



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 April 2022

Original: English

Seventy-seventh session

Item 117 (c) of the preliminary list*

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 31 March 2022 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the President of the General Assembly and has the honour to inform you that the Government of Georgia has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the period 2023–2025, at the elections to be held in October 2022, during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, in New York.

In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution [60/251](#), please find attached herewith the voluntary pledges and commitments of Georgia with regard to its contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations would be grateful if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 117 (c) of the preliminary list.

* [A/77/50](#).



Annex to the note verbale dated 31 March 2022 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Georgia to the Human Rights Council, 2023–2025

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

1. Georgia is honoured to present its candidature for membership in the Human Rights Council for the term 2023–2025. Both during and since its first term in the Council in 2016–2018, Georgia has been actively engaged in the work of the Council, particularly focusing on initiatives aimed at advancing the rights of the most vulnerable groups, with special emphasis on children, women and girls, and internally displaced persons.

I. Actions at the international level

Adherence to the United Nations human rights instruments

2. Georgia is a party to seven core United Nations human rights conventions¹ and seven optional protocols,² and has a strong tradition of full cooperation with all United Nations bodies. Georgia has extended a standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders and accepted individual complaints procedures in relation to six of the seven conventions.

3. Georgia pays utmost attention to the implementation of the recommendations of the human rights monitoring bodies, which are, in turn, translated into national action plans on human rights. In order to ensure the effective implementation of obligations under the United Nations human rights instruments, Georgia has developed an all-inclusive national reporting process with the active engagement of relevant stakeholders, including the increased role of the Georgian Parliament through the scrutiny of relevant reports, and civil society organizations.

Contributions to international and regional initiatives for the promotion and protection of human rights

4. Georgia is actively engaged in promoting human rights through the provision of human, technical and financial resources to this cause. Georgia is the initiator/co-initiator of a number of General Assembly and Human Rights Council resolutions as well as a number of Groups of Friends addressing the rights of vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, women and girls.

¹ Georgia has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

² Georgia has ratified the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

5. Georgia is committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As an example, the Government has aligned the national policy process with the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted a national document for the Sustainable Development Goals, and in July 2020 presented the second voluntary national review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

6. As a member of the Council of Europe and a party to the European human rights system, Georgia has signed and ratified most of the relevant regional human rights instruments and actively participates in the processes leading to the formation of the regional human rights agenda.

7. One of the priorities of Georgia's presidency of the Council of Europe in 2020 was the promotion of the relationship between human rights and environmental protection. Georgia continues its efforts in this regard.

8. Georgia is committed to upholding its obligations in the human dimension of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Georgia actively cooperates with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Georgia is actively engaged in preparations for the annual OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and the meeting of the Human Dimension Committee.

II. Actions at the national level

9. Georgia has an advanced, multilayered system for human rights protection. The Office of the Public Defender is an accredited body in full compliance with the Paris Principles. The Prime Minister's Inter-agency Human Rights Council serves as the national mechanism for effective coordination, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia is a newly established mechanism in charge of ensuring prompt response and quality of investigation of crimes within its mandate and protection of human rights during the process of administration of justice.

National strategy and action plan on human rights

10. The national policy is well reflected in the National Human Rights Strategy and the related action plans.

11. The second National Human Rights Strategy (2022–2030) was prepared by the inter-agency coordination working group in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

12. The action plans set out the detailed commitments of the Georgian authorities in order to implement the National Human Rights Strategy. Updates on the implementation of action plans are regularly presented to civil society organizations and annual reports on the National Human Rights Action Plan to the Parliament.

Gender equality

13. Georgia is continuously strengthening its national institutional mechanisms on gender equality through three key bodies: the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence at the executive level chaired by the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Human Rights, the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia, and the Gender Equality Department of the Office of the Public Defender.

Violence against women and domestic violence

14. Since 2017, as a result of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), Georgia has significantly strengthened its response to violence against women and domestic violence and enhanced the protection of survivors of violence by implementing special laws, policies and programmes. Georgia remains fully committed to continuing to strengthen the process of implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

Rights of internally displaced persons

15. The Government of Georgia continues to provide effective mechanisms for addressing specific needs by implementing different durable housing solutions and livelihood programmes within the action plan for implementation of the State strategy on internally displaced persons, and the law on internally displaced persons from the occupied territories of Georgia.

Rights of persons with disabilities

16. Georgia, as a State party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, has taken significant steps towards the harmonization of Georgian legislation with the principles of the Convention. To this end, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2020.

17. In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified in 2014, the Government of Georgia established the Inter-agency Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by resolution No. 551 of 29 November 2021.

