

(Tbilisi – 9 March, 2020) – Georgian Dream announces today a broad, cross-party agreement that will move ahead with a reform of the electoral system for the 2020 Parliamentary elections, due in October. The opposition parties have been fully involved in the process of drafting the reform.

Georgian Dream has consistently, for several years, advocated the introduction of a Proportional voting system as a natural evolution for Georgian democracy, as envisaged by the new Constitution. This agreement is a fulfilment of GD's promise to the Georgian people and will further strengthen our democratic system.

The deliberations on the electoral reform were facilitated by, and had the full participation of, Georgia's most important partners: the United States and the European Union.

The parties have agreed to:

- Adoption of a "120/30" electoral system, whereby 120 seats in the Parliament will be elected by proportional representation (increasing from the existing 77), and 30 seats elected by direct, equally sized constituencies (a drop from the existing 73).
- The proportional representation threshold is set at 1%.
- No party that fails to reach 40% of the vote can form a one-party government.

This is a balanced and pragmatic reform that will ensure Georgia continues to be a vibrant, multi-party democracy, and underscores Georgian Dream's commitment to free and fair elections.

Mr Archil Talakvadze, Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, stated:

"Georgian Dream is fully committed to ensuring the elections in October are free and fair. GD won a Parliamentary majority in the free and fair elections in 2012 and 2016, and we look forward once again to making our case to the people of Georgia in a vibrant election campaign.

"With the support of our key international partners, the United States and the European Union, Georgian Dream is continuing to be at the forefront of strengthening our country's

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Subject: Agreement on Electoral Reform in Georgia
Date: Monday, March 9, 2020 4:05:57 PM

Good Afternoon,

Georgian Dream is today announcing a crucial reform of Georgia's electoral system, an agreement between the ruling and opposition parties that ensures Georgia continues to be a vibrant, multi-party democracy, and underscores Georgian Dream's commitment to free and fair elections.

The electoral reform, which will significantly increase the number of parliamentary seats chosen by proportional representation, resulted from extensive dialogue between the ruling Georgian Dream party and opposition parties.

The United States and the European Union oversaw these talks, and the U.S. embassy in Georgia and the EU are hailing the agreement as "[a stepping stone on Georgia's democratic path.](#)" Georgia is an important strategic partner of both the United States and EU. Read more [here](#).

In recent months, some had accused Georgian Dream of backsliding on its commitment to Democracy. Yet today's agreement, with its endorsement by all parties, reinforces that Georgia Dream is fully committed to the country's young and vibrant democracy, and is taking steps to strengthen it.

"Georgian Dream is fully committed to ensuring the elections in October are free and fair. GD won a Parliamentary majority in the free and fair elections in 2012 and 2016, and we look forward once again to making our case to the people of Georgia in a vibrant election campaign." – Mr Archil Talakvadze, Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia.

Please also find the text of a statement detailing the electoral reform.

Thanks,
Jerry

Statement:

Georgian Dream Announces Cross-Party Agreement on Electoral Reform

October 2020 elections will yet again confirm Georgia's status as the leading pro-Western democracy in the region

democracy. The Georgian people appreciate the role that our international partners played in facilitating this agreement on electoral reform, which is in line with voting systems used in the European Union."

Mr Irakli Kobakhidze, Executive Secretary, Georgian Dream Party, stated:

"We encourage representatives from all political parties to act responsibly in the face of the external threats that our country is facing. The ruling Georgian Dream party will do its utmost to ensure a strong and prosperous development of Georgia. We urge the opposition to do the same by making certain that political party interests never take priority over the country's interests."

The Georgian Dream government is focused on addressing the issues that matter most to the people of Georgia: stable and secure development, economic growth, jobs and investment, advancing our application for membership of the European Union, our commitment to NATO and the Western Alliance, and reducing regional tensions to ensure stability and security for Georgian citizens and businesses.

Facts about Georgia's Democracy, Electoral Reform and the 2020 Elections

- This agreement is a win-win for the Georgian People and for Georgia's young, vibrant Democracy, as well as for all political parties whose aim is to promote sustainable development of the democratic political system in Georgia. All Georgians stand together in our commitment to Democracy and free and fair elections.
- The ruling party Georgian Dream has a strong and consistent record of holding free and fair elections since coming to power in 2012.
- In 2017, the ruling party Georgian Dream introduced a new constitution which finalized its transition to a being a Parliamentary Democracy, requiring the Government of Georgia to be directly responsible to Parliament and the Georgian people. This marked a big step in Georgia's continuing democratic evolution.
- In 2017, Georgian Dream, the governing party at the time, supported and initiated a switch to a fully proportional electoral system starting in 2024.
- In November 2019, the Georgian Parliament considered legislation introduced by

the Georgian Dream governing party that would have accelerated the proportional election system for 2020 rather than 2024. Unfortunately, the law failed by a handful of votes.

- The 2020 elections will now be conducted under a mixed system of proportional and majoritarian voting. There are currently 150 seats in Georgia's Parliament. Seats are divided between those that are elected based on "lists" and those that are elected based on "majoritarian" criteria. The current allocation between the two categories is 77/73. For the October 2020 elections, this will evolve to 120/30.
- In 2024, as enshrined in the new constitution, there will be transition to full proportional election, with the allocation 150/0. Georgian Dream is the initiator and author of this fundamental change and is fully committed to it.

NOTE: These materials are distributed by DCI Group AZ, L.L.C. for Political Union of Citizens "Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia," and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.