National Security Concept of Georgia

"It is the strong will of the citizens of Georgia to establish democratic order, economic freedom, a social state governed by the rule of law, to ensure universal human rights and freedoms and to strengthen state independence and peaceful co-existence with other nations…"

Preamble to the Constitution of Georgia

Introduction

Georgia is publishing its National Security Concept for the second time. The document reflects the changes that have taken place in the security environment of Georgia, as well as their influence on the threats and challenges to national security.

The National Security Concept of Georgia is the basic document that explains fundamental national values and national interests, the vision of the nation's secure development, threats, risks and challenges, and establishes the main directions for national security policy.

The Government of Georgia develops, and the Parliament of Georgia ratifies, the National Security Concept. Political parties, nongovernmental organizations, and other representatives of civil society have played an important role in the drafting of the Concept. Based on the National Security Concept, the Government of Georgia implements measures to ensure the protection of fundamental national values and the advancement of national interests, and to respond adequately to the risks, threats, and challenges facing the country.

The National Security Concept creates the basis for the development of specific strategies and plans that are updated along with changes to the National Security Concept.

Security Environment of Georgia

International and regional developments of the last few years have significantly changed the security environment of Georgia.

The large-scale military aggression committed by the Russian Federation against Georgia in August 2008 made it clear that, for certain countries, open military aggression is still a tool they are willing to employ in order to accomplish their political goals in today's world.

The military aggression by the Russian Federation in 2008, the occupation of Georgian territories, and the deployment of occupation forces in Georgian territories significantly worsened Georgia's security environment. The 2008 war demonstrated that the Russian Federation does not accept the sovereignty of Georgia, including Georgia's choice of democracy and its independent domestic and foreign policy.

Moreover, the military aggression by the Russian Federation worsened the security environment in the Caucasus region as a whole. In addition, the instability in the North Caucasus and the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh both negatively impact Georgia's security environment. The creation of a peaceful and cooperative environment in the Caucasus region would pay positive dividends for the security of Georgia.

Broadening the integration processes in Europe is important for the security of Georgia. Georgia is a part of the European and Euro-Atlantic space. Therefore, the expansion eastward of NATO and of the European Union is important for Georgia.

Georgia maintains close relations with the world's leading democratic states. The support of these countries plays an important role in the development of a democratic Georgia.

Along with a constantly changing international environment, other factors—such as domestic political processes—also influence the security of Georgia. Strengthening the country's democratic achievements by continuing reforms positively impacts stability and furthers the development of the state's democratic institutions.

For the stable and secure development of the country, it is critically important to maintain high long-term economic growth; this is achieved through the adoption of the free-market principles in the economy, strict fiscal discipline, and a healthy monetary policy. Open partnerships, free trade, and economic relationships with all nations and international entities—especially the European Union, the United States and the countries in the region—are important choices that Georgia has made.

National Values of Georgia

Sovereignty and territorial integrity: Georgia is an independent, united, and indivisible state within the borders defined by the Constitution of Georgia. It respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states and expects the same from them. Georgia will not accept any attempts to infringe upon its sovereignty, including attempts to change forcibly its foreign policy and to interfere in its internal affairs.

Freedom: The rights and freedoms of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights*, and the *European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* are recognized by Georgia and guaranteed by its Constitution. Georgia guarantees the rights and freedoms of all citizens and groups residing in Georgia, respects their right of free choice, guarantees the right to freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion, and belief, and creates a favorable environment that enables each citizen to realize his or her potential. Georgia recognizes that economic freedom is a precondition for the realization of all other rights and freedoms.

Democracy and rule of law: Georgia adheres to democratic values and principles, and, based on these, establishes a system of democratic governance in which state power is limited by law and distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Georgia ensures the rule of law, pluralism, and the protection of the rights of minorities, and seeks to strengthen civil society and other democratic institutions.

Security: Georgia strives to ensure the security of the state, its citizens, and institutions within its internationally recognized borders. In order to ensure its security, Georgia adheres to the norms and principles of international law and believes that security is indivisible, both in the relationships among citizens in the country and within the international system, since one state's security cannot be strengthened at the expense of another state.

Prosperity: Georgia recognizes that the pursuit of prosperity is a fundamental human right to guarantee, one that is only possible in a free environment. To achieve maximum welfare for its citizens, Georgia strives for the sustainable development of the state by creating a free economic environment characterized by small government, responsible macroeconomic policy, low taxes, and focused social policy.

Peace: Georgia strives to establish relationships with all nations based on the norms and principles of international law. In order to resolve disputes, Georgia appeals to peaceful and internationally accepted methods. A free, independent, united, developed, and peaceful Georgia will strengthen regional and international security and stability.

National Interests of Georgia

1. Ensuring sovereignty and territorial integrity: Georgia is determined to use all available lawful and peaceful means to restore and maintain its territorial integrity and protect its internationally recognized borders.

2. Developing state institutions and strengthening democracy: Georgia is creating a model of governance that provides for the further and sustainable development of the country's democratic political system. Georgia's aim is to strengthen democratic institutions that will provide for the rule of law, the safeguarding of human rights and liberties, and the protection of freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion, and belief. It is important to establish democratic values in society, to increase civic consciousness, and to further strengthen trust in state institutions.

3. Development of an efficient national security system: Georgia aims to create a security system that guarantees the further development of Georgian statehood and the security of its citizens.

4. Strengthening national unity and civil consent: Georgia guarantees the protection of the interests of its citizens, their rights and freedoms. Hence, Georgia facilitates the creation of a society governed by equality before the law, pluralism, tolerance, justice, human rights, and equality—regardless of race, language, gender, religion, political or other affiliations. The equal engagement of members of the multiethnic and multi-confessional Georgian nation in public and political life is one of the priorities of the state. It is important to have contact with citizens of Georgia living in the occupied territories and to integrate them into the political, economic, social, and cultural processes of the country.

5. European and Euro-Atlantic integration: Georgia aspires to become part of European and Euro-Atlantic structures, which will enable it to consolidate its democracy and strengthen its national security. Georgia is committed to the principle that all nations have the right to choose their own strategic path for future development, as well as the alliances they want to join.

