

P5_TA-PROV(2003)0602

Georgia

European Parliament resolution on Georgia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Georgia and the southern Caucasus,
 - having regard to the partnership and cooperation agreement between the European Union and Georgia,
 - having regard to its resolution of 20 November 2003¹ on the Wider Europe-New Neighbourhood Policy,
 - having regard to the parliamentary elections of 2 November 2003 in Georgia,
 - having regard to the resignation of President Edvard Shevardnadze on 23 November 2003,
 - having regard to the annulment of the elections by the Georgian Supreme Court,
 - having regard to Rule 50(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. pointing out that the general elections of 2 November 2003 were marked by widespread irregularities whereby gross manipulations and frauds compounded technical and administrative problems,
- B. stressing that the OSCE, the Council of Europe and Parliament's ad hoc delegation stated that the elections fell short of international standards,
- C. whereas a new presidential election is expected for 4 January 2004, and the scheduling of parliamentary elections is not yet decided,
- D. whereas the people of Georgia have brought about peaceful change in the presidency of their nation, and welcoming the remarkable maturity shown by the Georgian people through the peaceful 'revolution of the roses',
- E. whereas the people of Georgia have shown their attachment to democratic change and their abhorrence of distrust, corruption and lack of transparency in the previous government,
- F. having regard to the role played by Russia, notably its Foreign Minister Mr Ivanov, in the resolution of the recent political crisis,

¹ P5_TA(2003)0520.

- G. whereas a peaceful and prosperous Georgia is vital to the stability of the region in particular and to Europe in general, human rights, pluralism and parliamentary democracy being cornerstones of that stability,
 - H. whereas Georgia's situation remains extremely delicate owing to the disastrous state of its finances, the severe problems of the economy, the fragility of the institutions, widespread corruption, the internal instability generated by the separatist developments in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the non-recognition of the central government in Ajaria, and the extremely tense external context created by the war in Chechnya and the unresolved conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh,
 - I. deeply concerned for the viability of the economy and at the extent of Georgia's foreign debt, which amounts to USD 1.8 bn,
 - J. whereas at the recent OSCE ministerial summit the EU reaffirmed the need to reach an early agreement between the parties on the duration and modalities of the functioning of the Russian military bases within the territory of Georgia,
 - K. whereas Georgia has stressed on many occasions its European vocation, showing a deep interest in getting closer to the EU with a view to making an application for membership in the long term,
1. Congratulates the people of Georgia on the political change that they have recently set in motion; congratulates the new authorities, and calls on them to create the conditions for a full return to democracy and the setting-up of credible and reliable institutions;
 2. Demands determined leadership by the European Union in promoting peace, stability and economic development in Georgia, as well as in Azerbaijan and Armenia.
 3. Insists that the Special Representative of the European Union for the southern Caucasus should be provided with sufficient resources to enable the EU's policy objectives in the region to be implemented, one of which is ensuring the integrity and sovereignty of Georgia; urges Member States involved in conflict resolution in the region to actively cooperate with him;
 4. Stresses that the forthcoming elections in Georgia must be free, fair and transparent, and must include the peoples of the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;
 5. Calls on the Council and Commission to find ways and means of supporting the new Georgian authorities by providing the necessary political, financial and technical assistance to stabilise the situation, define a strategy for reforms and prepare for the general elections; welcomes in this respect the grant agreed by the Presidency-in-Office for the organisation of the presidential elections scheduled for 4 January 2004;
 6. Requests the Russian authorities to fulfil transparently their undertaking, given at the 1999 OSCE summit in Istanbul, to close their military bases immediately and withdraw forthwith from Georgia;
 7. Insists that the Georgian authorities ensure the effective rule of law over the entire territory of Georgia, including engagement in the fight against terrorism;

8. Calls on the Council and Commission to step up the TACIS democracy programmes for Georgia with regard, in particular, to the consolidation of democratic institutions, the development and strengthening of civil society, and support for independent media;
9. Invites the Council and Commission to propose to the UN and the OSCE, as well as to the central authorities in Georgia and to the regional authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the despatch of a mission for the maintenance of peace in those regions and as a measure to relaunch the process for resolving differences between those regions and the central authorities;
10. Urges the Council and Commission to include the question of the three peace processes in the southern Caucasus in the development of the EU-Russia partnership, so as to create the necessary momentum to overcome the present deadlock; deplores the meeting held in Moscow between the leaders of the three breakaway regions of Georgia, and calls on the Russian authorities to play a constructive role aimed at defusing tension in Tbilisi, facilitating dialogue and supporting Georgia's integrity and sovereignty;
11. Regrets, in this regard, the recent decision of the Russian Federation to introduce a facilitated visa regime for Ajaria, without consulting the Georgian authorities, as well as the recent arrangements to speed up the process of provision of Russian citizenship to the citizens of Abkhazia and Ajaria;
12. In view of the economic collapse of Georgia, expresses its grave concern for the health and wellbeing of the people of Georgia ahead of winter, and calls on the Commission to submit proposals for emergency aid for heating, additional electrical power supplies and supplies of food and medicine;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the acting President of Georgia, the UN Secretary-General, the OSCE, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Government of the Russian Federation.