**To:**

**The European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and their parliamentary bodies**

**Governments of the Member-States of the European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE**

**International Non-Governmental Organisations**

**Tbilisi, 3 December 2022**

We, former Georgian diplomats, address you with this letter on the issue of utmost urgency.

**Amid concerns of rapidly deteriorating health and citing severe human rights abuses, including torture and heavy metal poisoning, an independent team of U.S. medical experts has announced the findings of their recent assessment of the Former President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili.**

"The facts of his condition are alarming and it is clear President Saakashvili has been grossly mistreated, and subjected to torture," said Dr. James C. Cobey, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, who shared the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize on Landmines. "His life is immediately threatened unless he is moved to a western treatment facility to receive lifesaving care," added Dr. Cobey.

Since President Saakashvili was detained in October 2021, his physical and mental condition has significantly deteriorated. The recent findings confirm he now suffers from debilitating psychological, neurological, orthopedic and gastrointestinal conditions directly caused by confinement. In addition, the medical team discovered evidence of arsenic and heavy metals, including mercury in President Saakashvili's body, leading the medical experts to strongly recommend the immediate transfer in an advanced medical facility in the United States or Western Europe.

"President Saakashvili has been given at least 14 different drugs, some non-FDA approved," said Dr. David E. Smith, M.D., FASAM, FAACT, a leading toxicologist in the United States. "The deadly combination has produced brain dysfunction including white matter reduction in the prefrontal cortex which controls executive function in the brain, increasing morbidity and the risk of mortality, and immediate detoxification from these drugs is therefore necessary," added Dr. Smith.

On 2 December, due to the medical assessment findings, President Saakashvili's legal team, including Massimo F. D'Angelo, a U.S.-based lawyer with Akerman filed an emergency application in the Georgian court seeking the deferral of the former president's prison sentence and immediate transfer out of Georgia.

Allowing President Saakashvili to be treated abroad is a first step, as it would give the former president access to Western-standard testing and treatment, free from concerns of political interference. As the recent resolution by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has established, Mikheil Saakashvili is a political prisoner of the current regime. He must be freed. As Georgia is seeking to obtain the candidate status to the European Union, especially at a time when all of Europe’s security is under threat, developments like this one are absolutely unacceptable.

**We, the former Georgian diplomats, would like to raise international communities’ awareness on the issue and call on respective governments, IOs and INGOs to react as strongly as possible to these concerning developments.**

Giorgi Badridze, former Ambassador to the United Kingdom; Senior Fellow at Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies

David Bakradze, former Speaker of the Parliament, former Minister of Foreign Affairs; Member of the Parliament

Gela Bezhuashvili, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Secretary of National Security Council; Member of the Board, Strategy International

Valeri Chechelashvili, former Finance Minister, former 1st Deputy Foreign Minister, former Ambassador to Ukraine, to Russia, former Secretary General of BSEC, of GUAM; Member of European Leadership Network, Georgian Strategic Analysis Centre Board Member

Konstantin Gabashvili, former Ambassador of Georgia to Germany, Poland, Italy, Malta, San-Marino, FAO, IFAD, WFP, former Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs, of the Parliamentary Committee for Science and Education, former Minister of Education, former Mayor of Tbilisi, invited Lecturer at Tbilisi State University and Ilia State University

Mamuka Gamkrelidze, former Ambassador to the China, Mongolia, Vietnam; General Secretary of European Democrats Party of Georgia

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Alex Petriashvili, former State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, former Ambassador to Turkmenistan and Afghanistan; Senior Fellow at Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies

Salome Samadashvili, former Head of Georgia’s Mission to the European Union, Ambassador to Kingdom of Belgium and Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; Member of Parliament, Political Secretary of “Lelo for Georgia”

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Nikoloz Vashakidze, former Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council, former First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, former First Deputy Minister of Defence; Chairperson of Political Council of European Democrats Party of Georgia

Temur Yakobashvili, former State Minister for Reintegration, former Ambassador to the United States; President of the Revival Foundation, Washington DC based charity