6. Securing stable long-term economic growth: Creating an environment for stable and high long-term economic growth is one of the top priorities of Georgian national security policy. The Government of Georgia ensures free economic development, the broadening of the country's international economic relationships, the improvement of the investment environment in order to attract foreign capital, the maintenance of the principles of small government, a conservative fiscal policy, and a healthy monetary policy.

7. Ensuring energy security: In order to ensure the country's energy security, the further diversification of energy sources and transportation routes is a priority for Georgia. It is equally important to support the development and modernization of the country's energy systems, as well as

their integration into regional energy infrastructure. The further strengthening of Georgia's energy capacity will positively affect state security, economic development, and the welfare of citizens.

8. Ensuring regional stability: Developments in Europe, the Black Sea region, and the Caucasus directly affect Georgia's national security. Developments in Central Asia and the Middle East also play an important role for Georgia. The maintenance of stability and security and the peaceful resolution of the existing disagreements in these regions is in Georgia's interest. Georgia contributes to regional security through cooperation in multilateral and bilateral international frameworks.

9. Strengthening the transit role of Georgia: Georgia considers strengthening its transit role to be particularly important. Therefore, Georgia is prepared to participate even more actively in international energy, transport, and communications projects.

10. Ensuring the environmental security of Georgia and the region: Environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources is closely related to public health and safety. Ensuring environmental security is especially important while implementing large-scale domestic and international projects.

11. Ensuring civil integration and maintaining national and cultural uniqueness: Georgia's priority is to maintain and develop its cultural diversity and national uniqueness. It is important for Georgia to foster the integration and engagement of all ethnic groups in the country's development process. Georgia creates conditions for the protection and development of the identity and culture of these groups.

12. Strengthening cyber security: The security of cyber space and the protection of electronic information is very important for Georgia. As information technologies rapidly evolve, critical infrastructure is becoming more dependent on them. Therefore, combating cyber crime and protecting against cyber attacks is very important to the national interests of Georgia.

13. Demographic security: Promoting a healthy lifestyle, striving to achieve higher life expectancy, encouraging the repatriation of Georgian citizens and compatriots and their subsequent reintegration, all are important priorities for the Government of Georgia. Demographic security is directly linked to Georgia's stable and high long-term economic growth.

14. **Relations with the diaspora:** It is important for Georgia to strengthen ties with compatriots living abroad, to support the study of the Georgian language, and to preserve the cultural identity of Georgians of the diaspora.

Threats, Risks and Challenges to the National Security of Georgia

1. Occupation of Georgian territories by the Russian Federation and terrorist acts organized by the Russian Federation from the occupied territories: At the beginning of the 20th century, Georgia was the victim of Russian aggression that led to 70 years of Soviet occupation. In 1991, Georgia regained its independence; this was followed by political and economic instability caused by the Russian Federation. At the beginning of the 1990s, aggressive separatist movements—fueled and supported by the Russian Federation—triggered an armed confrontation in which military forces of the Russian Federation directly participated, together with local criminal groups. This confrontation resulted in the ethnic cleansing of Georgians, a fact recognized by the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) in Europe, and the European Parliament.

In order to infringe upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and to limit its free and democratic choice, in August 2008 the Russian Federation perpetrated a further military aggression, accompanied by a new wave of ethnic cleansing. The unlawful actions of the Russian Federation are documented in the Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, commissioned by the European Union. The occupation of Georgian territories by the Russian Federation is recognized by a number of governments, as well as by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

In an attempt to legalize the results of its military aggression, the Russian government, ignoring the principles of international law and the Ceasefire Agreement signed by the Russian Federation and Georgia on August 12, 2008, declared the occupied regions to be independent states and deployed new military forces and infrastructure in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region. In addition, the Russian Federation appealed to other members of the international community to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region, placing political and economic pressure on certain countries to do so.

The military occupation of part of Georgian territory by the Russian Federation breaches the sovereignty of Georgia and is a factor that impedes its statehood and subverts its political, economic, and social development. The intensive militarization of the occupied regions and the deployment of Russian ground, air, naval, and border forces breaches Georgia's sovereignty and endangers security in the region as a whole.

Russia's disrespect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states—and its attempts to change the European and Euro-Atlantic security architecture and restore principle of "spheres of influence"—endanger not only Georgia, but also all states that are neighbors of the Russian Federation as well as European security in general.

There is ample evidence that, after the Russian-Georgian War of 2008 and the occupation of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region, Russia has used these territories to recruit and train terrorists to

carry out terrorist acts in other parts of Georgian territory, as evidenced by the recent identification of terrorist groups and the subsequent suppression of their activity.

Regular and severe human rights violations by the proxy regimes and the Russian occupation forces in the occupied regions are alarming. Georgian citizens living in the occupied territories are systematically persecuted because of their ethnicity, while attempts to artificially change the demographic balance continue. Georgia is concerned about the threat that the occupation creates for the ethnic and cultural identity of the Abkhaz.

The illegal economic activity of the Russian Federation and the exploitation of the natural resources in the occupied territories result in critical environmental damage to these regions of Georgia.

2. The risk of renewed military aggression from Russia: Russia's military aggression in August 2008 not only aimed at the occupation of Georgian territories and the international recognition of the proxy regimes, but also sought to trigger a change on Georgia's foreign policy and the violent overthrow of its democratically elected government. The ruling political elite of the Russian Federation view an independent and democratic Georgia as an important threat. Therefore, the Russian Federation aims to turn Georgia into a failed state, to hinder the realization of Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic choice, and to forcibly return Georgia to the Russian political orbit. The presence of Russian military forces in the occupied Georgian territories, and the construction and strengthening of military bases there, create a staging-ground for provocations and a bridgehead for a possible renewed military aggression. The Russian Federation is in breach of the fundamental norms of international law, fails to fulfill the Russian-Georgian Ceasefire Agreement of August 12, 2008, and refuses to pledge not to attack Georgia. It blocks the work of the UN and OSCE missions in Georgia, resists the implementation of the European Union Monitoring Mission's mandate in the occupied territories, and opposes the idea of creating an international peacekeeping/police mechanism. Considering all this, there is a risk of renewed Russian aggression. However, international support for Georgia, as well as the presence of the European Union Monitoring Mission on the ground, are important deterrents to possible aggression.

