

# Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the 10 years anniversary of the conflict between Russia and Georgia

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Today marks the tenth anniversary of the conflict between Russia and Georgia. The European Union's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Georgia remains as strong as ever. The European Union reiterates its firm support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.

Unfortunately, Russian military presence in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia continues in violation of international law and commitments undertaken by Russia under the 12 August 2008 agreement, mediated by the European Union.

The European Union reconfirms its commitment to remain engaged and involved in stabilisation and conflict resolution efforts in Georgia, including by continuing its engagements as co-chair in the Geneva discussions, the efforts of the EU Special Representative, and the continued presence on the ground of the EU Monitoring Mission.

The EU welcomes the package of proposals "A Step to a Better Future" of the Georgian government that can benefit the citizens living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines by facilitating trade, education and mobility. Such proposals are in line with the European Union's policy of engagement with the breakaway regions of Georgia.

In these ten years, Georgia has strengthened its democratic institutions and undertaken reforms in the rule of law. Georgia has developed a thriving economy and become an important destination for foreign direct investment and tourism. It now represents a model of democratic stability in the region.

In addition, Georgia and the EU have signed an ambitious Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area that will shape our bilateral relations for years to come. In March 2017, Visa Free Travel for short term stays entered into force for Georgian citizens. The EU's engagement with Georgia is a true partnership based on political association and economic integration, as well as on a strong friendship between our peoples.

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