



Strasbourg, 28 October 2015

We, the undersigned members of the European Parliament -- while stressing importance of Georgia as an Associated Partner of the European Union and welcoming certain progress achieved in implementation of EU-Georgia Association Agenda -- would like to express our great concern over the recent developments in Georgia that endanger country's stability and democracy.

We are extremely worried about possible taking over of "Rustavi 2", Georgia's leading and the most popular independent TV station, and subsequent change in its editorial policy. In our view, this will significantly limit the political level playing field and threaten fairness of the 2016 parliamentary elections.

We remain repeatedly alarmed over the continuous prosecutions of leadership and members of the former ruling party, including former Prime Minister, former President, former ministers of Defence and Justice, former Mayor of Tbilisi, and others, including grassroots leaders. We express our concern over numerous facts of frequent abuse of pre-trial detention, political interference into the activities of the prosecution, political pre-selection of judges, and systematic abuse of the presumption of innocence.

In addition, we are shocked to learn about the recent violent attacks over the regional offices of the opposition throughout the country followed by unacceptable statements of Prime Minister of Georgia. Instead, we call on the Government to immediately find the perpetrators of this vandalism and bring them to justice.

Last but not least, we regret to hear the statements made by individuals from the ruling Coalition in trying to "rehabilitate" Iosif Stalin as well as to see his statues being re-erected in different places of the country. We deplore strongly this and ask the current Coalition in power to show due respect to the memory of millions of innocent victims of Stalinism, including in Georgia itself.

We call upon the present leadership of Georgia and its ruling Coalition to reverse these negative trends which are threatening the fairness of the forthcoming parliamentary elections and are putting Georgia's European path at grave danger.

We call upon the Commission and the European External Action Service to follow up on this matter with the Georgian authorities.

Petras Auštrevičius, MEP / Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Michał Boni, MEP / European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
Arnaud Danjean, MEP / European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
Mark Demesmaeker, MEP / European Conservatives and Reformists
Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, MEP / European Conservatives and Reformists
Michael Gahler, MEP / European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
Ana Maria Gomes, MEP / Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Sandra Kalniete, MEP / European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
Javier Nart, MEP / Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Urmaz Paet, MEP / Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Kati Piri, MEP, Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
Cristian Dan Preda, MEP / European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
Charles Tannock, MEP / European Conservatives and Reformists