3. Violation of the rights of internally displaced persons and refugees from the occupied territories: The ethnic cleansing in the early 1990s and in 2008 resulted in the expulsion of approximately 80% of the residents of these territories from their homes—a total of approximately 500,000 individuals, about 261,000 of whom presently reside in the unoccupied part of Georgia.

The violation of the fundamental rights of the individuals forcibly evicted from the occupied territories is a serious challenge for Georgia. It is an important priority for Georgia to protect the rights of these people, including their right to live and own property in the occupied territories.

4. Conflicts in the Caucasus: The possible spillover of conflicts from neighboring countries is a threat to Georgia.

The conflicts in the Caucasus negatively affect the security of the whole region and represent potential sources of humanitarian crises. At the same time, the Russian Federation is attempting to demonize Georgia among the population of the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation.

The lack of control over the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia, which border the Russian Federation, breeds conditions favorable to transnational criminals and further impedes the effective fight against transnational crime.

Another challenge is the continuing conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The renewal of military confrontation between these two states would weaken the security of all three South Caucasian nations and increase Russia's political influence over the entire region.

5. International terrorism and transnational organized crime: Terrorism is a serious challenge to the modern world ; it emanates from certain states and non-state actors.

The occupied regions of Georgia offer favorable conditions for transnational organized crime and international terrorism. State-organized terrorist acts present a particular threat to Georgia.

Considering Georgia's important transit role and potential, there is a danger that the occupied territories could be used for illegal activities such as trafficking and trade in arms, components of weapons of mass destruction, narcotics, and human beings.

6. Economic and social challenges: The low rate of long-term economic growth is a challenge to Georgia's national security. It is important to be prepared to cope with the challenges generated by a renewed world economic crisis. Further improvement of the economic growth rate is important for the security of Georgia. Insufficient economic growth could lead to a severe reduction in state revenues and a drastic rise in unemployment that could breed social tension, thus threatening the country's development, its stability, and its national security. For the long-term economic security of Georgia, it is important to maintain and further increase the competitiveness of Georgia's economy and citizens.

7. Energy challenges: Strengthening energy independence is important for the national security of Georgia. For this purpose, it is crucial to diversify sources of energy.

The further development of clean energy sources and the creation of required infrastructure is also important to the energy security of Georgia.

8. Cyber threats: As dependency of Georgia's critical infrastructure on information technologies increases, challenges related to the protection of Georgian cyberspace are growing. During the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, the Russian Federation conducted large-scale cyber-attacks, in parallel with the ground, air, and naval attacks,. These attacks showed that the protection of cyberspace is as important for national security as land, maritime, and air defenses.

9. Environmental challenges: Natural processes and man-made crises might threaten Georgia's natural environment, its bio-diversity, and the well-being of its citizens.

Georgia is concerned with the environmental damage caused by the Russian Federation's occupation of Georgian territories—particularly in Abkhazia, in connection with the preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. The Government of Georgia, in cooperation with the international community, will take measures to prevent the illegal extraction of construction materials and timber, and their subsequent transportation to Russia, which might cause an environmental disaster on the Black Sea shore.

10. Demographic challenges: Improving the demographic situation is important for the country's development. It is noteworthy that, compared to earlier years, both the birth rate and the return of emigrants to Georgia have accelerated. Maintaining this positive dynamic is a challenge for Georgia.

The attempts by the Russian Federation to change, artificially and illegally, the demographic balance in the occupied territories by settling Russian citizens there under favorable conditions pose an important challenge for Georgia. Moreover, such policies pose dangers to Abkhaz identity as well.

11. Challenges to civic integration: Civic integration requires the establishment of conditions in which all Georgian citizens of Georgia can learn the national language, thus facilitating their full participation in the nation's political, economic, social, and cultural life.

12. Destruction or damage of cultural heritage monuments: The protection of the monuments inked to the country's cultural heritage is important for Georgia. Georgia is concerned about intentional damage to cultural heritage monuments in the occupied territories. Another important issue is the protection of monuments linked to the country's cultural heritage that are located outside of Georgia.

Priorities of National Security Policy

1.Ending the occupation of Georgia's territories; relations with the Russian Federation.

1.1. Ending the occupation: Ending the occupation of Georgia's territories, the reintegration of people living in these territories, and the restoration of Georgian sovereignty on the whole territory of the country are the most important priorities of the country's national security policy.

The Government of Georgia is determined to take timely and effective steps toward the de-occupation of Georgian territories through peaceful means, based on the principles of international law. Georgia remains committed to the non-use of force obligations undertaken under the Russian-Georgian Ceasefire Agreement of August 12, 2008.

At the same time, Georgia has undertaken a unilateral commitment on non-use of force, as declared by the President of Georgia during his speech to the European Parliament on November 23, 2010. This obligation was confirmed by the letter of the President of Georgia to the leadership of the EU, NATO, UN, and OSCE, as well as to the President of the United States.

Georgia continues to propose peaceful initiatives, including ones that envisage granting broad autonomy to the currently occupied regions, based on the European experiences.

Georgia welcomes all peaceful initiatives and proposals that would foster de-occupation of the territories. In order to advance the de-occupation of Georgian territories, the greater involvement of the international community is required in order to influence the Russian Federation. Specifically, Russia must be persuaded to undertake a non-aggression obligation vis-à-vis Georgia and to observe the norms of international law, including the principle of not deploying military forces on a sovereign nation's territory without its consent. Moreover, Russia must respect all of its obligations under the EU-brokered Russian-Georgian Ceasefire Agreement of August 12, 2008—above all to withdraw its military forces from the occupied territories. The adoption of the term "occupation" in international political and legal documents is also an important component of the de-occupation policy. In this regard, the documents adopted by the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the US Senate, and legislative bodies of other partner nations of Georgia carry great importance.

