



## Joint statement by:

- the Chair of the Delegation for relations with the South Caucasus, MEP Marina KALJURAND, and
- the European Parliament's Standing Rapporteur on Georgia, MEP Sven MIKSER,

## on the so-called "presidential election" held in Georgia's occupied region of Tskhinvali / South Ossetia

**Brussels, 12 April 2022** - *“The European Union supports unwaveringly Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and calls for a peaceful resolution of the conflict by negotiation and diplomacy, including through the Geneva International Discussions, the activities of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia and the efforts of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia.*

*Against the background of Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war against Ukraine, it is more important than ever to reaffirm these principles that are the backbone of the international security order.*

*Consequently, we do not recognise the legitimacy of the so-called 'presidential election' held on 10 April in Georgia's occupied region of Tskhinvali/South Ossetia.*

*We have also noted with great concern that the de facto incumbent 'President' of the occupied region has threatened to hold a so-called 'referendum' on a possible 'unification' of Ossetia within the Russian Federation after this sham ballot. At the same time, the Kremlin, which is in desperate need of a success story to save face after its military debacle around Kyiv, has alluded that such a 'unification' – tantamount to an outright annexation of a part of Georgia's sovereign territory by Russia – could be indeed envisaged. Needless to say, the European Union will always stick to its principles: the regions of Tskhinvali/South Ossetia and Abkhazia are integral parts of Georgia, and no creeping annexation strategy, sham election or fake referendum will ever change that.*

*We call on the Russian Federation, as the country exercising de facto control over the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions, to put an end to this illegal occupation, to reverse its recognition of the independence of the so-called 'Republics' and to fulfil its obligations under the EU-mediated 2008 ceasefire agreement and its Implementing Measures, including by allowing free access for humanitarian assistance to these regions and by withdrawing its forces to pre-conflict positions.”*

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