



EMBASSY OF GEORGIA TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA
PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO THE OSCE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

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Statement of the Georgian Delegation

Forward-looking discussions, Session 3: Combating trafficking in human beings

Mr/Madame Moderator,

The Government of Georgia has dynamically undertaken measures to suppress the trafficking in persons in Georgia and for the purpose of prevention of this crime to conduct respective wide public awareness campaign. To meet the requirements of the well known "three Ps": Prevention, Protection and Prosecution of the crime, active measures have been undertaken both – at the legislative and implementation levels. There has been efficient use of the fourth "P" – partnership throughout the process.

Since 2007 Georgia is included in the "Tier 1" countries by the US Department of State in its yearly Report on Trafficking in Persons. The whole range of activities was directed towards the establishment and stable development of standards corresponding to internationally recognized norms for combating the crime of TIP in Georgia in 2006-2010.

In particular, the activities of the Georgian Government can be outlined as follows: Creation of Appropriate Legal Basis; Advancement of Institutional Capacity; Provision of TIP Victim Protection; Arranging the wide Public Awareness Activities; and Prosecution of TIP.

Let me briefly touch upon some of the principal reforms accomplished by the Government of Georgia:

With the aim to create an Appropriate Legal Basis, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on Fighting against Trafficking in Persons in April 2006, a result of the cooperation of relevant Georgian authorities, NGOs and international organizations. The Law determines organizational and legal grounds for preventing and combating trafficking in persons, the competencies and obligations of the state agencies and public officials, as well as legal entities and identifies procedure for coordination of activities of respective state bodies and officials. After several amendments the formulation of the crime of trafficking in persons was brought in full compliance with the definition given in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. It shall be noted that the Georgian legislation regarding TIP fully corresponds to the standards established by the Council of Europe Convention. UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was ratified by the Georgian Parliament in June 2006.

For the sake of the Advancement of Institutional Capacity, the following two actions have been accomplished: First, the Permanent Interagency Coordination Council was established, mechanism between the various bodies responsible for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, state institutions, ministries, international organizations and NGOs. Second, the State Fund for Protection of and Assistance to (Statutory) Victims of Trafficking in Persons was established on the basis of the Law under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Welfare. The State Fund provides the payment of compensation to victims of trafficking and finances their protection, assistance and rehabilitation measures. The Law also ensured creation of the institution providing services for the TIP victims (the shelter).

The purpose of creation of the Unified Database was facilitation of the process of the identification of human traffickers; systematization of the information on human traffickers existing in different agencies; promotion of the effective cooperation, coordination and mobilization of the government agencies for the fight against trafficking; prevention of the crime on the basis of generalization of systematized data; facilitation of the process of timely and effective aid, protection and rehabilitation of the victims by the Government.

Provision of TIP Victim Protection includes two directions: The National Referral Mechanism was put into operation in 2006, a detailed guideline for effective cooperation of the state agencies, local NGOs and international organizations in the fight against TIP. The Georgian Government's National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons devotes particular attention to the elaboration and effective implementation of the programs directed towards assistance to and reintegration of victims of trafficking in persons, rehabilitation and social reintegrations of victims. On July 19, 2007 the Coordination Council approved the Strategy for Rehabilitation and Reintegration into Society of the Victims of Trafficking in Persons.

The anti-trafficking information campaign and the large-scale educational activities conducted by the Georgian Government in cooperation with the international organizations and local NGOs among others contribute to both prevention and prosecution of TIP in Georgia and to the protection of the victims thereof. Namely, the various trainings have been conducted for the following target groups with the support of the Office of the Prosecutor General of Georgia: judges and prosecutors, high school teachers, the officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection, and the representatives of the Office of the Public Defender and the Mass Media.

Special attention is paid to the prosecution of traffickers. There are specialized investigators and prosecutors working on the trafficking cases. The law enforcement authorities regularly report on the prosecution of the cases of trafficking in persons before the Interagency Coordination Council.

The Georgian Government's new, 2-year National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons shall be adopted at the end of 2010. The draft 2011-2012 National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons identifies a range of activities planned in response to the needs and priorities acknowledged at this stage of the fight against trafficking in persons in Georgia.

The 2011-2012 National Action Plan on the Fight against Trafficking in Persons is being drafted with coordination and active participation of all relevant Georgian Governmental agencies and the international and local NGO community working on the TIP issues. The Action Plan is being drafted based on the internationally recognized standards. After the consent and approval by the Coordination Council, the Chairman of the Coordination Council shall refer the Action Plan to the President of Georgia for the final approval at the end of 2010. Anti-TIP Activities planned by the Georgian Government for 2011-2012 encompass four main goals mentioned above: equal attention is attributed to the prevention of this crime, protection of the victims of the crime of TIP, prosecution of offenders and partnerships in all the endeavors.

Thank you!