The Government of Georgia believes that the only efficient means for defusing tensions is the creation of a peaceful mechanism to provide for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the occupied territories, and the deployment of international peacekeeping/police forces there. Consequently, the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) is important for Georgia.

However, the EUMM also must cover the occupied territories, consistent with the EUMM's mandate. This will facilitate an effective peace process and the establishment of long-term peace. Moreover, the resolution of the Russian-Georgian conflict will have a positive impact on the resolution of other conflicts in neighboring states.

It is important that the international community continue its policy of non-recognition of the occupied territories and its acknowledgment of the fact of ethnic cleansing and ethnic persecution committed in these territories. Particularly important from this point of view are the UN General Assembly resolutions of 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; the UN Security Council Resolution of 1993; the OSCE Summit documents adopted in Budapest in 1994, in Lisbon in 1996, in Istanbul in 1999; and the European Parliament Resolution of November 17, 2011.

To neutralize the threat of terrorist attacks launched by the Russian Federation from the occupied territories, Georgia is developing the means to fight terrorism and is actively cooperating with the international community against this threat.

The return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their places of permanent residence, restitution of their property rights, and the provision of security guarantees should be ensured, in compliance with the principles of justice, equality, human rights. and freedom, based on the norms of international law. Of particular importance are the provisions that will give them the opportunity for safe, voluntary, and dignified return. Georgia will resist with all legitimate and peaceful means all attempts by the Russian Federation to change illegally the demographic composition and property situation in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali Region, including the so-called agreements imposed on the people remaining there.

1.2. Relations with the Russian Federation: Georgia is willing to have good-neighborly relations with the Russian Federation, based on the principle of equality—which is impossible without respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and the beginning of de-occupation. Georgia is willing to start a dialogue with the Russian Federation on these fundamental issues.

Georgia would welcome the transformation of the Russian Federation into a stable, democratic country that respects other countries' sovereignty, territorial integrity, democratic values, and market economy principles. Democratization and a predictable foreign policy in the Russian Federation would have a positive influence on Georgian, regional, and international security.

The integration of Georgia into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions will foster peace and stability in the Caucasus, ensuring Russian security on its southern borders, which should be in the Russian Federation's interest as well.

Establishing a peaceful and cooperative environment in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation is of particular importance to Georgia. Georgia realizes the need to deepen and develop relationships with the peoples of the North Caucasus, which will increase their awareness of Georgia's goals and political course, contributing to the creation of an atmosphere of trust, peace, and stability in the Caucasus. The languages of the peoples of the North Caucasus, their culture and history are part of the world's heritage; their preservation and development is thus important for Georgia. The preservation of the unique nature of the Caucasus and of the region's environmental security, along with the related issues, should become the subject of joint efforts by Georgia and the peoples of the North Caucasus.

The Caucasus is a common home for all individuals and groups living here. Georgia supports the peaceful resolution of all existing conflicts in the Caucasus in accordance with the principles of international law. Th ethnic and religious diversity of the Caucasus is a positive characteristic of the region that, in conditions of goodwill, democracy, and the protection of human rights, will form a solid foundation for the region's stability, peace and development.

2. Development of state institutions and strengthening of democracy

The citizens of Georgia are determined to develop a free, democratic society, and to strengthen the rule of law—a society in which all citizens are equal before the law, one which is transparent and accountable and guarantees rights and freedoms to all citizens, including the right to freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion and belief, and freedom of association. Such a political system is the main precondition for the further development of the nation.

The Constitution of Georgia distributes functions among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of power, creating the basis for a democratic government. Changes in the Constitution of Georgia in 2010 are important for the further development of state institutions and the self-governance of the country. The legislative and executive branches are being reformed and optimized, while a transparent, accountable, and competent public service has been established.

The establishment of the rule of law is achieved through reforms to the judicial system that aim to further increase the independence and effectiveness of the courts. Steps to enhance trust towards judiciary, including enhancement of the jury system, are important.

Georgia pays great attention to the establishment of an efficient system of local self-governance, and strives to create favorable conditions for the development of political parties, different unions of citizens, interest groups, business associations, non-governmental organizations, and mass media. This fosters the development of a strong and active civil society, thus strengthening democracy and responsible, accountable government.

Georgia has achieved significant success in the fight against corruption. Despite the fact that corruption no longer represents a challenge to national security, the fight against corruption requires constant vigilance by state institutions and civil society. In this regard, Georgia will continue to pursue policies to further increase transparency in government.

3. Implementation of the Engagement Policy

Georgia is determined to create the formats, mechanisms, and incentives that can foster engagement between the occupied territories and other Georgian regions, thus restoring relationships among the citizens of Georgia living on different sides of the occupation line. To this end, the Government of Georgia has prepared a *State Strategy on Occupied Territories: Engagement Through Cooperation* and an *Action Plan for Engagement*.

Georgia is interested in continuing to cooperate with the international community in order to draw on its resources and experience in implementing the engagement policy. Coordination with the Government of Georgia on humanitarian projects in the occupied territories is also essential for the successful implementation of the engagement policy.

4. Development of the defense and security system of Georgia

To protect its national security, Georgia implements reforms to increase the efficiency of its security system. The cornerstone of these reforms is the National Security Review process that includes institutionalized policy coordination among state agencies, increased cooperation between military and civil institutions, and the development of specific strategies for all agencies involved in the security sector.

One of the priorities of Georgian security policy is a unified, flexible, permanent, and efficient crisis management system that coordinates among state institutions defined by Georgian legislation. This system provides for the anticipation of possible crisis situations and their avoidance, or, in case of a crisis, ensures the rapid termination or minimization of its negative effects.

One of the most important pillars of Georgia's security policy involves strengthening the country's defense capabilities, given the transformed security environment. The Government of Georgia adapts its armed forces to meet the new challenges, operating environments, and tasks it confronts. Georgia pays special attention to measures to increase the readiness and ability of its military forces to respond to external aggression. These measures aim to ensure contemporary standards in the education and training system, to further develop the personnel management system, to improve the

command and control system, to increase interoperability with NATO, and to foster Euro-Atlantic integration.

