



## NATO Parliamentary Assembly

### DECLARATION 435

on

### SUPPORTING GEORGIA'S EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION\*

The Assembly,

1. **Congratulating** the people of Georgia with the 99<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Act of Independence and with the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of restoration of Independence;
2. **Committed** to further deepening of cooperation with the Parliament of Georgia, elected on 8 October 2016 in competitive and well-administered elections where fundamental freedoms were generally respected;
3. **Reaffirming** its commitment to NATO's Open Door Policy for all European democracies that share the values of our Alliance and are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership; and **underlining** that membership in NATO is a decision of the Allies and an aspirant country and cannot be influenced by a third country;
4. **Convinced** that Euro-Atlantic integration provides a path to stability and that the previous rounds of enlargement have enhanced Euro-Atlantic and indeed global security;
5. **Highly appreciating** Georgia's continuous and significant contribution to the common Euro-Atlantic security and its sizeable participation in the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and NATO Response Force; and **paying tribute** to all the members of the Georgian Armed Forces who lost their lives or were injured in Afghanistan;

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\* Presented by the Standing Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Monday 29 May 2017, Tbilissi, Georgia.

6. **Reaffirming** its unwavering support to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration expressed, *inter alia*, in its Declaration 419 on *NATO Enlargement* adopted in Budapest, in May 2015, and Resolution 431 on *NATO's Post-Warsaw Defence and Deterrence Posture* adopted in Istanbul, in November 2016; and **recalling** the provisions in the 3 April 2008 Bucharest Summit Declaration that Georgia will become a member of NATO;
7. **Impressed** by the high level of continuous support for the Euro-Atlantic integration among the people and main political parties in Georgia;
8. **Welcoming** the substantial political dialogue and practical cooperation between NATO and Georgia, including through integration mechanisms such as the NATO-Georgia Commission, the Annual National Programme and the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package;
9. **Recognising** the impressive progress made in implementing this Package and thereby strengthening Georgia's resilience and defence capabilities, enhancing interoperability with Allied forces and helping Georgia to advance in its preparation towards membership in the Alliance;
10. **Commending** the joint efforts of NATO and Georgia to develop the Defence Institution Building School inaugurated in July 2016, as well as to achieve operational capability of the Joint Training and Evaluation Centre since its inauguration in August 2015, and the conduct of the joint NATO-Georgia exercise in November 2016;
11. **Stressing** that Georgia's relationship with the Alliance contains all the practical tools to prepare for eventual membership, while **taking note** of the position of Allied leaders that Georgia will become a member of NATO with Membership Action Plan as an integral part of the process;
12. **Emphasising** the strategic importance of the Black Sea region for common Euro-Atlantic security, **recognising** Georgia's engagement in strategic discussions on Black Sea security and **welcoming** the decision of the Warsaw Summit to further strengthen the ongoing dialogue and cooperation with Georgia in this regard;
13. **Commending** the consistent and significant progress made by Georgia in further consolidating its democracy, improving transparency of its institutions and fostering economic development, thereby setting a very positive example for the entire region, while **recognising** that further efforts are needed to bolster the rule of law and the system of checks and balances, ensure media pluralism and reduce political polarisation;
14. **Reaffirming** its strong support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia in its internationally recognised borders and **condemning** the continuous illegal occupation of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia, grave large-scale violations of human rights in the occupied regions, restrictions of freedom of movement across the Administrative Boundary Line, the continued violation of a six-point ceasefire agreement by the Russian Federation and steps taken towards the *de facto* annexation of these regions by Russia as well as extensive military build-up in these territories, which pose a serious threat to broader regional peace and security;
15. **Welcoming** Georgia's constructive policy aimed at de-escalation of tensions with Russia including unilateral steps such as the pledge not to use force in restoring its territorial integrity, its constructive participation in the Geneva International Discussions as well as Tbilisi's efforts to engage with the population of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia;

16. **URGES** the member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:
  - a. to continue rendering strong political and practical support to Georgia in the process of NATO integration;
  - b. to advance further the political dimension of Georgia's NATO integration in order to create the conditions to grant the Membership Action Plan to Georgia in the future;
  - c. to contribute fully to the implementation of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package and to consider additional practical ways to intensify efforts in support of Georgia, including through holding regular joint NATO-Georgia or bilateral exercises and assisting with the strengthening of its anti-aircraft and other defensive capabilities;
  - d. to help Georgia enhance its ability to tackle hybrid threats, including propaganda and disinformation campaigns aimed at eroding public support for the pro-Western strategic course;
  - e. to further intensify dialogue and practical cooperation with Georgia, as an aspirant country, on Black Sea security;
  
17. **ENCOURAGES** the Government and Parliament of Georgia:
  - a. to continue making full use of all the opportunities to advance its NATO integration process offered by the NATO-Georgia Commission, the Annual National Programme, its role as an enhanced opportunities partner, its participation in the Defence Capacity Building Initiative, and the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package;
  - b. to maintain the course of strengthening democratic institutions, maintaining the system of checks and balances, bolstering an independent judiciary, preserving media pluralism as well as enhancing dialogue and reducing tensions between the ruling and opposition parties;
  
18. **CALLS UPON** the Russian Federation:
  - a. to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders, reverse the recognition of Georgia's occupied regions as independent states and withdraw its military forces from these territories;
  - b. to fulfil its obligations vis-à-vis Georgia and abide by international law;
  - c. to reciprocate Georgia's unilateral pledge not to use force and refrain from any provocative and aggressive steps towards Georgia;
  - d. to facilitate the access of international human rights observers to the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;
  - e. to allow freedom of movement and trade across the Administrative Boundary Line;
  
19. **PLEDGES**, as it has done in the past, to continue supporting and providing assistance to Georgia, including through the Georgia-NATO Interparliamentary Council, in its NATO membership process.