

## THE PORT OF VENICE ON A MISSION IN GEORGIA

*President Pino Musolino attending the Tbilisi Belt&Road Forum to strengthen institutional relationships along the Silk Road and create bilateral relationships with Georgian ports of Anaklia and Poti for commercial trades*

Venice-Tbilisi 29 November 2017 – Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, is hosting these days the **Belt&Road Forum, an initiative promoted by the Prime Minister of Georgia** and organized by the Ministry of Economy and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia: **more than 1000 delegates are attending the forum, including over 15 Ministers, High level Officials from 34 countries and companies from 50 different countries.**

The Port of Venice, represented by its President Pino Musolino, was invited to **attend the international summit as representative of the main European sea terminal to connect Asia and the old continent through the Silk Road.** It is a unique opportunity for the port of Venice to strengthen and create new institutional relations on the international theatre of the Belt and Road Initiative and **find new potential businesses and trades, not with China alone but also with South East Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia.**

During the mission, in order to favour the development of economic and commercial routes not only to the advantage of the Port of Venice but also of the companies of the North East of Italy, **President Musolino** – with the support of the Italian Embassy – **met some of the top institutional officials**, such as the Vice-premier and Minister of Economy of Georgia, **Dimitry Kumsishvili**, the Mayor of Tbilisi **Kakha Kaladze**, second vice-premier and former Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, as well as the Director General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission, **Henrik Hololei**.

In commercial terms, a series of B2B meetings were organized with Georgian businesses and operators including the **CEO of the Port of Anaklia**, Mr. **Levan Akhvlediani**, and the **General Manager of APM Terminals Poti**, Mr. **Klaus Holm Laursen**, who today welcomed the Venice delegation at the port of Poti for a tour of the port infrastructures.

*"Georgia is one of the countries along the XXI-century Silk Road and, like Venice, it represents an extraordinary gate to the hinterland markets. Establishing long-lasting trade relationships with Georgian ports means, for Venice, being able to count on incoming and outgoing trade flows with some of the highest potential markets. The road of Marco Polo should not be thought of as a mere link to and from China, but as an opportunity to reach new markets and start trades in line with the Venice excellences, such as the steel and break bulk industry, as well as the trade of fruit and vegetable products",* has declared by **Pino Musolino**, President of the Port of Venice.

**Georgia**, in fact, is in a highly strategic geographical position – overlooking the Black Sea and bordering with Turkey, Azerbaijan and Russia –and **represents the gateway to Caucasus and Central Asia, resulting in a strategic hub for commercial flows.** Through Georgia it is possible to **carry from Central Asia to Europe both natural resources** (oil, gas, coal, zinc, copper etc.) **and finished goods and products.** Commercial flows crossing the country ensure that Georgia can grow a healthy economy: **from 65% to 95% of cargo inflows are intended for transit.** That's why the **Georgian government aims at further developing the logistic sector through various services and incentives to their trade partners** including: *no tax* for goods transit, full transparency of customs services, a modern and effective logistic service (average time for import of 15 min.), a network of modern terminals equipped with efficient facilities. **The capital Tbilisi alone** represents a very important market since one third of 3 million 718 thousand inhabitants of the country live here, and **50% of the entire GDP of the country is produced here** (12 billion euro in 2016).