

Detention of Zaza Gakheladze in the Georgian breakaway territory of South Ossetia: UK statement

World news story

Nicola Murray, Deputy Head of Delegation, expresses UK concern at the detention of Georgian citizen Mr Gakheladze at the OSCE Permanent Council.



I'd like to thank my Georgian colleague for raising this issue today.

In July, the UK joined other States in this council in expressing our concern at the detention and alleged shooting of Georgian citizen Mr Gakheladze in the Georgian breakaway region of South Ossetia. Today we reiterate that concern as we note that Mr Gakheladze has been arbitrarily imprisoned for 12.5 years, and we call for his immediate release.

All Georgian citizens should have the right to travel within Georgia's internationally recognised borders. These ongoing detentions and so-called "borderisation" activity (which has continued despite the current pandemic) are specifically designed to destabilise the region and have a direct negative impact on civilians living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines. This must stop.

We note the importance of the work of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia in this context and we call on Russia to allow them to fulfil their full mandate to monitor on all sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines.

We remain unwavering in our support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and we encourage all parties to implement the six-point agreement of 2008 and its Implementing Measures in full. The recent European Court of Human Rights judgment in the case of Russia and Georgia reinforces the calls for Russia to stop its continuing violation of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Thank you.

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