



EUROPEAN UNION

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High Representative Catherine Ashton visits Georgia and Kazakhstan

The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission Catherine Ashton will visit Georgia on July 15-16. She will launch the negotiations for an EU – Georgia Association Agreement, visit the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and meet with the leadership of the country. She will then travel to Kazakhstan and attend the Informal Meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of OSCE participating states to be held in Almaty on July 17.

During her visit to Georgia HR/VP Catherine Ashton will meet with President Mikheil Saakashvili and Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze. She will launch the negotiations for an EU-Georgia Association Agreement in Batumi on 15 July. On July 16 she will visit EUMM as well as locations on the Administrative Border Line.

Ahead of her visit HR/VP Ashton said: *“Georgia can rest assured that the EU will continue to provide support in advancing democracy, rule of law and governance particularly under the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership. We stand firm on our full support to Georgia’s territorial integrity and welcome its commitment to solving conflicts only through peaceful means and diplomatic efforts. We encourage Georgia to reengage with the populations in the conflict regions in accordance with its recently adopted Action Plan, in the interest of people affected. The EU will remain fully engaged in conflict resolution efforts employing a wide spectrum of its instruments. The EUMM remains an indispensable factor for stability.”*

From Georgia HR/VP Ashton will travel to Almaty for the Informal OSCE Ministerial Meeting, hosted by Kazakhstan who currently chairs the OSCE. Foreign Ministers will discuss issues related to the security in Europe, address the situation in Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan and speak about protracted conflicts like Nagorny-Karabakh and Transnistria. On the margins of the Ministerial HR/VP Ashton will hold several bilateral meetings, including with the President and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan.

Background

On Association Agreement negotiations: The EU is launching the negotiations on the Association Agreements with Georgia (on 15 July), Azerbaijan (on 16 July) and Armenia (on 19 July). The main objective is to achieve closer political association and gradual economic integration between the EU and the three Southern Caucasian countries. The EU is currently negotiating similar Association Agreements with Ukraine and Moldova.

P R E S S

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

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On EUMM: Since the 1st of October 2008, the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia has contributed to the maintenance of confidence, security and stability on the ground. The 225 monitors are there to ensure all sides meet their obligations under the implementation of the peace agreements of 12 August and 8 September 2008, which have been brokered by the European Union, and to contribute to stabilisation and normalisation in post-conflict Georgia.

For more information see also:

EUMM Georgia

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1512&lang=en>

Informal Ministerial Meeting, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 16-17 July 2010

http://www.osce.org/conferences/inf_min_2010.html
