



TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2022)0249

Candidate status of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia

European Parliament resolution of 23 June 2022 on the candidate status of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia (2022/2716(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia,
 - having regard to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
 - having regard to the applications for EU membership made by Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 30 May 2022 on Ukraine,
 - having regard to the Versailles Declaration of 10 and 11 March 2022,
 - having regard to the Commission opinions of 17 June 2022 on the applications for EU membership submitted by Ukraine (COM(2022)0407), the Republic of Moldova (COM(2022)0406) and Georgia (COM(2022)0405),
 - having regard to the joint statement of the leaders of its Political Groups addressed to the Heads of State and Government in view of the European Council meeting of 23 and 24 June 2022,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Russian Federation has been carrying out an unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine since 24 February 2022; whereas Ukraine applied for accession to the European Union on 28 February 2022 and the Republic of Moldova and Georgia did so on 3 March 2022;
- B. whereas the applications come against the background of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, which has been carried out on a scale unprecedented in modern European history and has seen the perpetration of war crimes that may amount to genocide against the Ukrainian population, as well as the continued occupation of parts of the territories of Georgia and Moldova; whereas Ukraine is defending the European security order and the

principles on which it was built, such as the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe;

- C. whereas according to Article 49 TEU, ‘any European State which respects the values referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union’;
- D. whereas there is no ‘fast-track’ for EU membership and whereas accession remains a merit-based and structured process which requires the fulfilment of the EU membership criteria and is dependent on the effective implementation of reforms and the transposition of the EU *acquis*;
- E. whereas the Council exceptionally swiftly requested that the Commission submit its opinions on the EU membership applications of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia;
- F. whereas the Versailles Declaration of 10 and 11 March 2022 stated the European Council’s acknowledgement of the European aspirations and the European choice of Ukraine;
- G. whereas the people of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia have for years consistently demonstrated unwavering support for the European course of their countries, embracing European principles and values; whereas similar aspirations to live in a free, sovereign and democratic country are expressed by the majority of the people of Belarus who oppose the Russian-backed regime of Lukashenka;
- H. whereas past developments have shown that non-enlargement has a massive strategic cost and can undermine security and stability on our continent;
- I. whereas the EU’s relations with Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia are based on ambitious association agreements and deep and comprehensive free trade areas (AA/DCFTAs), creating a conducive environment for political association, legislative approximation and economic integration, which are crucial elements of a future accession process; whereas the full implementation of the AA/DCFTAs still needs to be achieved;
- J. whereas Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia all submitted both EU accession questionnaires in record time, demonstrating not only their great commitment to the EU’s values, but also their great ability and will to achieve these objectives;
- K. whereas on 17 June 2022, the Commission published opinions on the three applications, recommending that the Council confirm Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia’s perspectives of becoming Member States of the EU;
- L. whereas in its opinions, the Commission recommended granting Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova candidate status on the understanding that certain reform measures are taken, such as in the areas of the rule of law and the fight against corruption; whereas in the case of Georgia, the Commission recommended granting candidate status once the indicated priorities have been addressed;
- M. whereas the granting of candidate status would send a strong message of hope and solidarity to the citizens of the three countries and show that the European Union is determined to live up to the present challenges and its future vision;

1. Welcomes the membership applications of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia as an expression of the European aspirations of the people and their wish to live peacefully and in safety in free, democratic and prosperous countries that maintain good neighbourly relations with all European countries and engage in ever closer cooperation with EU Member States;
2. Welcomes the Commission's formal recommendation to grant EU candidate status to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova and a European perspective for Georgia;
3. Calls on the Heads of State and Government who will meet as the European Council on 23 and 24 June 2022 to grant EU candidate status to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova without delay, and to grant the same status to Georgia once its government has delivered on the indicated priorities in the Commission's opinion; underlines that the Heads of State and Government must live up to their historical responsibility and give clear political signals;
4. Underscores that the granting of candidate status by the European Union will equate to showing leadership, resolve and vision in today's context of the brutal Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and an attempted redefinition of the geopolitical environment and sends a clear political message that the countries in question have irreversibly chosen a European path, which has been accepted by their European partners, and should not be the subject of interference from any third parties; reiterates that the EU must continue to be a reliable partner and a credible geopolitical actor that lives up to its own principles and values by showing solidarity with those who stand up for the same ideals;
5. Calls on the Member States to muster the political will to re-energise the enlargement process and deliver on their promises through concrete positive steps in the accession processes of countries that seek to join the Union and deserve to be part of the European family; urges, therefore, the EU Heads of State and Government meeting on 23 and 24 June 2022 to green-light the Western Balkans enlargement process, which is currently blocked;
6. Recalls that in order to retain the credibility of the EU enlargement process and unlock its transformative power, the long-standing commitment towards the Western Balkan countries must be maintained and their parallel track needs to continue unaffected with more dynamism on the basis of merit, political alignment, solidarity in international matters and agreed commitments;
7. Underlines that accession to the EU must take place in accordance with Article 49 TEU, based on respect for the relevant procedures and conditional upon the fulfilment of the established criteria, in particular the so-called Copenhagen criteria for EU membership, and remains a merit-based process that requires adoption and implementation of relevant reforms, notably in the areas of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, a market economy and implementation of the EU *acquis*;
8. Invites the authorities of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia to unambiguously demonstrate their political determination to implement the European ambitions of their people by significantly enhancing progress with substantial reforms in order to effectively fulfil the criteria for EU membership as soon as possible;

9. Stresses the need to take advantage of the experiences of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia with the implementation of their respective AA/DCFTAs as a basis for the upcoming accession process, thus allowing the three countries to gradually integrate within the EU single market and enhance sectoral cooperation; calls on the Commission and the Member States to prepare internal structures and provide additional resources, as well as increased technical assistance and political support;
10. Acknowledges that Ukrainians, Moldovans and Georgians have continuously supported a pro-European orientation of their countries and deserve to live in free, democratic and prosperous countries that are proud and committed members of the European family; concludes that the forthcoming European Council can take an important first step towards fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of the people of the three countries;
11. Reiterates the EU's commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia within their internationally recognised borders and supports their efforts to fully enforce those principles; underlines the importance of the unity and solidarity of the Member States in this regard;
12. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to update the Eastern Partnership policy in order to enable it to remain a transformative and meaningful instrument in the current context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, which also threatens the security of Ukraine's neighbouring countries and affects stability in the region as a whole; reiterates the need for regional cooperation between the Eastern Partnership countries;
13. Calls on the Commission and the Council to establish enhanced and structured political dialogue with candidate and potential candidate countries in order to advance further economic integration and legislative harmonisation as well as gradual inclusion in the work and proceedings of the EU institutions, where appropriate;
14. Reiterates its call on the EU institutions to speed up the necessary steps to make EU decision-making more efficient;
15. Reaffirms its commitment to enlargement, to which there is no alternative and which is more than ever a geostrategic investment in a stable, strong and united EU; strongly believes that the prospect of full EU membership for the countries striving to become Member States of the EU is in the Union's own political, economic and security interests;
16. 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, and the presidents, governments and parliaments of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and the Western Balkan countries.