GEORGIAN
NATIONAL PLATFORM

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Statement of the GNP on the Anniversary of the Fall of Sokhumi

September 27, 2026

Georgian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership civil society forum marks the 33rd anniversary of the fall of Sokhumi, which represents one of the most tragic dates in Georgia's modern history. On this day, we honor the memory of those who lost their lives as a result of the conflict and express our full solidarity with the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons who shared the difficult fate of being refugees in their own homeland.

It must be clearly noted that the tragedy of Abkhazia was not an isolated event. It was the initial stage of aggression unleashed by the Russian Federation, which was later followed by other bloody conflicts, including in the Tskhinvali region/Samachablo. These processes are part of Russia's unified imperialist strategy aimed at hindering the development of sovereign states and maintaining hotbeds of instability in the region.

The Georgian National Platform pays special attention to the following critical challenges:

- **Creeping annexation and attempts at full integration:** The Russian occupying regime goes beyond mere military control and intentionally carries out the complete integration of the region into its own economic, legal, and political space. Mass passportization (the forced/illegal distribution of Russian citizenship), installing individuals loyal to the Kremlin through local so-called "elections," and constant discussions about formal annexation to the Russian Federation serve as instruments of continuous political blackmail directed against Georgia.
- **Expansion of military infrastructure and borderization:** The erection of barbed wire fences (borderization) by the occupying forces serves to expand military control. The Kremlin actively uses the occupied territories both on land and in the Black Sea (including attempts to establish new naval bases) as a military foothold, which poses a direct threat to the freedom of navigation and the security of the Black Sea basin.
- **Rights of IDPs and ethnic cleansing:** Due to the ethnic cleansing carried out as a result of the war, hundreds of thousands of people have been deprived of the opportunity to safely and worthily return to their homes for decades. Gross

violations of human rights continue due to Russia's refusal to enforce international humanitarian law.

- **Discrimination against ethnic Georgians:** Ethnic Georgians living in the occupied territory, particularly in the Gali district, face daily harassment regarding their rights. The prohibition of receiving education in their native language and restrictions on freedom of movement are clear manifestations of persecution on ethnic grounds.

European Security, Democratic Development, and Peaceful Conflict Resolution:

The situation in the occupied regions of Georgia is a key issue for the entire European security architecture. Against the backdrop of the ongoing full-scale aggression in Ukraine, it has become even clearer that long-term peace in Europe is impossible without the de-occupation of partner countries.

The Georgian National Platform firmly supports resolving the conflict through peaceful, diplomatic means. At the same time, we believe that Georgia's European integration and the country's democratic development represent the primary stimulating factors for societal reconciliation and the reunification of the country. We note with great concern that these fundamental processes face serious challenges today.

In the new context of EU enlargement, protecting peace, stability, and democratic values in the Eastern Partnership area is non-negotiable. We call on the international community to strengthen support for peace initiatives, ensure the full implementation of the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) mandate across the entire territory, and increase pressure on Russia to fulfill the 2008 ceasefire agreement.

The Eastern Partnership Georgian National Platform reaffirms its unwavering support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.