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02 July 2013

## Politically motivated prosecution of opposition members in Georgia

### Written declaration No. 552

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This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

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The peaceful transfer of power as the result of the free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in October 2012 is a major accomplishment that should enable Georgia to move forward towards democratic consolidation and fully functional pluralistic democracy. However, right after the elections, the new Georgian authorities have taken steps against former officials and other members of the current political opposition that appear to be motivated by political considerations.

The pre-trial detention of the former Prime Minister and Secretary General of the largest opposition party, Mr Ivane Merabishvili, as well as the criminal charges against more than 100 former officials and members of the opposition have given rise to particular concerns. These actions, as well as the undemocratic takeover of more than two thirds of elected local authorities throughout Georgia call into question the Government's commitment to continued democratic development of Georgia, which must include respect for basic freedoms for all, including for the opposition.

We would also like to urge the Georgian authorities to take specific measures to ensure the effective independence of the judiciary. We condemn verbal attacks by senior political representatives on Georgian judges, who rejected requests by the prosecutor's office to place former officials in pre-trial detention.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



Signed<sup>1</sup>:

OMTZIGT Pieter, Netherlands, EPP/CD  
AGRAMUNT Pedro, Spain, EPP/CD  
ARIEV Volodymyr, Ukraine, EPP/CD  
BADEA Viorel Riceard, Romania, EPP/CD  
BIEDROŃ Robert, Poland, SOC  
BONET PEROT Sílvia Eloïsa, Andorra, SOC  
ČIGĀNE Lolita, Latvia, EPP/CD  
FISCHER Axel E., Germany, EPP/CD  
GRUBER Attila, Hungary, EPP/CD  
HANSON Margus, Estonia, ALDE  
HERKEL Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD  
KALMÁR Ferenc, Hungary, EPP/CD  
KOSZORÚS László, Hungary, EPP/CD  
LEIPUTĖ Orinta, Lithuania, SOC  
LĪBIŅA-EGNERE Inese, Latvia, EPP/CD  
OROBETS Lesia, Ukraine, EPP/CD  
PANKEVYCH Oleh, Ukraine, NR  
POURBAIX-LUNDIN Marietta, de, Sweden, EPP/CD  
SASI Kimmo, Finland, EPP/CD  
SOBOLEV Serhiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD  
TÜRKEŞ Tuğrul, Turkey, EDG  
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

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Total = 22

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democrat Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group  
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group