



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2025)0019

Further deterioration of the political situation in Georgia

European Parliament resolution of 13 February 2025 on the further deterioration of the political situation in Georgia (2025/2522(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Georgia, in particular that of 28 November 2024 on Georgia's worsening democratic crisis following the recent parliamentary elections and alleged electoral fraud¹,
 - having regard to Georgia's status as an EU candidate country, granted by the European Council at its summit of 14 and 15 December 2023,
 - having regard to Article 78 of the Georgian Constitution, which demands the implementation of all possible measures to guarantee Georgia's complete integration into the EU and NATO,
 - having regard to the final report of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on the parliamentary elections held in Georgia on 26 October 2024,
 - having regard to Rules 136(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the democratic backsliding in Georgia has dramatically accelerated since the parliamentary elections of 26 October 2024, which were deeply flawed and marked by grave irregularities, and failed to meet international democratic standards and Georgia's OSCE commitments; whereas these elections violated the democratic norms and standards set for free and fair elections, failing to reflect the will of the people and rendering the resulting 'parliament', and subsequently the 'president', devoid of any democratic legitimacy; whereas from the very beginning of its activity, the current Georgian parliament has operated as a one-party (Georgian Dream) organ, which is incompatible with the essence of pluralistic parliamentary democracy;
- B. whereas Article 2 of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement² concerns the general principles of the agreement, which include democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms;

¹ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2024)0054.

² OJ L 261, 30.8.2014, p. 4.

- C. whereas Article 78 of the Georgian Constitution states that the constitutional bodies must take all measures within the scope of their competences to ensure the full integration of Georgia into the European Union;
- D. whereas the President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili, publicly condemned the parliamentary elections as rigged, declared that she would not recognise them and called for an international investigation; whereas the current Georgian regime, led by the Georgian Dream party and its founder, Bidzina Ivanishvili, has orchestrated an unconstitutional usurpation of power, systematically dismantling democratic institutions, undermining judicial independence and eroding fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, thereby deepening Georgia's political and constitutional crisis;
- E. whereas Georgia has officially held the status of EU candidate country since December 2023; whereas on 28 November 2024, Irakli Kobakhidze announced that Georgia would delay initiating accession talks with the EU and reject its financial assistance until the end of 2028, disregarding the country's constitutional commitment to European integration and effectively undermining Georgia's sovereign Euro-Atlantic aspirations;
- F. whereas on 28 November 2024, peaceful mass anti-government protests began across the country, demanding new, free and fair elections, an end to political violence and repression, and the return of the country to its European path; whereas the protests have been taking place without interruption for over 75 days;
- G. whereas on 14 December 2024, the de facto parliament held a 'presidential election' with a single candidate from the Georgian Dream party, former footballer Mikheil Kavelashvili, elected with 224 out of 225 votes cast;
- H. whereas Georgia's self-appointed authorities have plunged the country into a fully fledged constitutional and political crisis, as well as a human rights and democracy crisis; whereas this has been marked by the brutal repression of peaceful protesters, political opponents and media representatives, with judges, prosecutors and police officers actively fabricating politically motivated administrative and criminal charges against protesters, journalists and opposition figures detained during peaceful anti-government demonstrations; whereas, as of December 2024, more than 460 people have been arrested or punished since the protests began, with this number growing by the day;
- I. whereas riot police deliberately lacking force identification numbers have forcefully dispersed protesters with tear gas and water cannons; whereas numerous journalists have reported being targeted and beaten, and having their equipment destroyed and personal items stolen; whereas dozens of protesters have been brutally assaulted, and several hundred people have been arrested; whereas Georgia's Public Defender has revealed that 80 % of those detained reported experiencing violence and inhumane treatment at the hands of law enforcement officers; whereas despite international condemnation, the illegitimate Georgian Government has awarded medals to officials involved in the crackdown;
- J. whereas independent media outlets, including TV Formula, TV Mtavari and TV Pirveli, face severe operational and financial constraints due to the regime's interference, while dozens of media representatives are being subjected to various forms of intense physical

and psychological pressure; whereas numerous violent attacks on journalists have been documented, including the severe beatings of Aleksandre Keshelashvili, Maka Chikhladze and Giorgi Shetsiruli, and the harassment of detained journalist Saba Kevkhishvili; whereas on 12 January 2025, the Georgian authorities arrested journalist Mzia Amaghlobeli, who has been in pre-trial detention since then and is on hunger strike in solidarity with all political prisoners in Georgia; whereas she faces between four and seven years in prison;