18. The Parliament of Georgia ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2021. By ratifying the Protocol, Georgia recognizes the competence of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to, within its jurisdiction, receive and consider notifications by individuals or groups of persons, or persons acting on their behalf, that they are victims of a violation by the State.

19. The National Human Rights Strategy for 2022–2030 will also focus on the rights of persons with disabilities and implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Penitentiary and probation systems

20. Since 2012, the reform of the Georgian penitentiary and probations systems has been the major milestone and a success story for Georgia. This is confirmed by various international monitoring mechanisms (e.g. the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment). Reforms have been carried out for the formation of well-functioning and transparent systems that are predicated on the concepts of effective implementation of penalties, protection of the rights and dignity of prisoners and promotion of their re-entrance into society. Among other priorities, the reform strives to prevent future reoffending, support inmates' resocialization and rehabilitation and hence secure the paths towards a safer society.

Good governance and democracy

21. In 2019, the Government of Georgia introduced an updated policy development and coordination system by adopting government ordinance No. 629. The changes ensure that the national and sector-level government policies are evidence-based and results-oriented and formulated with a human-rights-based approach in mind.

22. The above-mentioned changes now require all State entities to conduct due public consultation process before submitting any policy document to the Government for approval, thus institutionalizing the public consultations and obliging State entities to provide proper feedback and justifications to the engaged stakeholders.

23. At the international level, Georgia has been an active member of the Open Government Partnership and the Community of Democracies, engaging in efforts to promote transparent, participatory, inclusive and accountable governance.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and human rights

24. During the crisis, the population of Georgia had access to regular and reliable information about the pandemic in six languages – Georgian, Abkhazian, Ossetian, English, Armenian and Azerbaijani. A text message system was used to share critical COVID-19-related information with the population, also in ethnic minority languages. The Government's anti-crisis plan supported various vulnerable groups of society by providing support, including financial, to ease the impact of the consequences of the pandemic.

25. The Government of Georgia paid significant attention to reducing the risks and impacts of violence against women and domestic violence. Throughout the pandemic, the State continuously provided a full range of free services for victims of violence against women and domestic violence.

III. Commitments by Georgia as a candidate for membership in the Human Rights Council

26. Being fully cognizant of the responsibilities delegated by Council membership, Georgia hereby pledges to:

(a) Continue full cooperation with the Council in accordance with resolution [60/251](#) and contribute to the comprehensive implementation of the mandate of the Council;

(b) Continue to contribute to further strengthening the efficiency and functioning of the Council and improving its working methods;

(c) Continue to support initiatives to strengthen the capacity of the Council to combat discrimination and promote the rights of the most vulnerable groups, with special emphasis on minorities, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities and conflict-affected people;

(d) Support initiatives to strengthen the capacity of the Council to promote and ensure full enjoyment of women's and girls' rights and to protect them from violence, including in humanitarian situations, and to bolster gender equality work;

(e) Continue to support initiatives strengthening the capacity of the Council to protect and promote the rights of the child;

(f) Support initiatives to strengthen the capacity of the Council to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, with special emphasis on the international principle

of “nothing about us without us” by strengthening grass-roots participation in high-level policymaking;

(g) Uphold the universality of the universal periodic review and engage in the review process through constructive participation in the interactive dialogues, as well as promote the wider engagement of national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society representatives, including boosting the role of parliaments within the universal periodic review process;

(h) Continue the practice of voluntary financial contributions to various United Nations human rights and humanitarian bodies, including contributions to support the participation of least developed countries and small island developing States in the work of the Council;

(i) Increase activities aimed at sharing best practices and experiences in promoting and protecting human rights, and carrying out internationally renowned reforms in institutional democracy, rule of law, good governance and evidence-based public service delivery, which serve the goal of effective implementation of human rights;

(j) As a member of the Group of Friends on national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, continue raising awareness of the importance of national mechanisms for effective, comprehensive and coordinated implementation, reporting and follow-up of the recommendations made by the international human rights system, and exchange of good practices and lessons learned for building effective national mechanisms;

(k) Work closely with all interested non-governmental organizations, especially grass-roots civil society organizations, to increase their representation and participation in international human rights forums;

(l) Promote the mainstreaming of the environmental dimension into human rights and a rights-based approach to environmental protection, and enhance awareness of environmental challenges and the enjoyment of the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

(m) Continue to contribute to international cooperation to harness the potential of new technologies to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, and mitigate technologically enabled threats to human rights and democracy;

(n) Among other priorities, continue the development of penitentiary and probation systems towards the highest standards of human rights and security.
