

Georgia: President Zourabichvili calls on EU to step up and defend its values



Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili addressed MEPs on Wednesday
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On Wednesday morning, the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili delivered a speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Welcoming President Zourabichvili to the hemicycle, [European Parliament President Roberta Metsola](#) said: “When you last visited this House, we discussed your country’s progress towards joining our European family. Today, this journey is under threat. I know that there are many in Georgia today who fear for their country’s future. I speak for this entire House when I say to all Georgians who look to Europe for support and for their future: you are not alone. We see you, we hear you, we are with you. This House stands strong with Georgia in its journey towards Europe.”

In her address to MEPs, President Zourabichvili discussed the protest movement sweeping Georgia since the disputed parliamentary elections in October: “In some ways, we feel like we are back in 1921”, she said, “as scenes are repeating themselves” (...) “That is what explains the courage and determination with which the Georgian people are reacting today. They see what is happening as a deposition of their freedom, their future and in some ways their independence”.

She emphasised, however, that this is a very peaceful movement, not a revolutionary one. “We only ask for two things: give us our voice back, because of the stolen elections, and give us our European future back,” through new elections.

Far from being a society split in two, President Zourabichvili described Georgia as a country where the Georgian people are in one corner and the repressive apparatus of one party in the other. She also outlined how in recent years Georgia has been sliding down a more and more authoritarian trajectory, before turning towards MEPs with a warning: “Europe has so far only met the challenge half way. It has been slow to wake up and slow to react. Much more could and should be done.” President Zourabichvili called on Europe and the West to provide sustained political backing to Georgia’s democratic voices, support for justice and the release of political prisoners, and firmly backing calls for new elections.

President Zourabichvili finally stressed that what is happening in Georgia is about more than its democracy and its political choices - it is also about Europe and its strategic interests. If Georgia falls “under Russian control, it will touch upon everything from Black Sea security to connectivity, and Armenia’s European future. (...) The stakes will be high”.

You can [watch the debate again](#) (18.12.2024). This was President Zourabichvili’s second speech in the hemicycle, [following a previous address on 31 May 2023](#).

Further information

[Press release: “Parliament calls for new elections in Georgia” \(28.11.2024\)](#)

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