To develop these pillars, the relevant doctrinal basis is created and implemented. Along with this, the rational management of the critically important capabilities and resources for defense is a part of the strategic defense review process. In addition, it is important to implement an efficient crisis management system in the armed forces, as well as to establish a cooperation framework among the military and civilian components of the nation's security system.

Georgia's defense planning is based on the principle of total defense, which requires the successful implementation of a civil defense system, along with related education and training, the development of proper infrastructure, and the creation of an effective military reserve. A new reserve system will improve reservist training, command and control, and the active involvement of the population in territorial defense. To develop the reserve and mobilization system, Georgia considers it a priority to cooperate with partner countries and to learn from their experience. Georgia remains dedicated to democratic values and to its continued integration into the Euro-Atlantic space. Therefore, the increased interoperability of the Georgian Armed Forces with NATO remains the priority of Georgian defense reform. To strengthen its defensive capabilities, Georgia attaches particular significance to deepening bilateral cooperation and to the assistance provided by partner countries.

Georgia is doing its utmost to make a significant contribution to ongoing NATO operations. Successfully concluded military missions by Georgian units during these operations not only increase the importance of Georgia for the security of the Euro-Atlantic space, but also enrich the military experience of the Georgian Armed Forces.

5. Integration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union

One of Georgia's major foreign and security policy priorities is membership in NATO and the European Union. As a Black Sea and Southeast European country, Georgia is part of Europe geographically, politically, and culturally; yet it was cut off from its natural course of development by historical cataclysms. Integration into NATO and the EU is Georgia's sovereign choice, one which will strengthen Georgia's security and ensure its stable development.

5.1 Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization:

Accession to NATO is an important foreign policy objective of Georgia. Georgia views NATO as the basis of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture as well as the major mechanism for ensuring security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic space. Georgia's membership in NATO will create solid guarantees for the nation's security and stability and will play an important role in strengthening stability in the entire region. Reforms related to NATO membership

help to strengthen the country's democratic institutions and foster its defense capabilities. There is wide political and public consensus in Georgia regarding membership in the Alliance, which was confirmed by the results of a plebiscite held in 2008.

Since 2004, Georgia has achieved significant progress in cooperation with NATO. At the 2008 Bucharest Summit, NATO member countries agreed that Georgia will become a member of NATO; that commitment was reaffirmed in the Strasbourg/Kiel and Lisbon Summit decisions, as well as in the new Strategic Concept of NATO.

The military aggression by the Russian Federation could not alter Georgia's course toward democratic development and NATO integration. The creation of the NATO-Georgia Commission after the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 and the beginning of implementation of the Annual National Plan, as well as the establishment of a NATO Liaison Office in Georgia, gave new impetus to NATO-Georgia relations. Georgia believes that the participation of the Parliament of Georgia in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly is particularly important.

Georgia is not only a consumer of security, but also shares responsibility for collective security and actively participates in international missions. Participation in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan is important. Georgia is one of the major contributors to military operations in Afghanistan and is ready to ensure their successful conclusion, along with other NATO forces.

5.2. Integration into the European Union

Georgia's stage-by-stage integration into the European Union represents one of the most important directions of the nation's political and economic development. Deepening cooperation with the EU supports the further strengthening of Georgia's democratic institutions and security, as well as its economic integration with the EU.

Broadening institutional frameworks of cooperation with the EU is important for Georgia. Georgia strives to achieve the Four Freedoms (free movement of people, goods, services, and capital) with the EU. Georgia considers the European Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership as important factors contributing to Georgia's integration into the EU.

Georgia has launched negotiations with the EU on an Association Agreement to achieve a higher level of political association and economic integration with the EU, including the development of deep and comprehensive free trade relations.

Georgia attaches particular importance to the successful implementation of the visa simplification and readmission agreements with the EU, as well as the initiatives included in the Mobility Partnership framework. Georgia aims to further liberalize the visa regime with the EU and to ultimately achieve visa-free travel.

The development of sectoral cooperation with the EU in energy security, transport, education, culture, and other spheres is important for Georgia.

Georgia places special emphasis on more active EU involvement in resolving the Russian-Georgian conflict. It is important that the EU and other members of the international community have recognized the occupation of Georgian territory by the Russian Federation. Hence, Georgia welcomes resolution to this effect of the European Parliament adopted on November 17, 2011.

Georgia welcomes the EU's goal of achieving greater engagement and cooperation with Russia. At the same time, Georgia believes that such a policy can be productive only if it facilitates the establishment of a Russian foreign policy of peaceful coexistence with its neighbors and respect for their sovereignty, as well as the development of democracy in Russia.

It is of principal importance to Georgia that the EU, as the mediator of the Russian-Georgian Ceasefire Agreement of August 12, 2008, exercise effective influence on the Russian Federation to fulfill the norms of international law and the international obligations it has undertaken.

6. Cooperation in the South Caucasus

Georgia emphasizes the importance of cooperation in its neighborhood and takes political and economic steps to facilitate the transformation of the South Caucasus into an economically attractive, peaceful, and safe region.

Georgia traditionally has enjoyed good neighborly relations with Azerbaijan and Armenia. Georgia believes that the establishment of a common approach to the region's future development is extremely important. Deepening regional cooperation and developing a common economic space and market would promote the stability and well-being of the region. The potential of Georgia as a Black Sea littoral state is a supporting factor for the development of multilateral cooperation.

Despite existing obstacles, there is potential for cooperation among the three South Caucasus countries in areas such as joint efforts against international terrorism, organized crime, and drug trafficking, as well as in developing joint measures to improve the environmental situation. From a long-term perspective, deepening the relationship in these ways will foster trilateral economic cooperation and political dialogue.

The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is undermining the stability of the countries in the region. Georgia would welcome a peaceful resolution to this conflict, based on the principles of international law and greater involvement of the international community in the peace process.

Georgia strives to deepen partner relationships and expand trade with Azerbaijan and Armenia. The implementation of major economic projects in the region not only has economic value, but is also important in terms of strengthening security through trust-building, better cooperation, and the establishment of long-term business partnerships.

