

Remarks by President Charles Michel at the signing ceremony of the Georgia agreement with President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili



Six weeks ago, on 1 March, I met with you all in Tbilisi. I called on you to relaunch political dialogue to set aside the political stalemate in your country and we met at the President's Palace where you are meeting tonight.

I put on the table five substantive points that needed to be addressed to overcome the challenges. I promised to you I would remain engaged. I appointed my Personal Envoy, Mr Danielsson, who visited Georgia twice and I asked my team to accompany the process.

Six weeks later, the crisis is over. I want to thank you all for your commitment and courage to put the differences aside in the interest of Georgia.

I would like to thank the diplomatic team that has worked so tirelessly with you – Christian Danielsson as well as Ambassador Hartzell and Ambassador Degnan. I am thankful for all their efforts. I am thankful to the Prime Minister for his vision. And I am thankful to you, political leaders and elected members of opposition parties for your courageous political choices. I would also like to thank you, President Zourabichvili: we were in close contact throughout this period and would like to thank you for sharing your advice with me.

This agreement is not the finish line. This agreement is the starting point for your work towards consolidating Georgia's democracy and taking Georgia forward on its Euro-Atlantic future.

More than ever, I am convinced Georgian citizens count on you to focus on the pressing challenges Georgia is facing – the economy, the Covid-19 pandemic and its fall out, reforms in the rule of law sphere and the judiciary, as well as the regional challenges.

Lastly, I also believe that the new chapter you have opened today is particularly important in the difficult regional context. The region is facing many challenges, as the Nagorno-Karabakh war painfully reminded us last year. Today, the military build-up along Ukraine's borders and in the illegally-annexed Crimea is of a deep concern.

The way you have addressed the stalemate today is particularly important in this regional context. It is a truly European way of resolving the crisis.

I have the pleasure to announce that I will come to Georgia tomorrow to meet you all to strengthen the ties between Georgia and Europe. This is a clear

sign of confidence in you.