

The Co-Chairs



Brussels/Tbilisi,  
FT/mp(2014) D-37

14.01.14 00054

Irakli Gharibashvili  
Prime Minister of Georgia  
7 Ingorokva St  
Tbilisi 0114 – Georgia  
E-mail: [info@geo.gov.ge](mailto:info@geo.gov.ge)

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to express our concern about the suspension from office of the elected Mayor of Tbilisi, Mr Ugulava, following a decision taken on 18 December 2013 in circumstances which have raised concerns within the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia and the international community.

The Council of Europe and the EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) recognise strong and independent local self-government as an instrument for securing efficient decentralisation and multi-level democratic governance in Europe.

We believe the EaP needs to build on the results of the Vilnius Summit, which has recognised "the significant role of local democracy and citizen participation in pursuing the goals of the EaP". In Vilnius, we welcomed the engagement of Georgia in supporting the inclusion of local and regional authorities in the implementation of the relevant EaP policies and strategies, as well as your encouragement in enhancing our contribution to the EaP.


The steps taken by Georgia towards further integration with the EU have also been recognised by CORLEAP - an EaP body representing elected officials from the EU and Eastern partner countries – which had agreed to organise its next plenary session in Tbilisi in 2014 upon the invitation of its Mayor.

We consider this event, which will gather the EU leadership and local and regional authorities from the EU and its 6 Eastern partners, as a further occasion for Georgia to demonstrate to the international community its full respect for the commitments taken in Vilnius in November 2013, by stressing the political, democratic and active role of local and regional authorities in achieving the objectives of the EaP and applying European standards regarding the respect of local democracy, the rule of law and the principle of subsidiarity.

We believe in Georgia's commitment and will to further engage in its reform process and therefore we call on it to strengthen its ties with its international partners working for full respect of the rule of law and democracy, thereby paving the way for a fully-fledged association agreement. In this context, the EU Committee of the Regions and CORLEAP remain at the disposal of Georgian authorities for consultation prior to future debate on the reform of the country's self-government system. Meaningful reforms that bring all partners into compliance with European rules and standards play an important role in the current process and no government will succeed without the broad support of the people.

We look forward to hearing from you on a solution to the above-mentioned case, in full respect of the rule of law and with a view to allowing democratic bodies such as local governance to work in the citizens' interests.

Yours faithfully,



**Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso**  
President of the EU Committee of the Regions  
Co-chair of CORLEAP



**Mamuka Abuladze**  
President of the National Association of Local  
Authorities of Georgia, Co-chair of CORLEAP