- K. whereas, on the night of 14 January 2025, Giorgi Gakharia, opposition leader of the For Georgia party and former Prime Minister, and Zviad Koridze, journalist and Transparency International activist, were physically assaulted by Georgian Dream officials in separate incidents at the same venue in Batumi;
- L. whereas on 2 February 2025, Nika Melia, a leader of the pro-European Akhali party, and Gigi Ugulava, the former mayor of Tbilisi, were arrested during the anti-government protests and subjected to physical violence in detention; whereas on 12 January 2025, Elene Khoshtaria, leader of the Droa political movement, was detained in Batumi;
- M. whereas the de facto Georgian authorities have used disproportionate force and excessive violence against peaceful protesters and resorted to arbitrary mass arrests to thwart dissent; whereas independent human rights organisations have reported the systemic mistreatment of detainees, including torture; whereas to date, not a single law enforcement official involved in the brutal crackdowns, arbitrary arrests and mistreatment has been brought to justice;
- N. whereas the self-appointed authorities introduced new draconian legislation that came into force on 30 December 2024 and amended the Criminal Code, the Code of Administrative Offences and the Law on Assemblies and Manifestations, imposing further arbitrary restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, introducing, among other things, hefty fines for putting up protest slogans and posters, and granting police the power to detain individuals ‘preventively’ for 48 hours on suspicion of planning to violate the rules governing public assembly; whereas on 3 February 2025, the Georgian Dream party unveiled further draft legislation designed to tighten control, ramping up penalties for a variety of offences directly targeting protestors, critics and political dissent, such as harsher punishments for ‘insulting officials’, the criminalisation of road blocks and an increase in the duration of administrative detention from 15 to 60 days;
- O. whereas on 27 January 2025, the Council decided to suspend parts of the EU-Georgia visa facilitation agreement for Georgian diplomats and officials, but failed to impose individual sanctions in response to the continued crackdown; whereas the Hungarian and Slovak Governments have been consistently blocking impactful EU-wide sanctions, preventing the remaining 25 Member States (EU-25) from effectively introducing sanctions against the self-appointed Georgian authorities;
- P. whereas several Member States, including Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Czechia, have imposed bilateral sanctions on some Georgian politicians, judges and other officials responsible for the brutal crackdown on protesters, violations of human rights and abuse of the rule of law; whereas in December 2024, the United States sanctioned Bidzina Ivanishvili, alongside Georgia’s ‘Minister of Internal Affairs’ Vakhtang Gomelauri and

Deputy Head of the Special Tasks Department Mirza Kezevadze, for their involvement in brutal crackdowns on media representatives, opposition figures and protesters; whereas the UK and Ukraine have imposed similar sanctions on high-level Georgian officials; whereas Ivanishvili, through hastily adopted laws tailored to his personal situation, is moving his offshore assets to Georgia in anticipation of further sanctions;

