



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

**S t a t e m e n t**

of Ambassador Konstantine Zaldastanishvili

the Head of the Delegation of Georgia to the OSCE

delivered at the 956<sup>th</sup> session of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, June 13, 2013

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to welcome the Special Representative of the OSCE on Freedom of Media, Mrs. Dunja Mijatovic to the Permanent Council meeting and thank her for the comprehensive overview of the media related issues across the OSCE region. The work undertaken by you, Mrs. Mijatovic, personally and your dedicated staff greatly contribute to the promotion of free media, pluralistic society and rights of journalists. The Government of Georgia reiterates its determination to work closely with your office in order to bring the media related practice and legislation in line with OSCE standards.

We are thankful for the special attention that you have attached in your report to the developments in Georgia. Concerning the specific questions which you have alluded to in the report, I would like to provide an update on the steps that the respective Georgian authorities have undertaken. Namely, as a follow-up to the legal review provided by professor

Katrin Nyman Metcalf, the following amendments have been introduced to the draft Law on Broadcasting:

- As regards the dates of entry into force of those articles, which regulate the election of members of Board of Trustees, the Parliament of Georgia has set the date of January 1, 2014, which means that the new election procedure of members of Board of Trustees will be enacted after 2014. Hence it will not be linked to the elections and the changes in political processes. This provision has been welcomed by the coalition of Media-for Advocacy, as well as the Transparency International-Georgia.
- The “Must Carry – Must offer” principle has been established across the entire territory of Georgia and at all periods, which ensures even greater access to information;
- The establishment of Public Broadcaster’s Ajara Television in the Autonomous republic of Ajara is underway.

In the end, allow me to once again extend my warm regards to you and reiterate that the Georgian side is very much delighted by the prospect of continuing active cooperation with your office, which is so indispensable for promoting the truly free media environment in Georgia.

Thank you.