

Statement of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in support of granting the Status of EU Candidate Country to Georgia

13 December 2022, Brussels

Following Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, and Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova's applications for EU membership, on 23 June 2022 the European Council granted EU candidate status to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova and recognised the European Perspective for Georgia, factually separating the so-called Associated Trio.

The European Union outlined 12-point conditions to grant Georgia EU candidate status and the government of Georgia initiated the necessary work to implement these conditions. So far, this ongoing, dynamic work process has been marked with both challenges and accomplishments, and Georgia's strategic task remains to fulfil the 12-point plan. Georgia has firmly and repeatedly declared its European aspiration, which is based on the will of the absolute majority of its population to become a full-fledged part of the Western civilisation. The people of Georgia's European choice is not dependent on temporary ruling parties, but it is a permanent, grounded civilisational choice, based on the recognition and fundamental sharing of democratic values and rule of law-based order.

On behalf of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, we welcome the granting of the EU candidate status to two of the Associated Trio countries – Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova – and we call on European leaders, particularly Mr. Charles Michel, President of the European Council, Ms Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission and Mr. Olivér Várhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement to support the granting of EU candidate status to Georgia.

The people of Georgia have great hope that their country will be granted the status of EU candidate. Granting EU candidate status to Georgia will strengthen public efforts put in the implementation of the necessary reforms in the country, and anchor the country's future more safely to the European Union. The steps taken forward in the process of European integration will also enhance the Eastern Partnership format, bring tangible results and generate more momentum for Western-style development in all six countries.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum