



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 5 March 2021
(OR. en)

6747/21

COEST 55

'I' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
dated: 4 March 2021
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: Relations with Georgia
– European Union's position for the 6th EU-Republic of Georgia
Association Council (Brussels, 16 March 2021)

1. In view of the 6th meeting of the members of the EU-Georgia Association Council (Brussels, 16 March 2021), the Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia discussed on 23 February, 2 March, and 4 March, and agreed on the position of the European Union in the following terms:
 - Provisional Agenda as set out in Annex 1;
 - draft EU Position for the meeting of the members of the Association Council as set out in Annex 2;
 - draft Orientation Note on key EU messages for the meeting of the members of the Association Council as set out in Annex 3.

2. The Committee of Permanent Representatives is therefore requested:
- to confirm the agreement on the position of the European Union for the Association Council with Georgia as set out in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to this document;
 - given the urgency of the matter, to approve the use of the written procedure for the adoption of the position of the European Union for the Association Council with Georgia, as set out in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to this document.
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EU-Georgia Association Council

Brussels, 16 March 2021

Provisional Agenda

1. TEXTS PRESENTED TO THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

- Agenda of the 6th EU-Georgia Association Council meeting (doc. UE-GE 4652/21)
- Minutes of the 5th EU-Georgia Association Council meeting held on 5 March 2019 (doc. UE-GE 4651/21)
- Exchange of written notes

2. EU-GEORGIA RELATIONS

- a) Political dialogue and reform, political association, justice, freedom and security
- b) Economic and sectoral cooperation, trade and trade-related matters
- c) Foreign and security policy, peaceful conflict resolution, including non-recognition and engagement

3. REGIONAL ISSUES [*IN RESTRICTED SESSION*]

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EU Position

Sixth EU-Georgia Association Council

Brussels, 16 March 2021

EU Position

1. **Texts presented to the Association Council**
2. **EU-Georgia Relations**
 - a) **Political dialogue and reform, political association, justice, freedom and security**

The EU:

1. Reaffirms the close and comprehensive partnership between the EU and Georgia based on common values. Reaffirms continued commitment to strengthening the political association and economic integration of Georgia with the European Union, on the basis of the Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Welcomes the ongoing work on the post-2020 Association Agenda to set priorities to direct AA/DCFTA implementation in the coming years, and to update the Association Agreement annexes.
2. Underlines the unity, solidarity and mutual commitment demonstrated in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recalls the EUR 183 million support package and the EUR 150 million macro-financial assistance that the EU has mobilised for Georgia to tackle the pandemic and its socio-economic impact. Reiterates readiness to support Georgia's vaccination strategy, including through the recently launched joint project with the WHO, and to cooperate on making COVID-19 vaccines a global common good at affordable prices.

3. Recognises the progress Georgia has made in its reform process, underlines the need to preserve the achieved results, in particular in democracy consolidation, and encourages Georgia to redouble its efforts to strengthen the independence and accountability in the justice sector. Reaffirms the EU's resolute support for Georgia's reform efforts, especially on the implementation of Association Agreement commitments, including Georgia's economic and societal recovery from the pandemic through "building back better" whilst ensuring a balanced territorial development. Recalls that EU financial support is clearly linked to concrete reform progress and fulfilment of conditionalities.
4. Welcomes the Parliament revision of the constitution introducing a new electoral system and adoption of amendments to the electoral code, to reflect a compromise reached by a wide spectrum of Georgian political parties. Welcomes the introduction of gender quotas for local and national elections. Recalls that according to the joint statement of preliminary findings and conclusions of the international observers, the 2020 Parliamentary elections were competitive and, overall, fundamental freedoms were respected. Notes however, that the conduct of the elections was impacted by pervasive allegations of violations and abuses throughout the campaign and on election day. Calls on Georgia to swiftly and fully address the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations following both the 2018 and 2020 elections, ahead of the October 2021 local elections through an inclusive, transparent and credible process.
5. Regrets the mistrust that has affected the electoral process and increased the political polarisation. Underlines the need for a fully functioning, representative Parliament as the central forum for political debate, with all elected parties working to advance reforms. Notes that this polarisation is not limited to the political sphere but a worrying tendency throughout the Georgian society. Calls for broad political unity and dialogue to defuse tensions and further consolidate democracy in Georgia, in light of political developments, and to refrain from polarising rhetoric. Encourages Georgia to ensure media freedom and pluralism and freedom of expression, to reduce the current polarisation and to continue consolidating Georgia's democracy.

