



EP should consent to EU-Georgia association deal, says Foreign Affairs Committee

[17-11-2014 - 17:50]

The European Parliament should grant its consent to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement in December, the Foreign Affairs Committee said in a vote on Monday. The deal, signed on 27 June 2014, aims to establish deep political association and economic integration between the EU and Georgia, leading to the progressive opening up of their markets. It includes a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement.

The committee recommended by 48 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions, that Parliament as a whole give its green light to the deal in its vote in December.

The deal is the third in the new generation of association agreements that the European Parliament is asked to ratify, after those with Ukraine and Moldova.

Strengthening democratic institutions

In an accompanying draft resolution, steered in Parliament by Andrejs Mamikins (S&D, LV) and backed by 49 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions, the committee welcomes recent judicial reforms designed to strengthen Georgia's democratic institutions. It also underlines that all three branches of power must be effectively separated and all prosecutions be transparent, proportionate and free from political motivation. MEPs point to the strong support in Georgian society for further democratisation of the country.

National reconciliation

The Georgian authorities must seek to bring about national reconciliation, MEPs add, warning against any misuse of judicial system to obstruct political opponents, which they fear could undermine Georgia's efforts to boost its democracy. The text urges all political forces in the country to avoid instrumentalising the justice system and making accusations of "selective justice" in the future, while keeping up to the fight against corruption and misuse of public office.

Abkhazia and South Ossetia

The Association Agreement must apply to and benefit the entire internationally recognized territory of Georgia, MEPs say. They also call on the EU to be more active in resolving conflicts and in ensuring that the Geneva talks tasked with monitoring the execution of the August 2008 ceasefire agreement deliver results. The committee also condemns so-called "borderization" i.e. the expansion of the occupied territories to the detriment of Georgia, and other acts that hinder confidence-building.

Relations with Russia

MEPs support Georgia's steps to improve its relations with Russia and calls on Russia to engage constructively in resolving conflicts peacefully. Russia should also fully respect Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and reverse its recognition of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia and put an end to their occupation, MEPs add.

Next steps

The full house will vote in Strasbourg in December on whether to ratify the agreement and on the accompanying non-legislative resolution. Parts of the Agreement, including the

Press release

Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, have been applied provisionally since 1 September 2014. To come into force, the Agreement also needs to be ratified by all the national parliaments of the EU member states.

In the chair: Elmar Brok (EPP, DE)

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