- Q. whereas on 29 January 2025, Georgian Dream announced that it would withdraw its delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) after it demanded new, genuinely democratic parliamentary elections, the release of political prisoners and accountability for perpetrators of violence; whereas UN experts have condemned the pattern of repression and human rights violations in Georgia, while the OSCE has called this suppression a serious breach of the right to freedom of assembly;
 - R. whereas the ruling Georgian Dream party convened the new parliament in violation of the country's constitution, resulting in a boycott of parliament by the opposition; whereas on 5 February 2025, the self-appointed 'parliament' voted to approve the early termination of the mandates of 49 out of 61 members of parliament, representing the Coalition for Change, Strong Georgia and the United National Movement, in order to strip them of their immunity and facilitate their arrest and prosecution; whereas the same 'parliament' established a commission to punish former ruling party United National Movement;
 - S. whereas a growing number of civil servants have been dismissed after speaking out against the halting of Georgia's EU accession process; whereas Georgian Dream has amended laws on public service, simplifying procedures to dismiss public servants, several of whom have been dismissed for participating in protests, in a clear attempt to silence critical voices;
1. Condemns the Georgian Dream 'authorities' and urges them to immediately cease the violent repression of peaceful protesters, political opponents and media representatives; underlines that Georgia's self-appointed authorities are currently violating fundamental freedoms, basic human rights and the core international obligations of the country, thereby undermining decades of democratic reforms driven by the country's political class and civil society; considers Georgia as a state captured by the illegitimate Georgian Dream regime; expresses deep regret over the fact that the ruling Georgian Dream party has abandoned its path towards European integration and NATO membership; recalls that the ongoing democratic backsliding and adoption of anti-democratic laws has effectively suspended Georgia's EU integration process; reiterates its unwavering support for the Georgian people's legitimate European aspirations and their wish to live in a prosperous and democratic country;
 2. Does not recognise the self-proclaimed authorities of the Georgian Dream party established following the rigged election of 26 October 2024, which was neither free nor fair, was held in violation of democratic norms and standards, and did not reflect the will of the people of Georgia; underlines that the extensive electoral fraud has undermined the integrity of the election process, cast doubt on the legitimacy of the result and eroded public trust, both domestically and internationally, in any new government;
 3. Calls for the EU and its Member States, as well as national parliaments and interparliamentary institutions, not to recognise the legitimacy of the Georgian Dream

one-party parliament and their appointed president; calls, therefore, on the international community to join the boycott of the self-proclaimed Georgian authorities;

4. Continues to recognise Salome Zourabichvili as the legitimate President of Georgia and representative of the Georgian people; praises her efforts to peacefully steer the country back towards a democratic and European path of development; calls on the President of the European Council to invite President Zourabichvili to represent Georgia at an upcoming European Council meeting and at the next European Political Community summit;
5. Underlines that the settlement of the current political and constitutional crisis in Georgia can only be achieved by way of new parliamentary elections; demands that new elections take place in Georgia within the next few months in an improved electoral environment, overseen by an independent and impartial election administration and monitored through diligent international observation to guarantee a genuinely fair, free and transparent process; encourages the Member States and EU officials to firmly demand new elections and to make any future engagement explicitly conditional on setting a new date for parliamentary elections and establishing a mechanism to ensure they are free and fair;
6. Calls on the Council and the Member States, particularly the EU-25 on a bilateral and coordinated basis, to impose immediate and targeted personal sanctions on Bidzina Ivanishvili, his family and his companies, and to freeze all his assets within the EU for his role in the deterioration of the political process in Georgia, enabling democratic backsliding and acting against the country's constitutionally declared interests of Euro-Atlantic integration; calls on the French Government to strip Bidzina Ivanishvili of the Legion of Honour and impose individual sanctions on him; welcomes, in this regard, the sanctions imposed bilaterally by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Czechia, as well as those already imposed by the US and the UK;
7. Calls for the EU and its Member States, in particular the EU-25 on a bilateral and coordinated basis, to impose personal sanctions on the officials and political leaders in Georgia responsible for democratic backsliding, electoral fraud, human rights violations and the persecution of political opponents and activists, including Irakli Kobakhidze, Shalva Papuashvili, Vakhtang Gomelauri, Mayor of Tbilisi and Secretary General of the ruling Georgian Dream party Kakha Kaladze, and Chair of the Georgian Dream party Irakli Garibashvili; calls for them to extend these sanctions to judges, including those of the Constitutional Court of Georgia who are passing politically motivated sentences, and representatives of the law enforcement services, as well as to financial enablers tacitly or openly supporting the regime and the owners of regime-aligned media outlets, including TV Imedi, Pos TV and Rustavi 2 TV, for their role in spreading disinformation and seeking to manipulate public discourse in order to sustain the current ruling party's authoritarian rule;
8. Calls on the Council and the Member States to impose sanctions on Bidzina Ivanishvili's network of enablers, elite entourage, corrupt financial operatives, propagandists and those facilitating the repressive state apparatus, including, among others, Ekaterine Khvedelidze, Uta Ivanishvili, Tsotne Ivanishvili, Bera Ivanishvili, Gvantsa Ivanishvili, Alexander Ivanishvili, Shmagi Kobakhidze, Ucha Mamatsashvili, Natia Turnava, Ivane Chkhartishvili, Sulkhan Papashvili, Giorgi Kapanadze, Tornike Rizhvadze, Ilia Tsulaia, Kakha Bekauri, Lasha Natsvlishvili, Vasil Maglaperidze,

