



Joint Statement,

Friends of Georgia, 6 November 2024

ON INTERNATIONAL INQUIRY COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE IRREGULARITIES OF ELECTIONS IN GEORGIA

Standing strongly in solidarity with nations that adhere to the values of democracy, fundamental freedoms and rule of law,

Standing strongly with the Georgian people and their European choice,

Noting with deep regret Georgia's recent democratic backsliding, including the enactment of anti-European legislation limiting the space for independent civil society organizations and human rights,

Reiterating our deepest concern about the fact that Parliamentary elections in Georgia of October 26 were marked with the unprecedented number of incidents and systemic violations which were reported by international observers,

Noting that integrity of elections and upholding the rule of law are an integral part and fundamentals of the European values to which Georgia as an EU candidate country has to demonstrate its commitment,

We demand that Georgian authorities ensure:

- that all allegations of electoral manipulation (including, during the pre-election period), especially with regard to voter intimidation and vote buying must be transparently investigated.
- that, as the allegations at hand are so serious, that only the independent international inquiry can address and investigate these elections and of all reported violations in the pre-electoral period and during the elections;
- making the voting protocols available and publicly transparent, so that each voter can verify if the information on their voting fact, time and place is factually accurate;
- repealing of the legislation that undermines the fundamental rights and freedoms of Georgian citizens and organizations and runs counter to the values and principles upon which the EU is founded.

We call on the European Union and the trans-Atlantic allies to impose sanctions on the officials and political leaders of Georgia, including Bidzina Ivanishvili, who are responsible for violations of the electoral process, including for the use of state institutions and administrative resources throughout the electoral process

We call the freezing of all EU funds engaged in assistance and cooperation projects with the state and public institutions of Georgia with the exception of



those dedicated to the supporting of civil society and the establishment of rule of law structures. At the same time, we call international partners to increase financial assistance to Georgia's civil society and independent media, based on respect for democracy and the rule of law.

We know how important visa freedom is, especially for young people. We call on the EU Commission & Council to reexamine the visa liberalization regime with Georgia without excluding the possibility of its full suspension if the above listed are not met.

We will continue standing with the Georgian people and their European choice. We will also continue supporting unwaveringly Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally established borders.

Christine Schwartz-Fuchs, Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, Federal Council, AUSTRIA

Els Van Hoof, Chair, Committee of Foreign Affairs, Chamber of Representatives, BELGIUM

Pavel Fischer, Chair, Committee for Foreign Relations, Defense and Security, Senate, CZECH REPUBLIC

Marko Mihkelson, Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, ESTONIA

Peeter Tali, Chair, European Affairs Committee, ESTONIA

Jukka Kopra, Chair, Defence Committee, FINLAND

Heikki Autto, Chair, Grand Committee, FINLAND

Sebastian Tynkkynen, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, FINLAND

Frédéric Petit, Deputy Chair, European Affairs Committee, Deputy Secretary General of European Democratic Party, FRANCE

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