Georgia's relationship with Azerbaijan has developed into a strategic partnership. Joint energy, transport, and communications projects significantly contribute to the stability and well-being of both nations. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway project is noteworthy since it will increase the transit role of Georgia and Azerbaijan, connecting them fully to international railway networks. This railway line will support the further deepening of economic ties between east and west and will move Georgia closer to the European economic space. It is important to maintain the competitiveness of this transit corridor through cooperation with Azerbaijan.

The three most important regional energy projects - the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Supsa oil pipelines, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline—not only are economically important, but they also increase stability in the region. Likewise, the realization of projects such as Nabucco, the Eurasian Oil Transportation Corridor, White Stream, and AGRI (Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania-Interconnector Project)—involving the resources of Azerbaijan and Central Asia and making full use of the Georgia-Azerbaijan transit corridor—will strengthen regional security. This is in the interests of Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as of other states.

Georgia also closely cooperates with Azerbaijan on political and security issues, as well as on Euro-Atlantic integration. Partnership between Georgia and Azerbaijan is also important in the framework of GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova). The participation of Azerbaijan in the European Union's Eastern Partnership and in the NATO Partnership for Peace program contributes to the harmonization of security interests and the development of common approaches to various strategic issues.

Georgia enjoys close cooperation with Armenia in all areas of mutual interest. Georgia believes that the deepening of good neighborly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with Armenia is in line with the national interests of both countries and strengthens the traditional friendship between them, while also fostering economic prosperity and political stability.

Georgia aspires to strengthen trade, economic, and transportation ties with Armenia. Cooperation in trade, transport infrastructure, tourism, and other fields will support the economic development of Georgia and Armenia.

Georgia supports Armenia's active participation in the European Union Eastern Partnership and welcomes Armenia's more active cooperation with NATO. Georgia welcomes all efforts to normalize Turkish-Armenian relations and to establish good neighborly ties between them.

7. Strengthening foreign relationships

Strengthening foreign political ties is a priority for Georgia, as is expanding foreign trade, attracting investment, and strengthening social and cultural links. To reach this goal, Georgia cooperates with the international community in bilateral and multilateral formats.

7.1. United States of America: Since the restoration of Georgia's independence, the US has actively supported Georgia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, the strengthening of its democratic institutions, the development of its market economy, and the country's full integration into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Georgia continues to deepen its strategic partnership with the US, a fact reflected in the US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership signed in January 2009. By focusing on the implementing of concrete decisions by working groups, this document advances the development of mutual relations in defense and security; economy, trade, and energy, democracy; and intercultural exchanges.

Support from the United States on the issue of the de-occupation of the Georgian territories is important for Georgia.

The deepening of economic and trade relations with the United States, attracting US investments, and growing Georgian exports to the US are important for Georgia. The preferential trade regime with the US advantages_import tariffs to Georgia. At the same time, the Georgian Government is determined to complete a free-trade agreement with the United States.

Financial support from the US since the restoration of independence has been very important for Georgia. In particular, the $1 billion in aid provided after the 2008 Russian aggression was especially significant to the Georgian people. Projects within the framework of the US Millennium Challenge Corporation have assisted in strengthening democratic institutions, developing infrastructure, and advancing humanitarian projects. Educational and scientific programs are also important as they promote education and raise the qualification levels of Georgian students and scientists.

Georgian defense capabilities have been significantly strengthened through US assistance programs. Georgia is interested in further deepening cooperation in this area.

Georgia actively continues to provide military and political support to the coalitions led by the United States. Georgian units, trained under US assistance programs, successfully participate in the NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Georgia and the US also closely and successfully cooperate in the fight against nuclear smuggling.

7.2. Ukraine: Georgia is determined to make the utmost of the potential of strategic partnership with Ukraine. Ukraine, growing in its role as a democratic and peaceful state, will contribute to regional stability and security in Europe.

Georgia and Ukraine cooperate in foreign and national security policy, not only on a bilateral level but also in such multilateral contexts as the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and GUAM. Cooperation with Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic integration process is important. Georgia also welcomes Ukraine's participation in the EU's Eastern Partnership.

7.3. Turkey: Turkey is Georgia's leading partner in the region. Turkey supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and its efforts to develop stable political, economic, and security institutions.

Turkey is Georgia's largest trade and economic partner. Free trade and visa-free regimes operate between Georgia and Turkey. Deepening economic, energy, and transport relationships, and the successful implementation of other projects, are of strategic importance for both countries. Georgia and Turkey cooperate in regional projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Erzurum pipelines. Regional energy and transportation projects such as Nabucco, the Eurasian Oil Transport Corridor, White Stream, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway, which are in various stages of planning and realization, are also important.

Turkey, as a NATO member-state and a regional leader, is an important military partner for Georgia. Georgia attaches great importance to further developing its partnership with Turkey in the areas of defense and security.

Deepening cultural relations is also very important. Georgia and Turkey have begun cooperating on cultural heritage monuments. Deepening this cooperation is in the interests of both countries.

7.4. Cooperation with the nations of the various regions of the world: Georgia actively cooperates with the Baltic countries on a broad range of issues. Sharing the experience of the Baltic States in European and Euro-Atlantic integration is important for Georgia. Support from these countries to Georgia on its path to NATO and EU integration is important.

Georgia considers cooperation with Central and Southeast European and Scandinavian states to be of significant importance. Deepening economic and political relations with these states,

and their support for Georgian sovereignty and reforms, are important. Georgia attaches great importance to cooperation with Moldova and Belarus and welcomes their participation in the EU's Eastern Partnership.

Georgia, as a natural bridge between Europe and Asia, pays great attention to close cooperation with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, especially with respect to the economy, transport, and energy. The main goal of this cooperation is to facilitate the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital between West and East. It is important for Georgia to keep the Central Asian states informed about Georgia's ongoing reform processes and its foreign policy priorities. The Russian Federation's attempts to forcefully change international borders that were recognized after the dissolution of the Soviet Union challenge the security of Russia's neighbors.

Georgia attaches great importance to deepening political dialogue and economic relations with China, Japan, South Korea, Israel, the Persian Gulf states, Canada, India, Brazil, Australia, Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia in order to foster trade and investment, and to generate international support to Georgia.

