



**OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2013
Warsaw, 25 September 2013**

**Statement By Georgia – Working Session 4: Fundamental freedoms I -
Freedom of expression, free media and information, including best practices for
protection of journalists**

Thank you Mr. Moderator,

We would like to welcome the Special Representative of the OSCE on Freedom of Media, Mrs. Dunja Mijatovic at today's meeting. We truly value the work done by her dedicated staff and note the successful cooperation between her Office and the relevant Georgian authorities in providing the legal expertise to the Law on Broadcasting.

The Government of Georgia attaches crucial importance to ensuring the right to freedom of expression and opinion, as well as safeguarding the environment conducive to free media and information. We are convinced that the effective implementation of these commitments is an indispensable element for promoting free media, pluralistic society and rights of journalists.

Today, I would like briefly outline some of the main legal instruments in Georgia which guarantee protection of these important rights.

The Constitution of Georgia provides for the right to freedom of expression and opinion. Article 19 of Georgian Constitution ensures the right to freedom of speech and prohibits the persecution of a person on the account of his/her speech, as well as the compulsion to express his/her opinion.

The Law of Georgia on Freedom of Speech and Expression demonstrates the importance that Government of Georgia devotes to the right to Freedom of Speech. It guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression of every person.

The importance of the role of journalists while carrying out their professional duty is reflected in the Georgian legislation as one of the main instruments for ensuring freedom of speech. The law of Georgia on Freedom of Speech and Expression recognizes the right of the journalists to protect and not disclose their sources. It prohibits disclosure of the professional information. The source of professional information is confidential and is protected by absolute privilege. According to the Law, no one is entitled to ask for a disclosure.

The law provides for the prevention of censorship, ensures the independence of media and pluralism, provides the rights of the journalists and protects sources of the information to be undisclosed.

Realizing the police role in ensuring the safety of journalists and protecting them from outside interference during job performance, Ministry of Internal Affairs adopted several measures. Police officers are duly informed about their obligation to cooperate with and to facilitate the work of journalists at every stage of their career development.

Thank you for your attention.