6. Underlines the importance of civic and civil society participation. Welcomes, in that regard, the work of the Human Rights Council, and encourages Georgia to further strengthen formal liaison mechanisms of civil society with the Government and the Parliament. Welcomes also the active oversight role played by the Public Defender's Office.
7. Stresses the importance of the full independence and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights and a stable, neutral, efficient and accountable public administration on national and local level.
8. Underlines the importance of stepping up reforms in the justice sector, including measures to strengthen the professionalism, independence and accountability of the judiciary and to enhance transparency and merit-based appointments of judges. Encourages Georgia to reinforce the full implementation of the third and fourth waves of judicial reforms.
9. Expresses concern that the selection process for Supreme Court judges did not adhere to all recommendations made by the Venice Commission and was characterised by significant shortcomings. In accordance with commitments under EU macro-financial assistance, expects no further appointments before the selection process is brought fully into line with European standards and observes all Venice Commission recommendations in order to achieve a merit-based, transparent, impartial process ensuring the greatest possible legitimacy for the appointees.
10. Notes the progress made in the institutional reforms of the prosecution, police and penitentiary sector and underline the importance of the independence of the prosecution. Expresses concern at the prevalence of the informal hierarchies in prisons and stresses that it is important that the National Preventive Mechanism can operate independently, in all confidence and confidentiality.
11. Calls on Georgia to further and better address crime cases, corruption and notably high-level corruption cases and encourages the creation of an independent and accountable Anti-Corruption Agency.

12. Recognises that a great number of Georgian citizens have benefitted from visa free travel to the EU. Recalls the European Commission's third report under the visa suspension mechanism, which confirmed that Georgia continued to fulfill the visa liberalisation benchmarks, while identifying several areas where further efforts are needed. Encourages Georgia to further strengthen the cooperation to achieve and maintain a swift decrease in the number of unfounded asylum applications, which remain significant, and to strengthen cross-border law enforcement cooperation to fight against Georgian organised crime groups and irregular migration. Emphasises that the Commission will continue to monitor the development, including in the context of the visa suspension mechanism. Welcomes concrete actions taken already by Georgia, including the adoption of the Amendments to the Law "On the Rules of Leaving and Entering Georgia by the Citizens of Georgia" and urges Georgia to continue actively implementing this Law and taking mitigating measures as necessary. Encourages continued and sustained efforts, particularly once international flights return to its normal pace, while reiterating EU's support in this respect. Welcomes the reinforced cooperation with Frontex, including through the recent signature of the working arrangement and looks forward to its implementation. Encourages more proactive cooperation with both Europol and CEPOL.
13. Welcomes the adoption of the new Migration Strategy of Georgia for 2021-2030 and encourages its implementation. Welcomes the new Working Arrangement establishing administrative cooperation between the European Commission and the State Commission on Migration Issues of Georgia in the European Migration Network.

14. Stands ready to support Georgia with the implementation of the Human Rights Strategy 2021-2030 through the EU4 Human Rights Programme. Welcomes the amendments improving the legal framework on gender equality and anti-discrimination, the law on sexual harassment and the adoption of the Code on the Rights of the Child. Calls on Georgia to effectively implement the anti-discrimination law, and to protect the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, LGBTI persons and children, and to ensure gender equality. Ensure the safe and peaceful gatherings of LGBTI activists and counter violence, hatred and discriminatory attitudes and behavior against these persons. Welcomes the work done to prevent and combat violence against women and girls and domestic violence, including the work to implement the Istanbul Convention.
15. Encourages Georgia to develop concrete and specific measures to increase the active, equal and meaningful participation of persons from underrepresented groups, including women and persons belonging to vulnerable groups and minorities, especially in the political and economic sphere.
16. Reiterates the importance of further improving public awareness of the tangible benefits of EU cooperation, strengthening coordination among the different strategic communication divisions and responding to disinformation. Stresses the importance of the timely development and implementation of Georgia's European Integration Communication Strategy for 2021-2024 and its yearly Action Plans.
17. Welcomes Georgia's active and constructive participation in the Eastern Partnership multilateral framework, and looks forward to its continued engagement ahead of the 2021 Eastern Partnership Summit.

