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Elections in Georgia – alarming developments

Written declaration No. 801

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.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

There are alarming reports coming from Georgia which seem to indicate that the ruling party is preparing to steal the upcoming parliamentary elections.

These include a massive intimidation campaign against opposition candidates and their supporters, whose premises are looted and whose families are threatened with apparent impunity. There have also been physical attacks against opposition activists.

Voters are also being intimidated by disseminating false information putting into question the secrecy of the vote – "the government will know how you voted and there will be consequences".

Many national election observation groups are being prevented from doing their jobs by abusing anti-corruption legislation even before the so-called "foreign agents law" enters into force.

Finally, it appears that the Central Election Commission has recently been brought under the control of the ruling party.

Such actions have created a pre-electoral environment in which it is very difficult to hold free and fair elections. In order to achieve international recognition of the election result, the authorities should stop acting in an anti-democratic way and reverse course.

The role of the international election observers, including the Parliamentary Assembly's, is therefore crucial to allow the people of Georgia to determine their future freely.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

KROSS Eerik-Niiles, Estonia, ALDE
ALCOBÉ Meritxell, Andorra, ALDE
BERGONZI Régis, Monaco, ALDE
BILOZIR Larysa, Ukraine, ALDE
BONETTI Elena, Italy, ALDE
CHRISTOFFERSEN Lise, Norway, SOC
COMA Bernadeta, Andorra, ALDE
GRIPPO Valentina, Italy, ALDE
JENSEN Mogens, Denmark, SOC
KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA Zanda, Latvia, EPP/CD
KUMPULA-NATRI Miapetra, Finland, SOC
LYDEKA Arminas, Lithuania, ALDE
MODERT Octavie, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
PAPANDREOU George, Greece, SOC
PETRU Ryszard, Poland, ALDE
PULJAK Marijana, Croatia, ALDE
ROJHAN Azadeh, Sweden, SOC
SOBOLIEV Serhii, Ukraine, EPP/CD
TALI Kadri, Estonia, NR
TIBLOM Victoria, Sweden, EC/DA
VALENTIN Kim, Denmark, ALDE
VASYLENKO Lesia, Ukraine, ALDE
VLASENKO Sergiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, EC/DA

Total = 24

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC/DA: European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group