



International response to the new peace initiative “A Step to a Better Future” adopted by the GoG on April 4, 2018



AlanDuncanMP commemorates the 10th anniversary of the Russia-Georgia conflict¹

August 7, 2018

We also support Georgia's new peace initiative called "**A step to a Better Future**". We call upon Russia to implement the Six Point Agreement of 12 August 2008 to withdraw its military forces from the territory of Georgia in order to allow reconciliation and a peaceful resolution of conflicts".



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia Sven Mikser²

August 7, 2018

We welcome the Georgian Government's commitment to seeking dialogue. The peace initiative by the Georgian Government "A Step to a Better Future" looks for opportunities to improve the living standards of people on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Line. This type of inclusive approach is also supported by the

European Union.

¹ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1026757934997483521>

² <https://goo.gl/oXDLkf>



Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the 10 years anniversary of the conflict between Russia and Georgia, European Council, Council of the European Union³

August 7, 2018



European Council
Council of the European Union

The EU welcomes the package of proposals "**A Step to a Better Future**" of the Georgian government that can benefit the citizens living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines by facilitating trade, education and mobility. Such proposals are in line with the European Union's policy of engagement with the breakaway regions of Georgia.

Jacek Czaputowicz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, joint news conference with Lithuanian, Latvian and Georgian Foreign Ministers and Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine:⁴

“We call on Russia to withdraw the recognition of so-called independence of Georgia’s occupied regions, to fully comply with the August 12, 2008 Ceasefire Agreement and to withdraw its troops from these territories. We are also concerned over the deterioration of human rights and security situation in occupied territories. I welcome the initiative of the Government of Georgia, "**Step for a Better Future**", which is a clear signal for residents of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region”.



³ <https://goo.gl/emyiaW>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/PolandMFA/status/1026796325445296128>



Joint statement of the Group of Friends of Georgia 10 years since the Russian military invasion of Georgia ⁵

August 7, 2018

This statement is made on behalf of Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America:

We support the new peace initiative of the Government of Georgia, **'A Step to a Better Future'**, aimed at improving the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of people residing in Georgia's Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions and fostering people-to-people contact and confidence building between divided communities to the benefit of all people.

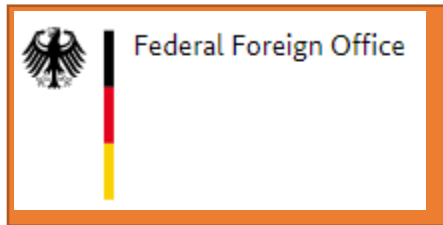


Statement by Frederica Mogherini, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the EC
August 7, 2018

According to Federica Mogherini, the EU welcomes the package of proposals "**A Step to a Better Future**" of the Georgian government that can benefit the citizens living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines by facilitating trade, education and mobility. "Such proposals are in line with the European Union's policy of engagement with the breakaway regions of Georgia," the EU High Representative says.

"In these ten years, Georgia has strengthened its democratic institutions and undertaken reforms in the rule of law. Georgia has developed a thriving economy and become an important destination for foreign direct investment and tourism. It now represents a model of democratic stability in the region".

⁵ <https://ge.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-of-the-group-of-friends-of-georgia-10-years-since-the-russian-military-invasion-of-georgia-august-7/>



Federal Foreign Office on the 10th anniversary of the war between the Russian Federation and Georgia⁶

August 7, 2018

Germany will continue to support the European monitoring mission (EUMM) and to call for international human rights organisations to be granted access to the breakaway regions. We welcome the Georgian Government's package of measures **“A Step to a Better Future”**, which is intended to improve the quality of life of those living beyond the administrative boundary lines through facilitations in the spheres of trade, education and mobility.



Statement of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic on 10th Anniversary of the Russian - Georgian conflict⁷

August 7, 2018

The Slovak Republic appreciates and supports the initiative of the Georgian Government **“Steps Towards a Better Future”** that aims at confidence building, improvement of humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of the peoples of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, development of personal relations and economic cooperation, as well as at stepping up the process of reconciliation between the communities in the region.



Statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 10th war anniversary between Russia and Georgia Statement, August 7 - Ottawa, Ontario- Global Affairs Canada⁸

August 7, 2018

Canada welcomes the Government of Georgia's new peace initiative, **‘A Step to a Better Future’**, directed at improving the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of residents in Georgia's Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions.

⁶ <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/10-anniversary-war-russia-georgia/2125070>

⁷ <https://goo.gl/cc1rar>

⁸ <https://goo.gl/GrkC6r>



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on marking ten years since Russia's aggression against Georgia⁹

August 7, 2018

Latvia welcomes Georgia's efforts to facilitate its engagement with the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, including the reconciliation and **peace initiative by Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, "A Step to a Better Future" (Keti Package)**, brought forward by the Government of Georgia.



Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the 2008 Russian-Georgian war¹⁰

August 7, 2018

Ukraine reaffirms once again its consistent and resolute support for Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity in its internationally recognized borders, as well as its commitment to the strategic partnership between our states. In particular, Ukraine supports the latest peace initiative of the Government of Georgia "**A Step to a Better Future**" aimed at settling the conflict and reconciliation.

Council of Europe and Conflict in Georgia, 1315th Meeting, 2 May, 2018

Decisions

The Deputies

The 5th paragraph of the document states: "Underlined the efforts of Georgia to reach out to the residents of its regions - Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia by enhancing humanitarian activities; expressed appreciation for the various initiatives taken by Georgia in this respect, *inter alia*, through providing education opportunities and free medical service to the residents of these regions; **welcomed the new peace initiative of the Government of Georgia entitled**



⁹ <https://goo.gl/scB3tt>

¹⁰ <https://goo.gl/iyPtCe>



“A Step to a Better Future”, as a vivid sign of Georgia’s firm commitment to promote confidence and interaction between the societies split by the dividing lines”.



NATO-Georgia Commission Declaration at the Brussels Summit, July 12, 2018. Paragraph 7 states that:

We also support Georgia’s efforts toward engagement and confidence building and **welcome the Georgian government’s new peace initiative “A step to a Better Future”** to improve the lives of the people living in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia regions of Georgia. Allies express firm support to the Geneva International Discussions, co-chaired by

We welcome the Georgian government’s new peace initiative “A step to a Better Future”

the EU, UN and OSCE, and underline the utmost need for reaching tangible results on the core issues of the negotiations with the aim to pursue peaceful conflict resolution within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia”.



European Parliament resolution on Georgian occupied territories 10 years after the Russian invasion. *14 June, 2018*
(2018/2741(RSP))

Paragraph 12 states: “Welcomes the new peace initiative of the Government of Georgia entitled “**A Step to a Better Future**”, aimed at improving the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of people residing in the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia and fostering people-to-people contact and confidence building between divided communities”.¹¹

¹¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0266+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>



Georgian occupied territories - ten years after the Russian invasion: extracts from the debate:

- **Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the EC:** “The European Union has been the central actor in the process to manage the consequences of the conflict, to improve the lives of all the people in the region and to find a lasting solution. We have, as European Union, a very special role to play, particularly because of our European Union monitoring mission to Georgia. Today we are the only international monitoring presence in the field.



Our approach is to include the breakaway regions in our programs in Georgia, whenever this is possible. This is what we are doing, for instance, with our programs on agriculture, our rural development and vocational training. We are also assisting civil society initiatives in the entities. **We support all of the initiatives that can help re-establish confidence between the sides.** Such as people to people contacts, dialog

processes and academic exchanges. All our actions between the two regions are fully coordinated and approved by the government of Georgia and in full line with the Georgian engagement policy”.¹²

In light of the recent **Peace Initiative of the Georgian State Ministry of Reconciliation, we are now looking at the possibility of providing further support.** For instance, there is a clear interest from the breakaway regions to increase trade with the rest of Georgia, but also with the rest of the region. This would represent a major improvement for the life of local communities, and for all people in the wider region. We are also considering a mobility scheme for academics from the breakaway regions, and this could also be facilitated by the Peace Initiative that I just mentioned. Our policy is one of non-recognition but also of engagement with Abkhazia and South Ossetia; exactly in line with the approach of the Georgian government.

