giorgi Vashadze, and Iago Khvichia.