Berlin, 20 October 2026

Open Letter on the Situation in Georgia

ISSUED BY THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
Supported by the state associations in Berlin, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate

Dear High Representative Kallas,
Dear Commissioner Kos,

We are writing as representatives of the Federal Executive Board of the German Party of Humanists ("Partei der Humanisten") to express our concerns regarding the ongoing deterioration of democratic standards, fundamental rights, and civic freedoms in Georgia.

During the past few months, there have been concerns about the political and legal environment in Georgia. Increasing pressure on civil society organisations, opposition actors, journalists, demonstrators, and other independent voices has progressively narrowed the space for democratic participation and political pluralism. It is important to note that recent restrictions affecting internationally operating organisations and political foundations form part of this broader development.

These developments are of particular significance considering Georgia's status as a candidate country for membership of the European Union. The credibility of the accession process depends on a clear association between further integration and tangible adherence to democratic principles, the rule of law, and the safeguarding of fundamental rights.

We therefore advocate that the European Union adopts a coordinated and proportionate response.

To that end, the European Union should consider the implementation of targeted restrictive measures against individuals who bear direct responsibility for serious violations of democratic rights or for the systematic erosion of democratic institutions. In instances where legal and political circumstances permit, measures such as travel restrictions and asset freezing should be considered. It is vital that their purpose is to address individual responsibility, while taking care to avoid measures that would have an adverse effect on Georgian civil society as a whole.
In addition, it is essential that any further progress in Georgia's European integration is clearly linked to specific, transparent, and measurable benchmarks. These should include the effective protection of political and civil rights, the independence of democratic institutions, the rule of law, and the ability of civil society organisations and independent media to operate without undue political interference.

Finally, the European Union should continue to strengthen its support for independent civil society, media, democratic participation, and academic cooperation. In instances where restrictive legislation or administrative measures compromise the operational capacity of independent organisations, the European Union should undertake a review of its existing support instruments with subsequent adaptation where deemed necessary. This is in order to ensure the preservation of sustainable pathways for cooperation with Georgian civil society.

At the same time, the European Union should maintain a clear distinction between measures directed at responsible political actors and its broader relationship with Georgian society. A significant part of the Georgian nation continues to advocate for democratic development and closer European integration. Measures that primarily increase the isolation of Georgian citizens from the European Union risk undermining rather than strengthening these relations.

The European Union should therefore continue to address restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of association and assembly. It should also address the treatment of opposition figures, journalists, demonstrators, and representatives of civil society within its political dialogue with the Georgian government.

Georgia should continue to embrace a European perspective, provided that this commitment is clearly conditional. To maintain the credibility of the enlargement process, it is essential to link progress towards becoming a member of the European Union with verifiable democratic and rule-of-law principles. Furthermore, any serious violations of these principles must result in political consequences.

We therefore urge the European Commission, the High Representative, and the Member States to adopt a unified approach that incorporates targeted restrictive measures, clearly defined democratic conditions for further integration, and sustained support for independent civil society and democratic institutions in Georgia.
Such an approach would demonstrate the European Union's continued commitment to the democratic standards on which the accession process is founded, as well as to those in Georgian society who advocate for a democratic and European future for their country.

Yours sincerely,

Felicitas Jäger
Federal Chair

Sascha Klughardt
Secretary-General

Daniel Keye
Treasurer