



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

As delivered by the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the OSCE,

Ambassador Paata Gaprindashvili

at the 918th session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, June 21, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to warmly welcome the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Dunja Mijatovic and thank her for presenting to the Permanent Council the detailed and comprehensive regular report.

The Government of Georgia highly appreciates your continuous interest and engagement, Dear Ms. Mijatovic, in progress of media environment in Georgia. Allow me to assure you that the cases referred to in the regular report have been thoroughly examined by the respective Georgian authorities. The Georgian side stands ready to carefully examine all the cases brought to its attention and provide the Office with additional information.

Dear Colleagues,

The Government of Georgia is fully committed to, and ensures, the unhindered exercise of the freedom of expression in all of its forms, including that of the freedom of media. Therefore, we attach the tremendous importance to the balanced coverage of the upcoming parliamentary elections in October 2012 by the media. We are grateful for the EU to reciprocate our request to finance the media-monitoring project similar to the one implemented during the

2010 local elections. We are pleased that on 25 April 2012, 5 months prior to the 2012 parliamentary elections the EU and the UNDP launched a new project on pre-election media monitoring contributing to a transparent, objective and balanced media environment. In addition, a number of new regulations were introduced to the new Elections Code adopted on 27 December 2011 to facilitate political debates during election campaigns and familiarize voters with the views of political parties on issues of their interest. As a result, the new code provides additional guarantees to fair and balanced news coverage of all candidates during election campaign, ensures balanced reporting and equal access for all political parties to the media.

In the end, I would like to use this opportunity and, once again, reiterate that the issues related to the freedom of media represent the priority of both the Government and the society of Georgia. Georgia attaches great importance to the assistance of the RFoM to the Government of Georgia in accomplishing numerous reforms with the objective to ensure the protection of media freedom and pluralism. We highly appreciate the active and fruitful cooperation enjoyed with the Office of the OSCE RFoM and remain committed to continue the close interaction in the same spirit.

Thank You.