



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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EU – Georgia Cooperation Council Twelfth meeting, Brussels, 1 December 2011

The Cooperation Council between the European Union and Georgia held its twelfth meeting on Thursday 1 December 2011. The EU was represented by Mr Radosław Sikorski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, acting on behalf of the High Representative Catherine Ashton and Mr Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy. The Georgian delegation was led by Mr Gregory Vashadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, acting as chair of the Cooperation Council meeting.

This meeting took place following the recent visit of HR/VP Ashton in Tbilisi on 17 November which reconfirmed EU's strengthened commitment to Georgia and the wider South Caucasus region.

The Cooperation Council took stock of the progress made in the bilateral relations between EU and Georgia the last year:

The entry into force of the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements on 1 March and the effective implementation of these agreements so far. This is part of the gradual steps that are taken to enhance mobility of Georgian citizens and towards a visa free regime in a secure and well managed environment in due course.

Four rounds of Association Agreement negotiations, with good progress made and broad agreement already reached on the elements covering political dialogue and foreign and security policy and justice, freedom and security, and in many chapters on economic and sector cooperation.

Intense preparations for the start of negotiations on a deep and comprehensive free trade area as an integral part of the future Association Agreement.

P R E S S

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The appointment of a new EU Special Representative, Mr. Philippe Lefort, and the extension of the EU monitoring mission, to continue to support the further stabilization and normalization efforts of the situation after the war in 2008.

The Council also followed up the recent Eastern Partnership Summit in Warsaw which reconfirmed the EU commitment to closer relationship with its Eastern partners. The Council discussed the development of a road map for Georgia that would list objectives, instruments and actions and guide and monitor their implementation until the next Eastern Partnership Summit in the second half of 2013.

The EU welcomed Georgia's European aspirations and commitment to the goals of political association and economic integration with the EU. The EU supported the continuation of democratic reforms in Georgia and the need to consolidate democratic institutions, encourage political pluralism and enhance media freedom.