b) Economic and sectoral cooperation, trade and trade-related matters

The EU:

18. Acknowledges Georgia's efforts in maintaining the macro-economic and financial stability in the current challenging times. Refers to the EU Macro-Financial Assistance package to help limit the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic ratified by the Georgian Parliament in September 2020, for which the first instalment was disbursed last November. Recalls that the second instalment will be disbursed if Georgia implements agreed policy measures and implements the programme with the International Monetary Fund.
19. Encourages Georgia to develop a new SME Strategy for the post-2020 period.. Underlines the importance of pursuing structural reforms linked to the investment climate, further enhancing the financial infrastructure of the country, as well as of matching skills and labour market demand, for further private sector development.
20. Stresses that the timely enactment of the Motor Third Party Liability (MTPL) Law remains crucial for diversifying the financial sector, reducing the fiscal burden of social welfare, and reducing household vulnerability.
21. Welcomes Georgia's active contribution improving the connectivity between the EU and Georgia through the gradual completion of the indicative core Trans-European Transport networks (TEN-T) and stresses the need for further progress in improving road safety and developing the logistics sector. Welcomes the entry into force of the EU-Georgia Common Aviation Area Agreement. Encourages Georgia to develop a comprehensive port strategy.
22. Reiterates Georgia's key role as a partner for European energy security, and notably its transit role for Caspian hydrocarbon resources via the Southern Gas Corridor and its possible extension to Central Asia.

23. Welcomes Georgia's work on implementation of the Paris Agreement mainstreaming climate into other policies. Encourages a submission of an ambitious nationally determined contribution (NDC) update and a mid-century low emission development strategy, possibly aligned with EU's targets of climate neutrality by 2050, well before COP26 in Glasgow. Commends Georgia's joint initiative with Lithuania to establish a regional sub-sectoral network on renewable energy within the Eastern Partnership Energy Panel and expects productive outcomes from this new format. Recognises Georgia's interest in closer involvement in implementing the European Green Deal and continues to look into the possibilities of strengthened mutual cooperation on the subject.
24. Encourages Georgia to advance with the implementation of key legislation in the areas of electricity, renewables and energy efficiency (notably in public buildings), environment and climate action, with the support of the EU in particular through the EU4Energy and EU4Climate programmes and the Energy Community Secretariat. Welcomes the adoption of a law on air quality and key technical regulations in the area of waste management while encouraging further progress.
25. Welcomes efforts for closer cooperation with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and recalls that additional support to enhance preparedness for health emergencies has been also mobilised under this Mechanism. Welcomes Georgia's efforts to develop the 2021-2023 National Strategy and Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction. Stresses the importance of the implementation of the Host Nation Support legislation.
26. Welcomes the new 2021-2027 Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy and its Action Plan for 2021-2023. Refers to the EU's support to reforms in the area of agriculture and rural development, particularly through the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD).

27. Welcomes important amendments to the Labour Code. Recalls the urgent need to further improve labour rights and working conditions in line with international and European labour standards. Welcomes the crucial adoption and the entry into force of the new Law on the Labour Inspectorate. Stresses the importance of setting up a fully-fledged labour inspection system, with adequate human and financial resources and trained and equipped staff. Welcomes progress in labour market governance through the adoption of the 2019-23 Employment Strategy and its Action Plan, the new Law on Employment and the roll-out of new employment services.
28. Stresses the need to continue comprehensive reforms towards Universal Health Coverage and strengthening of the health care sector and to finalise the National Health Strategy. Welcomes Georgia's willingness to associate to the incoming EU4Health Programme. Welcomes Georgia joining COVAX Facility to benefit from equitable access to a safe and efficient vaccine. Urges Georgia to ratify the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.
29. Welcomes the launch of a new strategy for education and science for 2022-2030, and ongoing work on reforming vocational education and training, with EU support. Underlines the importance of ensuring the involvement of social partners and the private sector.
30. Appreciates Georgia's strong involvement in Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and the Creative Europe programme. Highlights the EU's commitment to support the Georgia's participation in EU initiatives and programmes in education, culture, youth, sport, research and innovation. Welcomes the ongoing negotiations on association of Georgia to Horizon Europe. Welcomes the launch of the second phase of the European School in Tbilisi and looks forward to the opening of the School in the new premises in 2023.
31. Welcomes the pilot integrated regional development programme, the adoption of a decentralisation strategy, and the development of a smart specialisation framework for strengthening innovation potential of the regions.
32. Highlights Georgia's contribution to the Black Sea Basin ENI Cross Border Cooperation programme, and its engagement for the upcoming Interreg NEXT programme.

