



**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR OF THE DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS
WITH THE SOUTH CAUCASUS, MEP Marina KALJURAND**

**on the political situation in the run-up to the second round of the parliamentary
elections in Georgia**

Brussels, 17 November 2020 - “I wish to recall the European Parliament’s prior assessment, in line with the findings of the international observers and notably the core team of experts and long-term observers deployed by the OSCE/ODIHR, that these elections were competitive, well-administered despite a difficult epidemiological situation and that fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression, were respected overall, notwithstanding some remaining shortcomings that need to be addressed.

All substantiated appeals and complaints that have been lodged with the Election Commission must be addressed in a fair, thorough and rigorous manner, in accordance with the law and the highest democratic standards.

Much to my regret, some opposition parties that are disappointed with the outcome of the first round have announced their intention to boycott the second round of elections and to renounce their seats in the parliament once it is in session. I strongly believe that this deliberate attempt to impede the proper functioning of an institution vital for democracy is unfortunate. I call on all political parties and candidates to participate in the second round of the elections and take up their mandates in the Parliament in order to honour the democratically expressed will of the Georgian citizens.

I wholeheartedly welcome the ongoing dialogue between representatives of the opposition and the authorities under the aegis of the EU and US Ambassadors with a view to defusing tensions. I am deeply convinced that Euro-Atlantic cooperation provides a path to stability and I look forward to further cooperating with the newly elected Parliament of Georgia.”

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