“Peace Initiative of the Georgian State Ministry of Reconciliation, we are now looking at the possibility of providing further support”

¹² <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/EN/vod.html?mode=unit&vodLanguage=EN&startTime=20180612-18:28:54-328#>



“The package of proposals adopted today by the Government of Georgia can benefit the citizens living on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines by facilitating trade, education and mobility”

Released a statement regarding the new peace initiative of the Georgian government **“Step for Better Future”**: “The package of proposals adopted today by the Government of Georgia can benefit the citizens living on both sides of the Administrative

Boundary Lines by facilitating trade, education and mobility. These proposals are in line with the European Union’s policy of engagement with the breakaway regions of Georgia, which includes several ongoing EU projects. We support initiatives aimed at building bridges across the dividing lines and addressing humanitarian challenges”.

- **Clare Moody, a Member of the European Parliament:** The S&D Group strongly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, while the resolution of this conflict is crucial to enhancing security and stability across Europe. We must demonstrate our



solidarity with the citizens of the occupied regions and support our Georgian colleagues’ peace initiative – **“A Step to a Better Future”**. I hope that despite 10 years of occupation, we can help to achieve better relations between those kept apart by the fences of the occupied regions and the rest of Georgia.¹³

¹³ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/EN/vod.html?mode=unit&vodLanguage=EN&startTime=20180612-18:51:02-320>



- **Victor Boștinaru, a Member of the European Parliament:** in these ten difficult years, Georgia has managed to make incredible progress along its European integration path and, in particular, to visa liberalisation and the Association Agreement. This is the best sign that Russia did not manage to take Georgia and the Georgian people away from their dreams and will not manage to succeed with Ukraine. Ten years after, Georgia is a much stronger and more developed country, a model for the East European partners of our Union, and an example also in the way it deals with the occupied territories – **especially with the initiative aimed at peace and reconciliation by the Georgian Government.**¹⁴



- **Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, a Member of the European Parliament:** We stand by Georgia. We support the country's European and transatlantic vocation, peace initiatives and the request for a sanctions list condemning and punishing the targeted killings of Russian citizens, in particular Otkhozoria and Tatunashvili. We also praise the EUMM role in Georgia. During two SEDE missions to Georgia we were also able to monitor territories adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and we are very much concerned about the situation of people living there.¹⁵



¹⁴ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/EN/vod.html?mode=unit&vodLanguage=EN&startTime=20180612-18:36:39-322#>

¹⁵ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/EN/vod.html?mode=unit&vodLanguage=EN&startTime=20180612-18:39:49-128#>



- **Heidi Hautala, a Member of the European Parliament:** What you see is that people living in these ‘breakaway’ or ‘occupied’ regions they are denied their basic human rights. They have no chance to express their will and their wishes freely, they have no right to education in their native language and I think we have to praise the peace initiative that Georgia has undertaken – “A Step to a Better Future” whereby they invite the people living in these occupied areas to enjoy certain human rights like health, education and so on.¹⁶



The supplementary item Resolution on “Ten Years after the August 2008 War in Georgia,” 27th Annual Session of the OSCE PA, Berlin, 7-11, 2018

Paragraph 11 states: “Welcomes the **new peace initiative of the Government of Georgia - “A Step to a Better Future”**, aimed at improving the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of people residing in Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, as well as at fostering people-to-people contacts and confidence-building between the divided communities”.

