



**PRESIDENT**

**PRIME MINISTER**

**CHAIRMAN  
OF THE PARLIAMENT**

*Tbilisi, 05 May 2015*

Your Excellency,

In just a few weeks, leaders of the 28 EU Member States and six Eastern Partnership countries will meet in Riga for a Summit that will be critical for the future of our region. Since the last summit in Vilnius, the political and security environment has changed dramatically. Already at that time, we faced a clear challenge by the Russian Federation to fundamental principles of international law and practice, including the right of nations to exercise a sovereign choice and decide their own future. Since that time, Moscow's infringement on sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours has advanced to fundamentally challenge the security architecture of Europe as such. In this context, it is essential that we together reaffirm the Eastern Partnership principles, and take concrete steps towards realizing our common vision for a free and united Europe.

With this in mind, we write, Mr. President, to bring to your attention the expectations of Georgian leaders and people from the Riga Summit and appeal for your support and solidarity with those countries which have made the sovereign choice to pursue the vision of European integration. We hope that the European perspective of Georgia will be acknowledged, and, most importantly, that substantial progress will be made with regard to visa liberalisation.

The EU's active role in our region is essential to defend the framework upon which peace and security in Europe is based, namely the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, which are as critical to our nations today as they were to Germany's reunification in 1989, to the security of the Baltic states following the fall of the USSR, or to the countries of the Balkans in the aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia.

The EU also plays a key role in supporting internal democratic reforms, which underpin long-term peace and stability. Georgia is a front runner in transparency and open governance. Over the last two and a half years alone, we have, with the support of our EU partners, made great strides in bringing Georgia into line with the highest European and international standards: we have held free and fair Presidential and municipal elections; we have amended our Constitution to strengthen the role of the Parliament and increase checks and balances between the democratic institutions; we have increased the independence of the judiciary and the rights of defendants; we have introduced an ambitious human rights strategy and action plan as well as anti-discrimination legislation; we have strengthened freedom of the media and of expression; we have overhauled our tax and financial governance systems; we have cracked down on corruption and increased transparency.

**H. E. Donald Tusk**  
**President of the European Council**

We are fully committed to maintaining the momentum of internal reforms – which we believe in and of themselves greatly serve the interests of our country – and pursuing our Association agenda with the EU which strengthens this process. We trust in turn that the EU will continue its support for Georgia’s EU integration process, in line with the principles of differentiation and “more for more” and based on defined, transparent criteria. We hope that the Summit will recognize our progress and will note that EU-Georgia relations may deepen and expand beyond the Association – regardless of Russian opposition.

A critical step in advancing EU-Georgia relations is visa-liberalisation. We have put immense efforts into fulfilling all the benchmarks of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan, as part of our overall development programme and in order to demonstrate to our people that the commitment to comprehensive reforms delivers tangible benefits. We are confident that Georgia’s efforts to finalize the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan will be assessed as adequate in the final report of the European Commission ahead of the Summit.

With the technical requirements completed, it is our clear hope that the final declaration of the Riga Summit will contain an unambiguous endorsement of a visa-free regime with Georgia.

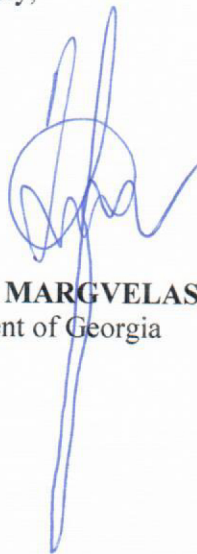
Granting visa-free travel to Georgian citizens will mean more tourism, cultural and student exchanges, and civil society partnerships. This will help develop Georgia and anchor future generations firmly within the European family of nations. Most importantly, it will provide a clear demonstration to the people of Georgia, including the inhabitants of the occupied territories of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia, and to those of the other Eastern Partnership countries that the EU upholds a merit-based approach and delivers on its promises. For Georgians, visa liberalization will provide a long-awaited tangible reward for reforms and encourage renewed efforts. For the people of the occupied regions, it will be a symbol of what stands to be gained from reintegration with the Georgian state. For other Eastern Partnership countries, it will offer a clear incentive for reforms.

Mr. President,


The shared vision and values of the Eastern Partnership are more important today than ever before. If these are to flourish, we must demonstrate at Riga that the European Union stands united in defence of fundamental norms and principles and that the European agenda brings tangible benefits for the people of the region.

We look forward to fruitful discussions in Riga and trust that the citizens of Georgia can count on your support.

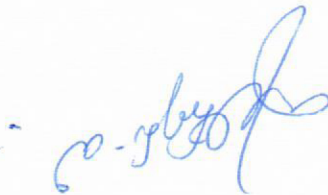
Sincerely,



**Giorgi MARGVELASHVILI**  
President of Georgia



**Irakli GARIBASHVILI**  
Prime Minister of Georgia



**David USUPASHVILI**  
Chairman of the Parliament  
of Georgia