



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Georgia

Delivered by Ambassador Veronika Bard

Geneva, November 10, 2015 (speaking time 1 min 45 sec)

Mr President,

Sweden wishes to welcome the delegation of Georgia and express our thanks for the information provided to address our advance questions.

Sweden recommends the Government of Georgia:

- 1) To establish a mechanism for the enforcement of protective and restrictive orders relating to domestic violence, to ensure their effectiveness, and prevent recurring offences, i.a. through establishing specialized police units on gender-based violence and domestic violence.
- 2) To eliminate existing gaps in the legislation governing the work of the High Council of Justice in order to make sure that its powers are balanced by adequate guarantees of transparency and accountability.
- 3) To amend the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination to include a mechanism of fines and other sanctions for use by the Public Defender's Office in the event of discriminatory actions.
- 4) To establish a specialized police unit for investigating hate crimes, closely collaborating with the LGBT community and organizations in order to create a trusting relationship.

Sweden commends the adoption of the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination in 2014 by Georgia. It is now critical that an efficient implementation mechanism is established. The Public Defender's Office is currently limited to issuing non-binding recommendations.

Georgia has included gender equality principles in its constitution, and established progressive laws on gender equality. However, more needs to be done to effectively implement existing legislation. Women are still under-represented in political and economic life. Gender-based and domestic violence remain widespread.

In Georgia, court practices largely comply with national legislation, but not fully with international standards. There are concerns about the frequent application and duration of pre-trial detention. The broad powers of the High Council of

Justice are not adequately balanced by standards of transparency and accountability.

After the first UPR cycle, a series of changes to LGBT-rights took place in Georgia. Despite these positive steps, LGBT persons remain one of the most marginalized groups. Homophobic and transphobic attitudes, as well as violence against LGBT persons, are widespread. Police officers undergo general training on human rights protection, but there is no specialized police unit working specifically on hate crimes. This makes it difficult to document the extent of homophobic and transphobic hate crimes and take effective measures to prevent such crimes.

Thank you, Mr. President