33. Welcomes Georgia's support for the identification of bankable projects in the framework of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea. Welcomes Georgia's commitments to effectively implement the Sofia Ministerial Declaration towards fisheries sustainability and invites to continue cooperating on fisheries governance within the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Encourages Georgia to increase the level of monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries in the Black Sea. Welcomes Georgia's political commitment to fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, while highlighting the importance to ensure the effective implementation of the legal framework.
34. Welcomes the improvement in compliance with European and international standards in a number of statistical domains, as well as the progress made in the revision of the statistical law. Encourages swift adoption and implementation of the new law and continued follow-up of further recommendations from the Global Assessment carried out in 2019.
35. Encourages the Georgian authorities to enhance the protection of consumer rights, adopt a Consumer Protection Law and pursue enforcement.
36. Encourages Georgia to revive the legislative discussion on the draft data protection law to ensure alignment with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Directive on processing personal data for the purposes of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.
37. Welcomes the adoption of Georgia's Broadband Development Strategy.
38. Welcomes that the EU remains Georgia's largest trading partner, Georgia's growing exports to the EU, and the ambition from both sides to increase EU-Georgia trade flows. Expresses the EU's continued commitment to support Georgia in further alleviating obstacles to trade in a targeted way. Underlines the importance to maintain the course of the reforms. Encourages Georgia to also establish contacts with the import promotion agencies in the EU.

39. Welcomes the good implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area commitments so far on a vast range of issues, including the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter. Encourages further timely implementation of the remaining commitments and looks forward to further enhancing economic integration and regulatory approximation within the framework of the Association Agreement, to fully benefit from the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Encourages Georgia to devote particular attention to fulfilling Association Agreement commitments in the field of public procurement, product standards, accreditation and conformity assessment, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, IPR, services, competition and subsidies, as these can lead to increased market access.
40. Welcomes that Georgia has fulfilled the main requirements for Phase I of the Public Procurement Roadmap, including the establishment of a new dispute resolution body. Encourages Georgia to prepare for the functioning of the latter to ensure impartiality and independence of this body, as set out in the Association Agreement.
41. Welcomes the alignment of the national customs code to the Union Customs Code and underlines that both parties need to continue customs cooperation. Welcomes the progress made by Georgia towards accession to the Common Transit Convention, and launching the new computerised transit system
42. Welcomes the importance both parties give to a high-level of protection for geographical indications. Encourages Georgia to revise its legal framework on the protection and quality control system of Geographical Indications in compliance with EU legislation.

c) **Foreign and security policy, peaceful conflict resolution, including non-recognition and engagement**

The EU:

