



## **Statement of Representatives of Civil Societies of “Association Trio” on the upcoming EaP Summit**

We welcomed the establishment of the “Association Trio” by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in May 2021. We acknowledge that this format aims to enhance cooperation and dialogue among the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of three EU associated partners, as well as with the European Union on matters of common interest related to the European integration of our countries.

Batumi Summit Declaration (the Petra Declaration) was signed by the Heads of State of Association Trio – Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2021. The Petra Declaration strengthened the trilateral cooperation among our countries on European integration and reiterated our pledge to work together for the peaceful, democratic and prosperous European future for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Petra Declaration illustrated that the three associated countries focus on developing a common approach, vision on their European paths. At the same time, they have the common history and challenges. According to this Declaration, the associated states are united by the goal of joining the European Union. No third party could influence this sovereign choice. Furthermore, the visit of Charles Michel, the President of the European Council and participation in the signing ceremony of the Petra Declaration demonstrated that the EU is a strong partner for our countries in the region. The strategic interest of the EU is to assist the Associated Trio to achieve tangible results in terms of establishing a democratic and stable, secure environment.

Before the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit, the visit of Prime Ministers of Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova to Brussels and meetings with all three EU Presidents - the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament indicated that our countries will deepen relations with the European Union.

We think that the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit should give the impetus to a more ambitious strategy for the integration of EaP countries that have association agreements with the European Union.

We believe that the Summit participants will reconfirm the importance of the incentive-based approach (“more for more”) aimed to set progressive benchmarks of the integration process and provide for tangible achievements for our societies.

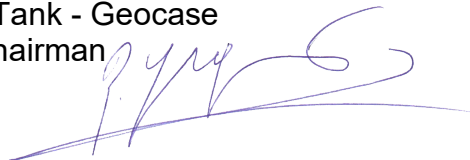
We expect that the Summit participants will reiterate the EU’s strong support of EaP countries’ independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognised borders. They will condemn Russia’s aggressive actions including direct and indirect involvement in armed conflicts and military build-ups inside the borders of or on its borders with the EaP region.

We also appreciate the EU's greater role and engagement in finding peaceful conflicts' solutions. We believe that the Summit Joint Declaration will pay special attention to the development of new initiatives for strengthening the security capacities of our countries.

We suppose that the Summit participants will reaffirm the sovereign right of each partner to choose the level of ambition and the goals to which it aspires in its relations with the EU. According to international law, all states have the right to define foreign policy priorities independently. Therefore, the Russian Federation should respect the sovereign choice of our countries.

The Summit Joint Declaration should reflect clear political messages on the European perspectives of our nations. In this regard, we acknowledge that the effective implementation of reforms will be the precondition for our European future. We believe that the parties will reaffirm their continued commitment to our countries' deeper political association and economic integration with the EU. Overall, the development of the ambitious strategy for the associated partners will facilitate preparation for the new momentum of European integration. It will increase opportunities for our countries on the European path and assist us to achieve our European aspirations.

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