

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002502/25
to the Commission
Krzysztof Brejza (PPE)
(23 June 2025)**

Subject: Systemic political repression — Russian hybrid influence undermining democracy in the EU's Eastern Partnership

On 23 June 2025, a Georgian court sentenced opposition leader Zurab Japaridze to seven months' imprisonment and imposed a two-year ban on political activity. This follows a concerning trajectory of judicial repression orchestrated by the ruling Georgian Dream party, under the influence of oligarch Bidzina Ivanishvili. Numerous high-profile opposition leaders — including Mikheil Saakashvili, Nika Melia, Nika Gvaramia and Irakli Okruashvili — are currently imprisoned or facing imminent imprisonment under politically motivated charges.

These developments constitute a systematic dismantling of democratic institutions, in direct violation of Georgia's obligations under the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, and align with Russian hybrid warfare objectives in the Eastern Partnership region — seeking to erode democratic governance, provoke instability and obstruct Euro-Atlantic integration.

In this context:

1. What immediate and tangible measures will the Commission adopt to secure the release of Mr Japaridze and other political detainees?
2. What specific political, legal or financial instruments will the Commission activate to impose individualised sanctions on Mr Ivanishvili and affiliated enablers of repression?
3. In view of Georgia's democratic backsliding, when will the Commission initiate a formal review of the Association Agreement, and under what criteria?

Submitted: 23.6.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(18 August 2025)**

The EU is deeply concerned about the arrest of the leader of Girchi-More Freedom political party, as well as the arrests of other Georgian opposition leaders, and calls for the release of those unjustly detained ⁽¹⁾. In response to Georgia's continuous democratic backsliding and human rights violations, political contacts with the authorities have been downgraded and assistance benefitting the authorities has been suspended. The EU's support to civil society and independent media has been increased ⁽²⁾. Georgia's accession process has been effectively halted. The visa-free regime for the Georgian holders of diplomatic and service passports has been suspended ⁽³⁾. On 14 July 2025, the Commission sent a letter reminding Georgia of its obligations to fulfil the conditions for visa liberalisation ⁽⁴⁾.

At the Foreign Affairs Council of 15 July 2025, Member States discussed imposing sanctions on those Georgian citizens responsible for, involved in, or associated with serious human rights violations. To date, it was not possible to reach consensus by Member States and the discussions will continue ⁽⁵⁾.

Several additional EU actions were discussed by Member States at the 15 July 2025 Foreign Affairs Council, including the activation of the Visa Suspension Mechanism and the suspension of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement⁽⁵⁾. All options remain on the table.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/georgia-joint-statement-recent-developments-georgia_en.

⁽²⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-press-remarks-high-representative-kaja-kallas-press-conference_en;
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2024/12/16/>.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/01/27/georgia-council-suspends-visa-free-travel-for-diplomats-and-officials/>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-press-remarks-high-representative-kaja-kallas-upon-arrival-2_en.

⁽⁵⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-press-remarks-high-representative-kaja-kallas-upon-arrival-2_en;
https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-remarks-high-representative-kaja-kallas-press-conference-1_en.