



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. Vienna, 20 April 2023

#### **EU Statement on the 57th round of the Geneva International Discussions**

1. The European Union welcomes the 57th round of the Geneva International Discussions (GID) that was held in Switzerland on 4-5 April 2023. We wish to thank GID Co-Chairs for their consistent efforts in keeping this format operational.
2. As mandated by the Six-point Agreement of 12 August 2008 and the Implementing Measures of 8 September 2008, the GID process continues to serve as the only platform where consequences of the conflict, including issues related to the implementation of the Six-point Agreement and its Implementing Measures, are addressed. This includes discussions on core issues, such as non-use of force and international security arrangements, as well as internally displaced persons and refugees.
3. While the discussion on the non-use of force and international security arrangements did not bring any results, we encourage further efforts in this direction and continue to believe that a clear non-use of force statement by Russia is essential to enhance security, help build confidence and provide space for further political dialogue.
4. We regret that discussion on IDPs and refugees was again not possible due to the walkout by the Russian, Abkhaz and South Ossetian participants to this meeting. This practice of walkouts must be stopped.

5. We deplore false allegations repeatedly made in Tbilisi and Moscow that the West, including the EU, is pushing Georgia to open a so-called “second front”. Such false allegations are having a further negative impact on the conflict dynamics.
6. The European Union expresses its concern with regard to the severe and lasting impact this conflict has on the overall security situation in Georgia and the wider region, as well as on the well-being of conflict affected populations. The EU remains concerned about the continued illegal Russian military presence and activities in Georgia. We are also concerned about Russia’s attempts to de-facto integrate Georgia’s breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Russia’s regulatory and security space, as well as the ongoing “borderisation” activities, the restrictions on movement of civilians across the administrative boundary lines and the arbitrary detentions of Georgian citizens.
7. The EU reiterates its call on Russia for allowing OHCHR and international and regional human rights mechanisms immediate and unimpeded access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia breakaway regions of Georgia, to allow the High Commissioner to fully implement his mandate and to conduct an independent assessment of the human rights protection needs of the population in these areas. We are seriously concerned about the lasting human rights violations committed therein reported by the High Commissioner and echo his calls for accountability.
8. The EU calls on Russia, as a party to this conflict, to recommit itself to respecting Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and to fulfil its obligations under the agreement of 12 August 2008 and its subsequent implementing measures of 8 September 2008 in full and without further delay. The EU also urges Russia to ensure the proper follow-up of the landmark judgement of 21 January 2021 of the European Court of Human Rights in the case Georgia vs Russia.
9. The EU notes positively that the 111th IPRM took place in Ergneti on 2 March and expresses its hope for a fruitful next meeting, planned for 27 April. The EU also calls for the soonest possible resumption of the IPRM in Gali, which should be held in accordance with the established practices and without any preconditions.
10. Since October 2008, the EU has been actively involved in conflict resolution efforts and served as Co-Chair together with the UN and OSCE. The EU, as a Co-Chair,

remains committed to its active involvement in the Geneva International Discussions. The EU's commitment to Georgia's security is also proven through the continued activities of the EUMM – the only legitimate international presence on the ground.

11. As the EU stands united in condemning, in the strongest possible terms, Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, we also reiterate our condemnation of the blatant breach of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation since August 2008. The EU remains unwavering in its support to Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA\*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.