Grigol Liluashvili, Mikheil Chinchaladze, Levan Murusidze, Irakli Rukhadze, Tinatin Berdzenishvili, Tamaz Gaiashvili, Anton Obolashvili and Gocha Enukidze;

9. Maintains the view that the measures taken so far by the EU in response to the flagrant democratic backsliding and reneging on previous commitments does not yet fully reflect the severity of the situation in Georgia and the latest developments; welcomes the Council's decision to suspend visa-free travel for Georgian diplomats and officials, but considers it as only a first step, which must be followed by tougher measures; deplores the obstruction by the Hungarian and Slovak Governments of the Council decisions on introducing sanctions against individuals responsible for democratic backsliding in Georgia;
10. Emphasises that respect for fundamental rights is vital to the EU's visa liberalisation benchmarks; reiterates its call on the Commission and the Council to review Georgia's visa-free status, with the possibility of suspension if it is considered that EU standards on democratic governance and freedoms are not being upheld;
11. Strongly condemns the brutal violence and repression used by Georgia's ruling regime against peaceful protesters since 28 November 2024; calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and those detained during the anti-government protests; demands the release of journalist Mzia Amaghlobeli, who has been on hunger strike for over four weeks now because of her unjust detention and risks facing critical, irreversible and life-threatening consequences; denounces the assault and beating of former Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, resulting in his hospitalisation, followed by the arrest on 2 February 2025 of political leaders including Nika Melia and Gigi Ugulava, as a shocking escalation of state-orchestrated violence by Georgian Dream and its allies against peaceful demonstrators and political opponents; reminds of the detention of Elene Khoshtaria on 12 January 2025 in Batumi;
12. Reiterates its solidarity with the people of Georgia and its vibrant civil society in fighting for their legitimate democratic rights and for a European future for their country; urges the Georgian Government to reverse its current political course and return to implementing the will of the Georgian people for continued democratic reforms that would reopen the prospect of future EU membership;
13. Strongly condemns the enactment of draconian legislation that imposes unjustified restrictions on freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, and demands the annulment of such recently adopted repressive legislation; urges the Georgian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all individuals detained for peacefully exercising their fundamental rights to freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, and to ensure prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all allegations of unlawful and disproportionate use of force by the law enforcement agencies; considers that the Georgian justice system has been weaponised to stifle dissent, instil fear and silence free speech;
14. Calls for the 'Georgian authorities' to take immediate action to ensure the safety and freedom of journalists and to investigate all instances of violence and misconduct by law enforcement agencies; emphasises the importance of fostering a democratic environment where media, civil society and the opposition can operate freely without fear of retaliation or censorship;

15. Demands an independent, transparent and impartial investigation into police brutality and the excessive use of force against peaceful demonstrators; calls for those responsible for human rights violations, including law enforcement and government officials ordering acts of repression, to be held fully accountable before the law;
16. Denounces the launch of an investigation by the Prosecutor's Office on 8 February 2025 into non-governmental organisations accused of aggravated sabotage, attempted sabotage and assisting foreign and foreign-controlled organisations in hostile activities aimed at undermining the state interests of Georgia, for which they could receive multiple-year sentences; views this action as further escalation of repression by the regime, misuse of the judicial system and accelerated democratic backsliding;
17. Condemns the broader campaign of attacks by the Georgian authorities vilifying civil society organisations and reputable international donors that support democracy, the rule of law and the protection of human rights in Georgia;
18. Denounces the termination by Georgian Dream of the mandates of 49 opposition members of parliament as a sign of further democratic backsliding, and considers this the latest move in Georgian Dream's attack on political pluralism in the country;
19. Welcomes PACE's decision to challenge the credentials of Georgia's parliamentary delegation due to democratic backsliding and human rights abuses; supports PACE's call for Georgia to immediately initiate an inclusive process involving all political and social actors, including the ruling party, the opposition and civil society, to urgently address the deficiencies and shortcomings noted during the recent parliamentary elections and to create an electoral environment conducive to new, genuinely democratic elections to be announced in the coming months;
20. Notes that Georgia, once a front runner for Euro-Atlantic integration, is undergoing an accelerated process of democratic backsliding, in a seemingly deliberate attempt to demonstrate that the will of the Georgian people no longer determines the country's future, which could result in the country taking the Belarussian path of political development, transitioning from the current authoritarian state to a dictatorial regime;
21. Deplores the decision of Irakli Kobakhidze to suspend accession talks and reject EU funding until the end of 2028; recalls that all polls consistently show the overwhelming support of the Georgian population for a Euro-Atlantic future; expresses strong support for the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the Georgian people;
22. Calls for an immediate and comprehensive audit of EU policy towards Georgia due to the democratic backsliding; calls on the Commission to review the EU-Georgia Association Agreement in the light of the self-declared Georgian authorities' breach of the general principles, as laid down in Article 2, namely respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms; points out that non-fulfilment of obligations may result in the conditional suspension of economic cooperation and privileges afforded by the Agreement;
23. Welcomes the Commission's decision to cease all budgetary support to the Georgian authorities and to suspend the initiation of any future investment projects; encourages the Commission to terminate all financial support for ongoing projects; calls for a moratorium on all investment projects in the field of connectivity; calls on the

Commission to start identifying economic sectors of relevance to the oligarchic interests that support and sustain the current authoritarian rule, with a view to a potential future decision about restrictive measures or economic sanctions; calls on the Commission to start identifying connectivity projects that support and sustain the current authoritarian rule and to consider their suspension until a rerun of the parliamentary elections;

24. Condemns the climate of intimidation and polarisation fuelled by statements by Georgian Government representatives and political leaders, as well as by attacks against political pluralism, including through disturbing cases of intimidation and violence against the Georgian democratic political forces and repeated threats to ban opposition parties, to arrest their leaders and even ordinary supporters, and to silence dissent; underlines that anything but the full restoration of Georgia's democratic standards will entail a further deterioration of EU-Georgia relations, make any move towards EU accession impossible and result in additional sanctions;
25. Calls on the Commission to swiftly redirect the frozen EUR 120 million originally intended as support for the Georgian authorities to enhance the EU's support for Georgia's civil society, in particular the non-governmental sector and independent media, which are increasingly coming under undue pressure from the ruling political party and the authorities, as well as to support programmes supporting democratic resilience and electoral integrity; calls for the EU's funding mechanisms to be adjusted to take into account the needs that arise in a more hostile and anti-democratic environment; highlights the urgency of the need to support civil society in the light of growing repression and the suspension of activities of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and therefore urges the Commission to ramp up support without delay;
26. Expresses deep concern about the increasing Russian influence in the country and about the Georgian Dream government's actions in pursuing a policy of rapprochement and collaboration with Russia, in spite of its creeping occupation of Georgian territory; deplores, in this regard, the growing anti-Western and hostile rhetoric of the Georgian Dream party's representatives towards Georgia's strategic Western partners, including the EU, and its MEPs and officials, and Georgian Dream's promotion of Russian disinformation and manipulation;
27. Strongly reiterates its urgent demand for the immediate release of former President Mikheil Saakashvili on humanitarian grounds, specifically for the purpose of seeking medical treatment abroad; emphasises that the self-appointed authorities bear full and undeniable responsibility for the life, health, safety and well-being of former President Mikheil Saakashvili and must be held fully accountable for any harm that befalls him; calls, furthermore, on the Georgian Dream authorities to ensure that Members of the European Parliament are granted unhindered access to Mikheil Saakashvili;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the self-appointed authorities of Georgia.