

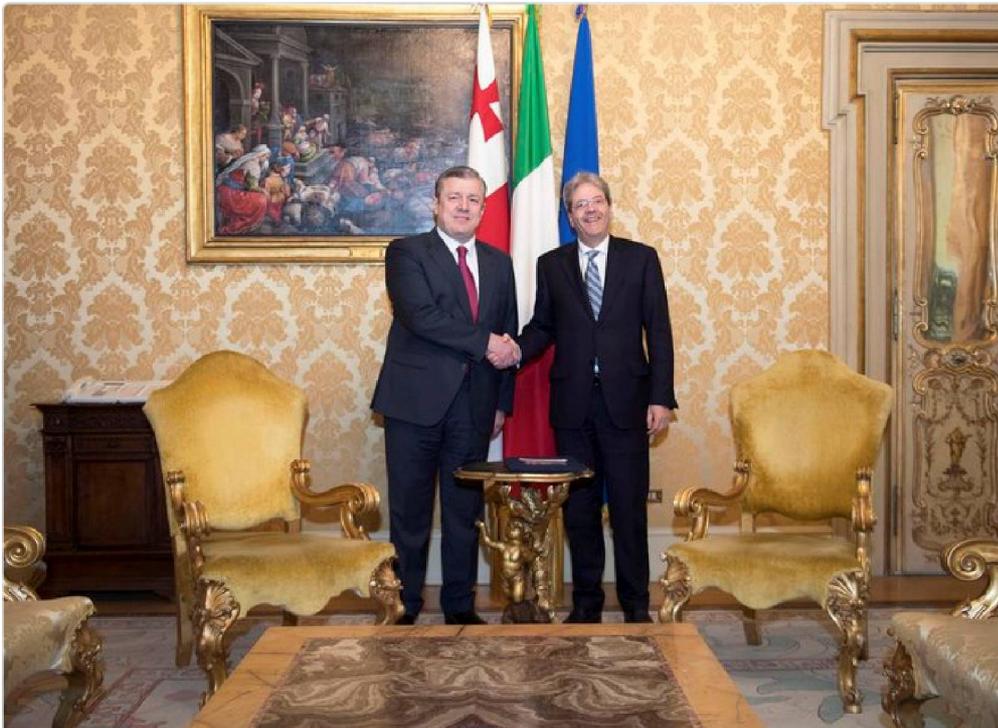
## Georgian Prime Minister Concludes Italy Visit

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Georgia's Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili, accompanied by cabinet members, paid a state visit to Rome, where he participated in the joint Georgia-Italy Business Forum and met with his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni.

"We certainly hope that this visit will mark the beginning of a new phase. Moreover, we have been assured that our relations will advance to a strategic level," PM Kvirikashvili [stated](#) at the end of his March 8 visit.

According to the Georgian Prime Minister's press office, Giorgi Kvirikashvili and his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni spoke on the bilateral cooperation in economy, trade, tourism, energy and agricultural sectors and stressed the "dynamic" cooperation in cultural, education, scientific, defense and security matters.



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Following the meeting with his Italian counterpart, PM Kvirikashvili, together with Italian Foreign Minister Angelino Alfano, addressed the joint [Georgia-Italy Business Forum](#), which gathered representatives of around 200 Italian and 60 Georgian companies.

In his [remarks](#), Giorgi Kvirikashvili emphasized that the country's liberal trade regime, low taxes and its strategic location, have made Georgia "a new regional frontier for investment opportunities and "an opening window" to the economies of Central Asia and the Far East.

"Investing in Georgia requires little legal hassle and normative adjustment. Georgia's Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement with the EU - established in 2014 - is of particular importance for us, as it envisions the gradual economic integration of Georgia with the EU's internal market," he also said.

"In this respect, we provide physical access through modern transport infrastructure and normative access in terms of free trade agreements. Specifically, we have already finalized negotiations and Georgia will be the first country in the region to have a Free Trade Agreement with China. We also have in place FTA agreements with the CIS, Turkey, and GSP regimes with the United States, Canada and Japan and plan to launch FTA negotiations with India later this year," Kvirikashvili explained.

He also spoke on the potential of the Port of Anaklia, "the only deep-sea port on the Eastern side of the Black Sea that sits on the shortest route from China to Europe.

Addressing the participants, Angelino Alfano [emphasized](#) that the Forum's objective "is to offer Italian businesses opportunities for cooperation and investment in the manufacturing, infrastructure and tourism sectors."

"Georgia is a dynamic democracy implementing a number of successful reforms, as evidenced by international ratings," Alfano said according to the Georgian PM's press office.

Within his visit to Rome, Kvirikashvili also met with the President of the Senate [Pietro Grasso](#), Italian Minister of Economic Development [Carlo Calenda](#) and NATO Parliamentary Assembly President [Paolo Alli](#).

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