

Emergency Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, Madrid (Spain), 21st – 22nd October 2015

The Backsliding of Democracy in Georgia

The European People's Party

- **Is gravely concerned** by the reports of the government-backed campaign to change the ownership and editorial policy of Georgia's most popular TV channel Rustavi2 and freedom of media in the country, including the shutdown of political talk shows in the election year;
- **Is strongly worried** about the continuation of politically-motivated prosecutions of opposition leadership and the pre-trial detention of Rustavi2 supporters;
- **Condemns** the re-arrest of UNM campaign manager, leader and former Tbilisi mayor Gigi Ugulava after the Constitutional Court of Georgia declared his prolonged pre-trial detention as “anti-constitutional and illegal” amid the acceleration of one the cases against him with the sole purpose of incarcerating a major political leader;
- **Expresses** serious concern over the Georgian judiciary system becoming a tool of retribution against political opponents in the hands of the authorities;
- **Calls** on the Georgian authorities to fully respect the independence of the judiciary and to refrain from any political instrumentalisation, any restriction and any improper influence of judicial decisions;
- **Stresses** that the plurality of information, freedom of the media, political competition, rule of law, justice and democracy are the main principles and values of a democratic society and are key to the success of European integration;
- **Calls** upon the government of Georgia to reverse these trends and concentrate on the country's future;
- **Insists** that failing to reverse these trends will seriously harm Georgia and its progress in moving towards the European family of nations.