43. Welcomes Georgia's interest in advancing cooperation with the EU in the security and defence field and its significant contribution to EU CSDP activities, while looking into opportunities to further develop this cooperation on expand Georgia's participation in civil and military crisis management operations. Welcomes the third EU-Georgia strategic security dialogue held in Tbilisi on 25 October 2019 and looks forward to the fourth dialogue. Calls for greater alignment of Georgia with EU CFSP declarations, also in line with the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Member States. Reconfirms EU's willingness to continue cooperation with Georgia in countering hybrid threats, based on the hybrid threats assessment and in strengthening cybersecurity. Encourages Georgia to approximate the national cyber security system with the Directive on security of network and information systems (NIS).
44. Reaffirms the EU's firm support for Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Underlines that the EU remains firmly committed to conflict resolution and its policy of non-recognition and engagement in Georgia through a comprehensive approach. The activities of the EUSR for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia and of the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) are concrete signs of these commitments.
45. Shares Georgia's concerns about Russia's illegal presence and activities in the Georgian breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the deterioration of the human rights situation there, including but not limited to (i) fencing activities along the South Ossetian Administrative Boundary Line and (ii) repeated and protracted closures of crossing points. Recalls that the EU is constantly urging Russia, both bilaterally and in international fora, to fulfil all of its obligations under the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement and its subsequent implementing measures, including providing access of the EUMM in Georgia to the breakaway regions. The EU also regularly calls for access for international human rights monitoring mechanisms.
46. Expresses concern about the deteriorating human rights situation of ethnic Georgians in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, including but not limited to the freedom of movement, property rights, and education in their native language, as well as about continued obstacles to the rights of displaced persons to choose a durable solution including return or compensation for their property.

47. Recalls that the European Court of Human Rights' judgement in the inter-State case concerning the armed conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008 and its consequences concluded that after 12 August 2008 the Russian Federation, exercising effective control over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, violated several provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights. Shares Georgia's concerns regarding the recent approval of the creation of a common socio-economic space between the Russian Federation and the Georgian breakaway region of Abkhazia.
48. Reiterates that the Geneva International Discussions and fully operational Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms meetings (IPRMs) are crucial for the security and stability in Georgia. Welcomes the holding of 51st round of Geneva International Discussions on 10-11 December 2020, the resumption of Ergneti IPRM meetings and hopes the Gali IPRM also resumes shortly.
49. Reiterates that, within its non-recognition and engagement policy, and in full respect of international law, the EU is willing to develop further initiatives, including in support of civil society and in the fields of education, cultural heritage and environment. Underlines that small steps and confidence-building measures are of crucial importance. Commends Georgia for its "Peace Initiative: A Step to a Better Future". Underlines the need for sincere dialogue with the breakaway regions and enhance people-to-people contacts to build trust and confidence and contribute to sustainable conflict resolution. Encourages Georgia to address the concerns and observations expressed by the Venice Commission regarding the "Law on Occupied Territories".

3. Regional issues [in restricted session]

4. Any other business

Orientation Note**EU-Georgia 6th Association Council****Brussels, 16 March 2021****Key messages/objectives:**

1. Underline the EU's firm commitment to the political association and economic integration of Georgia with the EU and welcome Georgia's commitment to the successful implementation of the Association Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. Welcome the solidarity the EU and Georgia demonstrated in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reiterate readiness to support Georgia's vaccination strategy. Underline the importance for Georgia to maintain momentum on the reform agenda, live up to its commitments, ensure sustainability of already achieved progress and ensure further implementation of reforms, including in key areas such as justice, democracy consolidation and security and make full use of EU assistance. Stress that the EU will focus on supporting Georgia's sustainable economic and societal recovery from the pandemic through "building back better", whilst ensuring a balanced territorial development. Encourage Georgia to fully use the export and growth potential provided for by the DCFTA and to enhance the investment climate, notably by building trust in the judiciary and offer a level playing field. Recall the EU's continuing strategic support for Georgia's efforts towards economic development, and the quality and safety of agricultural and other consumer products in line with EU standards. Encourage Georgia to maintain macro-economic stability and recall the outstanding fulfilment of the agreed policy measures, which would allow for the disbursement of the second instalment of Macro-Financial Assistance. Welcome Georgia's key role as a partner for European energy security and connectivity, and stress the EU's continued support in this regard. Encourage Georgia to advance with the implementation of key EU legislation in the areas of electricity, renewables and energy efficiency, environment and climate action. Commend its initiative to co-ordinate new regional sub-sectoral network on renewable energy within Eastern Partnership Energy Panel and express willingness to look into the possibilities of strengthened mutual cooperation on Georgia's closer involvement in implementing the European Green Deal.

