



HUMAN RIGHTS HOUSE
FOUNDATION

Read by Anna Innocenti

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31st SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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Item 6

UPR Adoption of Georgia

Check against delivery

This statement is endorsed by Article 42 of the Constitution and the Georgian Centre for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT) and the Human Rights Centre, members of the Human Rights House Tbilisi.

Mr Chairperson,

The Human Rights House Foundation welcomes the participation of the Republic of Georgia to its Universal Periodic Review (UPR)¹. Georgian civil society has also participated actively, including a broad coalition of independent non-governmental organisations in the Human Rights House Tbilisi².

We welcome the steps taken by the Government of Georgia to address cases of torture and other ill and degrading treatments. Georgia must now undertake additional efforts to ensure the efficiency and impartiality of investigations conducted in the penitentiary system³. The Government must create an independent investigative mechanism for the prompt, unbiased and competent investigation and justice for the crimes of torture and other inhuman, or degrading treatments, or punishments and to ensure protection to alleged victims during the investigation process.

We welcome the adoption of the anti-discrimination plan by Georgia. However, Georgia should further improve its anti-discrimination legislation to ensure adequate protection against discrimination in practice⁴ and to strengthen the role of the Public Defender's Office in this regard.

Discrimination based on political opinion also remains an issue, particularly in the public work sphere. The Government must create and implement a strategy to prevent politically motivated dismissals from public service and to effectively investigate such cases.

In Georgia, widespread cases of discrimination against LGBT people also remain. The Government should provide effective protection to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons and ensure the investigation, prosecution and punishment of any act of violence motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity in accordance with article 53, para. 3¹, of the Criminal Code.⁵

¹ See also: <http://humanrightshouse.org/Articles/21272.html>

² See also: <http://humanrightshouse.org/Articles/21224.html>

³ 2011 and 2012 Reports of Public Defender of Georgia about Human Rights in Georgia

⁴ UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on the 4th Periodic Report of Georgia, CCPR/C/GEO/4, 19 August 2014, para. 6

⁵ UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on the 4th Periodic Report of Georgia, CCPR/C/GEO/4, 19 August 2014,

We call upon Georgia to effectively investigate cases of discrimination and attacks on the basis of sexual orientation and to implement awareness raising strategies to prevent such crimes.

We welcome the ratification of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Unfortunately, the process of implementation of the Convention is still ineffective and the Administrative Procedural Code does not provide any effective remedy against lack of facilities for disabled persons. The Government must ensure that national standards for the protection of disabled persons are in accordance with international standards. In particular, persons with disabilities should enjoy the possibility to fully integrate within society, and **the Government must include effective remedies for the lack of facilities for disabled persons.**

Georgia received numerous recommendations on ensuring gender equality and the economic empowerment of women. Insufficient awareness of discrimination and the absence of an effective mechanism to combat discrimination during recruitment processes, leads to the exclusion of women from the labour market and puts them in an inherently unequal situation.

We call upon Georgia to explicitly formulate a mechanism in the labour legislation to combat gender discrimination, particularly during the employment process, which should effectively reflect the standards formulated by the International Labour Organisation. On this regard, the Government of Georgia should ratify the ILO Conventions N183 on Maternity Protection, N156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities and N158 on the Termination of Employment, despite the lack of UPR recommendations on this direction.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, the Government should take step to ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society and promote the role of human rights defenders in society. Members of the ruling political coalition should refrain from engaging in smear campaigns against civil society organizations. The Government should strictly condemn any sign of smear campaign against Human Rights Defenders.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.