It is important to continue establishing diplomatic relations with Latin American and Caribbean states and to develop political, trade, economic, and cultural relationships with them in order to provide for Georgia's economic growth, attract investments, and raise awareness of Georgia in these countries. Special attention should be paid to gaining further support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, and to mutually beneficial cooperation within the UN and other international organizations.

7.5. Multilateral cooperation forums: Cooperation with the international community in multilateral forums is an important foreign and national security policy priority for Georgia.

7.5.1. The United Nations (UN): Georgia believes that the UN should play a leading role in establishing global peace and in advancing just resolutions of existing conflicts. Therefore, it is important to increase the effectiveness of the UN. Georgia views negatively the termination of the United Nation's Observer Mission in Georgia as a result of Russian pressure; it considers this an unhelpful precedent that has a negative impact on the UN's role in establishing peace and security in the world.

7.5.2. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. (OSCE): The OSCE is a very important organization for ensuring European security, playing a leading role in strengthening peace, stability, democracy, and human rights in Europe.

Georgia is committed to the Helsinki Final Act and the principles of other fundamental OSCE documents, which are based on profound respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity

of states. Georgia believes that the further advancement of the OSCE's role will contribute to strengthening the security of member states.

Russia blocked OSCE activities in Georgia to decrease the level of international engagement in the occupied Georgian territories. The Government of Georgia will make every effort, based on the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, to return the OSCE mission to Georgia, including to its territories occupied by the Russian Federation. OSCE support for the development of democratic institutions and the successful implementation of reforms is important for Georgia.

7.5.3. Council of Europe: Georgia considers cooperation in the framework of the Council of Europe as the best opportunity to establish European political and legal values and norms. Georgia adheres to the Council of Europe's standards as an important factor in the development of a democratic state based on Western values and norms. Georgia is determined to fulfill the recommendations of the Council of Europe on issues of democratic development at the local and regional levels, as well as with respect to human rights, the rights of national minorities, and strengthening the rule of law.

Georgia considers very important the participation of the Parliament of Georgia in the parliamentary assemblies of the OSCE and Council of Europe.

8. Fight against international terrorism and transnational organized crime

The goal of Georgia's counterterrorism policy is to ensure the security of its citizens, the state, and other institutions. Georgia has joined the counterterrorism conventions and protocols of the UN and actively cooperates on counterterrorism at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

In order to achieve its goals, the Government of Georgia actively cooperates with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and strengthens the means to fight terrorism, including the armed forces and the special forces of te law enforcement agencies. In order to preclude the use of Georgian territory as a transit route for terrorists, Georgia strengthens border protection and customs control, actively cooperating with Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan on counterterrorism and fighting transnational organized crime.

A significant terrorist threat for Georgia comes from the territories occupied by the Russian Federation. Terrorist acts have been organized from the occupied territories by members of the Russian occupation forces. Effective pressure from the international community on the Russian Federation is important to neutralize this threat; Russia should pay a heavy political price for continuing such terrorist acts.

Georgia attaches great importance to the threat of nuclear terrorism and, therefore, actively cooperates with the International Atomic Energy Agency, other international organizations, and states to preclude use of the Georgian territory for the the production and transportation of nuclear and radioactive materials. In this regard, the situation in the Russian-occupied territories of Georgia is of particular concern.

Participation in multinational counterterrorism operations gives Georgia an opportunity to contribute to the activities of the counterterrorist coalition. International terrorism represents a global threat. Therefore, the failure of the international community in Afghanistan would have a negative impact on international and regional security, as well as on Georgia's security.

9. Economic security policy

Georgia's economic policy is based on the principle of economic freedom. The goal of Georgia's economic security policy is to create all the necessary conditions to encourage the nation's development, the prosperity of its citizens, the improvement of their competitiveness, and the competitiveness of the economy as a whole.

An important priority of Georgia's economic security policy is to increase macro-economic stability by further improving and simplifying tax administration; reducing the budget deficit to ensure financial soundness; implementing conservative fiscal and monetary policy; reaching and maintaining a minimal level of inflation; reducing the public spending; and minimizing the national debt.

One of the most important goals of Georgia's foreign and security policy is to encourage healthy economic cooperation, including the promotion of free trade regimes with the EU, the US, and states in the region. Strong cross-border economic relations will support the reduction of regional tensions and the resolution of regional conflicts. In this regard, Georgia will continue economic cooperation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and other states of the Black Sea region, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

Further development of the transport infrastructure; maximum utilization of the country's transport, transit, and communication potential; and the full integration of Georgia into international transport systems is equally important in developing the country's role as a regional logistical center.

Georgia's economic policy ensures the state's non-intervention in the economic activities of individuals and businesses; the protection of property rights and economic liberty; the further improvement of tax administration; and the maintenance of conservative fiscal policy.

Georgia is striving to create conditions for easy access to high-quality goods and services for its citizens. The goals of Georgia's economic policy, therefore, are to create and maintain a favorable

foreign investment environment; to raise the competitiveness of its citizens and of the overall economy; to boost employment by creating and maintaining a competitive labor market. In order to increase the economic competitiveness of Georgia's citizens and of the economy as a whole, it is critically important to encourage the development of a qualified workforce, which can be achieved by implementing a focused education policy.

10. Energy security policy

In order to ensure sustainable energy security for Georgia, it is important to create a favorable investment environment, to strengthen international cooperation, and to further develop the existing energy infrastructure. Also, great importance is attached to the diversification of energy resources and suppliers, as well as to participation in international and regional energy projects. In this regard, Georgia welcomes the implementation of new projects in the framework of the South Energy Corridor, including those projects that will supply oil and natural gas from the Caspian and Central Asian regions through Georgia to Europe.

Georgia is a part of important energy corridors. Georgia is aware of its role in supplying the rest of the world with energy resources from the Caspian Sea and Central Asian regions via alternative routes. Georgia's Black Sea ports, the Baku-Supsa and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipelines, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline are already active and strategically important projects. Georgia is determined to ensure the effective functioning of these existing projects and to develop prospective new ones.

