

Remarks by President Donald Tusk after his meeting with President of Georgia Salomé Zourabichvili

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Good afternoon. Let me start by welcoming you, President Zourabichvili, in Brussels, on your first foreign visit as President. I congratulate you on your victory in Georgia's elections. And I value your efforts to bridge social and political divisions in your country.

The EU-Georgia partnership is outstanding and far-reaching. The EU is Georgia's largest trading partner and since the introduction of the visa-free regime in March 2017, over 300,000 Georgians have enjoyed visa-free travel.

In our meeting today, I reconfirmed the EU's commitment to intensifying our cooperation in the framework of the Association Agreement. The agreement has brought significant benefits to our citizens and has potential to strengthen further Georgia's social, economic, political and institutional resilience.

Today, I also welcomed Georgia's dedication to reform. The President and I agreed on the importance of progress in the rule of law and judicial areas.

More than 10 years have passed since the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia. I re-state the EU's unchanging support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and to conflict resolution efforts.

Last year Tbilisi launched important trade, education and health initiatives towards people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We stand ready to provide further assistance to all those, whose lives have been affected by conflict, and to facilitate dialogue.

Regionally, Georgia's continued, strong support to the Eastern Partnership is important. Later this year, we will celebrate its 10th anniversary. This will be an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made together. I thank Georgia for the proposal to dedicate the 2019 Batumi Conference to this anniversary. I will be very glad to visit Georgia again, to attend this conference in July.

Madam President, let me conclude by once again wishing you every success in your office, and I look forward to working with you. Thank you.

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