2. Welcome that the Georgian Parliament revised the constitution to introduce a new electoral system and adopted relevant amendments to the electoral code to reflect a compromise reached by a wide spectrum of Georgian political parties. Recall that according to the joint statement of preliminary findings and conclusions of the international observers, the 2020 Parliamentary elections were competitive and, overall, fundamental freedoms were respected, while regretting that pervasive allegations of pressure on voters and blurring of the line between the ruling party and the state throughout the campaign and on election day affected trust in the electoral process. Underline the need for a fully functioning, representative Parliament as the central forum for political debate and regret the increased political polarisation. Call to swiftly and fully address the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations following both the 2018 and 2020 elections, including by improving the foundations for future elections through ambitious and credible electoral and judicial reforms, ahead of the 2021 local elections. Welcome the creation of a working group on election to address remaining election reform and call for an inclusive, transparent and credible process.

3. Call for further resolute reforms to consolidate democracy, including by guaranteeing a free and pluralistic media environment, to strengthen the rule of law including the judiciary and to ensure good governance and respect for human rights. Welcome recent amendments to improve the legal framework on gender equality, anti-discrimination, sexual harassment and rights of the Child and encourage further progress in the implementation of the anti-discrimination law and to protect the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, LGBTI persons and children. Welcome the recent labour reform and encourage further efforts to improve respect for labour rights and decent working conditions. Stress the importance of stepping up reforms in the justice sector including measures to strengthen the professionalism, independence and accountability of the judiciary and ensure that judges are appointed in a transparent and merit-based manner. Reiterate, in this regard, that the legislation on appointments of Supreme Court judges needs to urgently be brought into line with the Venice Commission recommendations and refrain from irrevocable steps in the appointment of Supreme Court Judges, awaiting the revised legislation. Recall that upholding the highest standards of judicial independence, the right to a fair trial and the rule of law is an essential commitment of Georgia under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. Recall the European Commission's third report under the visa suspension mechanism, which confirmed that Georgia continued to fulfil the visa liberalisation benchmarks, while identifying several areas where further efforts are needed. Encourages Georgia to further strengthen the cooperation to decrease in the number of unfounded asylum applications, which remains significant, and to strengthen cross-border law enforcement cooperation to fight against Georgian organised crime groups and irregular migration. Welcome concrete actions taken already by Georgia, including the adoption of the Amendments to the Law "On the Rules of Leaving and Entering Georgia by the Citizens of Georgia" and urge Georgia to continue actively implementing this Law and taking mitigating measures as necessary. Reiterate that the EU and its Member States stand ready to further cooperate with the Georgian authorities in the implementation of relevant measures.

4. Reconfirm the EU's firm support for Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Underline the EU's firm commitment to conflict resolution and its policy of non-recognition and engagement in Georgia. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia as well as the EU Monitoring Mission are the concrete signs of the EU's commitment. Highlight in this respect the importance of continuing to pursue dialogue with all stakeholders in the process and of renewed efforts to reach out to the breakaway regions. Commend Georgia for its "Peace Initiative: A Step to a Better Future".
5. Discuss regional and other foreign policy issues and their impact on EU-Georgia relations, in particular in the aftermath of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. Reiterate the importance of developing an integrated approach to conflict and crises and to develop an area of shared stability, security and prosperity. Recall the updated and enhanced EU-Georgia dialogue in multilateral fora to uphold the rules-based international order and tackle global challenges. Welcome the third EU-Georgia strategic security dialogue held on 25 October 2019, and look forward to the next dialogue. Recall the mutually agreed actions for future cooperation, including enhancing the dialogue on CSDP cooperation and supporting the strengthening of Georgia's resilience against cyber-attacks. Stress willingness to help consolidate its resilience against hybrid threats, including by following up on the findings of the hybrid risk survey.
6. Recall that the Neighbourhood is a strategic priority and of fundamental interest for the EU. Commend Georgia for its active and constructive participation to the Eastern Partnership multilateral framework as well as in the framework of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea. Look forward to continued engagement ahead of the Eastern Partnership Summit in 2021, which will set the ground for reinforced cooperation in five priority policy areas (democracy and rule of law, economy, green transition, digital agenda and society) under the overarching goal of strengthening resilience, with a clear focus on recovery from the COVID - 19 pandemic.