Among the main priorities of Georgia's energy policy are the development of energy infrastructure, the more efficient use of hydropower, and research into other clean-energy resources. Georgia actively cooperates with foreign investors on developing renewable energy resources.

The construction of new electricity transmission lines and power plants, and the rehabilitation of old hydropower stations, contributes to the reduction of Georgia's dependency on imported energy sources and, consequently, to the improvement of Georgia's energy security. Georgia's goal is to become an important regional exporter of electricity. Therefore, in addition to increased energy production, new transmission lines must be constructed between Georgia and other countries.

11. Education policy

Improving the education system is an important priority for the Georgian Government. The comprehensive reform of the education system is aimed at qualitatively improving general, vocational, and higher education; advancing a knowledge-based civil society; and creating conditions

that foster the development of the sciences. Increasing participation of the private sector is important for the further development of the education system.

Georgia's reformed educational system should give Georgian citizens the opportunity to fully develop their abilities and to be competitive in the Georgian and global labor markets.

Programs in information technology and foreign languages, especially the English language, are important components of education system reform.

The development of vocational education is an important reform priority. The dynamic development of Georgia's economy requires the further improvement of the vocational education system.

Further improvements to the higher education system is very important for Georgia's development. Support for top-quality higher education is a precondition for increasing Georgia's scientific potential and economic prosperity. It is also important to deepen international cooperation in the fields of scientific studies and new technologies.

12. Social security and healthcare policy

The goals of Georgia's social security policy are to overcome poverty, improve living standards, and develop a strong middle class.

In order to ensure the social security of Georgian citizens, it is important to develop an environment that fosters job creation and further improving those aspects of the social security that provide social assistance to people living below the poverty line.

The healthcare policy of the Government of Georgia focuses on improving the delivery of medical services; the refinement of the medical education and certification system; increasing efficiency in preventing and managing epidemics and pandemics; preventing and treating socially dangerous diseases (TB, AIDS, drug-addiction, etc.); preventing especially dangerous infectious diseases; developing efficient laboratory surveillance systems; promoting a healthy lifestyle; increasing the availability of medical services through the further refinement of insurance systems; and providing medical services to people living below the poverty line.

13. Cyber security policy

Georgia has set a goal of creating a cyber security system that can minimize the consequences of any cyber attack and that can rapidly and effectively restore affected networks in case of an attack.

Georgia places special emphasis on the security of classified information and the protection of the state's information systems. Georgia is in the process of establishing the necessary legal framework and infrastructure to improve information technologies and the protection of information.

Cooperation with partner states and the sharing of experiences is important for Georgia's cyber security.

14. Environmental Security Policy

The environmental security policy of Georgia protects people and the environment by reducing the use of natural resources and the prevention of environmental damage caused by natural and manmade crises. Special attention is paid to such disasters as floods, landslides, avalanches, and earthquakes, as well as industrial accidents, etc.

The goal of Georgia's environmental policy is to develop and implement efficient measures to prevent pollution of all kinds—of air, water, and earth—to protect forest resources and the Black Sea, and to manage radioactive and other hazardous materials on the territory of Georgia.

The Government of Georgia is aware that the country's environmental security demands close regional and international cooperation. The participation of international organizations in preventing the further deterioration of the environmental situation in the Russian-occupied territories of Georgia is important. The Government of Georgia will employ all diplomatic means to increase international pressure on the Russian Federation to cease the illegal extraction of natural construction materials and timber resources from Abkhazia to be used for construction related to the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, as these acts will cause an environmental disaster on the Black Sea coast of Georgia—and well beyond.

Georgia cooperates on environmental security with countries in the region. Successful cooperation between Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and Georgia will contribute to the protection of the natural environment and the improvement of environmental security.

15. Protection of Georgia's Cultural Heritage

Georgia, in close cooperation with UNESCO and other international organizations, is determined to protect and develop the country's unique cultural heritage, which is an important part of the world's cultural heritage. It is therefore necessary to implement Georgia's cultural heritage protection policy, which aims to promote modern and traditional Georgian arts and to protect architectural monuments. At the same time, in order to protect Georgia's cultural heritage abroad, Georgia will

actively cooperate with the states in which Georgian cultural monuments are located or whose archives or museums hold artifacts of Georgian culture.

Georgian cultural heritage monuments are under especially serious threat in the Russian-occupied territories. The international community should take an active part in protecting cultural heritage in the occupied territories. From this point of view, cooperation with UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, and IUCN is especially important.

16. Demographic policy

In order to improve the demographic situation, Georgia supports measures to increase the birth rate, decrease infant mortality rates, introduce a healthy lifestyle, and increase life expectancy.

Georgia also strives to create favorable conditions for the return to Georgia of Georgian citizens and other compatriots living abroad.

Georgia is concerned by the Russian policy of illegally and artificially changing the demographics in the occupied territories by settling Russian citizens there under favorable conditions. Georgia will do its utmost not to allow the legitimization of the results of these policies and to support the survival and development of the ethnic and cultural identity of the Abkhaz and Ossetian people.

17. Civil Integration Policy

The Government of Georgia supports the process of integrating ethnic minorities and fostering their engagement in Georgian society. It is important to increase knowledge of the Georgian language among ethnic minorities, while allowing them complete freedom to retain their identity and culture. This policy is stipulated in the *National Concept of Tolerance and Civil Integration* and the related *Action Plan.* The state takes measures to teach ethnic minorities the Georgian language, which helps them to fully realize their civil rights and freedoms.

Georgia assigns great importance to the creation of an environment that fosters the reintegration and civic engagement of Georgian emigrants who return home.

18. Policy of Strengthening Relations with the diaspora

The preservation of the Georgian identity of compatriots living abroad is a priority for the Georgian Government. Georgia supports and assists the establishment and operation of overseas Georgian Sunday schools, Georgian language courses, Georgian public schools, and folk and art groups, as well as other efforts aimed at the preservation and development of the country's cultural heritage. Georgia also supports the deepening of ties among the Georgian diaspora members residing in various countries and the realization of joint projects by them.