¹⁶ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/EN/vod.html?mode=unit&vodLanguage=EN&startTime=20180612-18:43:11-867#>



Response by the States and International Organizations

- ✓ **U.S. Embassy Statement on the “A Step to a Better Future” Peace Initiative by the Georgian Government (April 4, 2018):** “The United States welcomes Georgia’s release of a package of proposals intended to improve connectivity across the Administrative Boundary Lines. These measures help address the needs of the most vulnerable populations on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines and provide increased opportunity for mobility, improved livelihoods, and access to education. We welcome Georgia’s commitment to dialogue and to a peaceful solution to the conflict. The United States reiterates its full support for Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders”.¹⁷
- ✓ **Press Statement. Heather Nauert, Department Spokesperson, Washington, DC, April 4, 2018:** “The United States welcomes Georgia’s package of proposals to improve the lives of people living in Georgia’s regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These measures help address the needs of the most vulnerable populations on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines and provide increased opportunities for mobility, improved livelihoods, and access to education. We welcome Georgia’s commitment to dialogue and to a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The United States reiterates its full support for Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders”.
- ✓ **German Ambassador to Georgia Heike Peitsch** in his statement welcomes the new peace initiative of the Georgian government **“Step for Better Future”**: “With the initiative, the Georgian government led by Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili proves its courage and prescience. Being an ambassador of the country, which remained divided during 40 years, I hail initiatives, which will contribute to relieve and improvement of living conditions of locals residing on both sides of the dividing line”.
- ✓ **Justin McKenzie Smith, the British Ambassador to Georgia**, said in his twitter post on April 4 that the new initiative was “a sincere commitment to peace.” “We welcome it. Helping people to engage across dividing lines is essential to addressing their needs and hopes for a more positive future,” he also noted.

¹⁷ <https://ge.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-statement-step-better-future-peace-initiative-georgian-government-april-4/>



- ✓ **Jos Douma, the Dutch Ambassador to Georgia**, commented that the initiative was “brave,” and that it deserved “support from all concerned.”
- ✓ **Martina Quick, the Swedish Ambassador to Georgia**, released the message, saying the initiative was “a brave step by the Government Georgia for engagement,” and that it deserved “solid support.”
- ✓ **The Embassy of Turkey in Georgia** responds to the peace initiative – A Step to a Better Future. “We welcome the new package of the peace initiative adopted by the Georgian government. Turkey fully supports Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty,”
- ✓ **Janos Herman, Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia** said that EU will support Georgia’s peace initiative “**A Step for Better Future**” with practical steps. “The initiative will serve interests of citizens residing on both sides of the dividing line. This is part of our non-recognition and engagement policy. We believe that we could contribute to bringing benefits from the initiative including with facilitation of trade, mobility and education,” Herman said.

“EU will support Georgia’s peace initiative “A Step for Better Future” with practical steps“
- ✓ **Andreas Peschke, Special Envoy to the Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, Federal Foreign Office of Germany** tweeted: “Welcome initiative by Government of Georgia to improve living conditions on both sides of the administrative border line. Positive step! Germany supports it”.
- ✓ **The Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office, Michael Roth** stated when speaking at the event to mark the 100th anniversary of the first democratic republic of Georgia that **he highly appreciated Georgia’s peace initiative for the conflict resolution.**
- ✓ **German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas** at Joint Press conference with Georgian Foreign Minister Zalkaliani on July 2, 2018 stated: “We stand shoulder to shoulder with you on security issues. That also applies to the conflict regions. The territorial integrity of Georgia is not the subject of trade for us and nothing will change in the future in this regard”. *{info released by the MFA of Georgia: - Zalkaliani and Maas at the meeting also spoke about Georgia’s role in the NATO-Black Sea security discussions. Special attention was paid to Russia’s illegal activities in the occupied territories of Georgia that once again point to the need to create human rights and security mechanisms on the ground. The Georgian Foreign Minister spoke about the government of Georgia peace initiative for the peaceful resolution of conflict. He emphasized*



*the role of the European Union as the co-chair of the Geneva International Discussions and highlighted the **Georgian government's peace initiative "A step toward a better future"**, which is directed towards ensuring that Georgia's occupied regions also enjoy the benefits of integration with the EU}.*