
NATO-GEORGIA COMMISSION DECLARATION AT THE BRUSSELS SUMMIT

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Press Release, 12 Jul. 2018

We, NATO Heads of State and Government and Georgia, met in Brussels today to discuss security, defence reform, and cooperation. Allies congratulate the people of Georgia on the centennial anniversary of their independence. Allies and Georgia emphasize the unique scope and depth of Georgias relationship with the Alliance. Allies welcome the substantial progress on reforms in Georgia over the past decade in consolidating its democracy and achieving stronger economic development, more effective defence institutions and modernized armed forces. Georgia is committed to continue implementing these reforms.

Georgia is one of the Alliances closest operational partners, and an Enhanced Opportunities Partner. Allies highly appreciate Georgias steadfast support for NATOs operations and missions, in particular its contribution to the NATO Response Force and its significant contribution to the Resolute Support Mission (RSM). Georgia is one of the largest troop contributors to RSM. We recognize the sacrifices and contributions the Georgian people have made to our shared security. These efforts, along with Georgias participation in EU-led operations, demonstrate Georgias commitment and capability to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security.

NATO Heads of State and Government and Georgia welcome our expanding practical cooperation, in particular under the umbrella of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP), to which all Allies contribute, as well as Finland and Sweden. The SNGP is bolstering Georgias defence reform efforts, its interoperability with NATO, and Georgias resilience. Allies commend Georgia on its commitment to implementation of the SNGP across the full spectrum of Georgias defence and security sector reforms. We welcome the overall progress made, including the close cooperation that has developed between NATO and the Georgian defence institutions, such as the mentoring relationship of the Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz with the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre (JTEC), the Defence Institution Building School, as well as Georgias participation in exercises. NATO and Georgia are ready to further enhance cooperation, including through the next NATO-Georgia exercise in March 2019, which Allies will support with broad participation. We are moving ahead with the establishment of secure communications with Georgia and stepping up our support in the area of counter-mobility. We welcome our dialogue on hybrid threats and resilience. We will consider further enhancement of cooperation in cyber defence to further strengthen interoperability.

NATO Heads of State and Government value Georgias engagement in, and contributions to, strategic discussion and mutual awareness on Black Sea security. We pledge to further develop dialogue and practical cooperation in this context, including through the SNGP. A number of new

steps have already been initiated in this regard. We welcome Georgias offers to provide further logistical support to NATO and Allies, the start of training of Georgian Coast Guard boarding teams, the enhanced interaction between Georgia and NATOs Standing Naval Forces, including through passage exercises and port calls, and the exchanges between Georgias Joint Maritime Operations Centre and the NATO Shipping Centre. Allies intend to assist Georgia in the extension of its air and maritime picture. We also look forward to Georgias future participation in Operation Sea Guardian.

NATO Heads of State and Government welcome the clear progress made by Georgia on defence spending and in implementing comprehensive reforms aimed at strengthening Georgias defence and resilience capabilities.

Georgia reaffirms its determination to achieve NATO membership, one of its top foreign and security policy priorities, which is backed by strong public support, and is now also enshrined in its new Constitution. Allies reiterate their decision made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance, with MAP as an integral part of the process; they reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions. They welcome the significant progress made since 2008. Georgias relationship with the Alliance contains all the practical tools to prepare for eventual membership, in particular the NATO-Georgia Commission, the Annual National Programme and the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package. Allies recognize the significant progress on reforms which Georgia has made and must continue, which are helping Georgia, an aspirant country, progress in its preparations towards membership, and which strengthen Georgias defence and interoperability capabilities with the Alliance.

NATO Heads of State and Government reiterate our full support for Georgias independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the so-called independence of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia. We condemn the grave human rights violations taking place in these regions, their militarization, as well as other activities such as the construction of barbed wire fences and other artificial border-like obstacles along the Administrative Boundary Line. These steps violate Georgias sovereignty and territorial integrity and blatantly contradict the principles of international law, OSCE principles and Russias international commitments. We further call on Russia to implement the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, in particular to withdraw its forces from the territory of Georgia, which are present without Georgias consent, and allow the creation of an international security arrangement on the ground. We welcome Georgias compliance with the Ceasefire Agreement and its commitment on non-use of force and call on Russia to reciprocate. We also support Georgias efforts toward engagement and confidence building and welcome the Georgian Governments new peace initiative A step to a Better Future to improve the lives of the people living in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions of Georgia. Allies express firm support to the Geneva International Discussions, co-chaired by the EU, UN and OSCE, and underline the utmost need for reaching tangible results on the core issues of the negotiations with the aim to pursue peaceful conflict resolution within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia.

Our meeting, marking the tenth anniversary of the NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC), demonstrates the depth, breadth and enduring nature of the NATO-Georgia relationship. Looking ahead, we expect the NGC to continue to play a central role in deepening political dialogue and enhancing practical cooperation between Georgia and the Alliance.

Kaynak/Source: