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**Of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia**

**Thirty-seventh session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group**

**Tbilisi, 26 January 2021**

Your Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, I am privileged to address you at the 3rd cycle of Universal Periodic Review. During my intervention I will also cover some of the advanced questions raised by partner states.

Government of Georgia continuous effective **fight against human trafficking** and strengthens 4-pillars[[1]](#footnote-1) policy within the Interagency Council set up in 2006 and chaired by the Justice Minister.

The best assessment of the successful anti-trafficking responses is the latest US TIP report (published in June, 2020) underling that Georgia fully meets the standards for the elimination of trafficking, remains in Tier 1 since 2016 and shares leading position among other western countries.

Georgian Anti-Trafficking legislation is in full compliance with international treaties and since 2003 explicitly prohibits all forms of trafficking in adults and minors, including sale, sexual and labor exploitation, etc..

As a result of intensive community policing, well-structured and coordinated public outreach activities and proactive measures, the number of investigations, prosecutions and victims is gradually increasing. E.g. comparing the 2012, the number of investigations is doubled, when the number of prosecution has increased five times.

One of the recent remarkable cases of international child trafficking and pornography was successfully investigated by Georgian law enforcements and with the engagement of Georgian Attaché in EUROPOL and US and Australian colleagues 23 perpetrators were convicted; while 23 girl-victims benefitted the state run services.

Aiming at protection of children born surrogacy from any type of violence, in 2016 new regulations were introduced which defined the procedures for taking a child born in Georgia through surrogacy and defined the grounds of the restriction of right to remove the child from Georgia.

For the protection and assistance of the TIP victims, Georgian Government continuous providing the full package of state funded child-tailored services - legal consultation, medical and psychological assistance, one-off compensation, crisis centers and Shelters.

The reform of **Penitentiary and Crime Prevention Systems** has been the major milestone and a success story for the past several years. The new wave of reforms started back in July 2018, aimed at ensuring existence of the well-functioning and transparent systems that are predicated on the concepts of effective implementation of penalties, protection of rights and dignity of inmates, promotion of their re-entrance into the society and prevention of reoffending.

Georgia is proud to note that in a very short period of time, we have achieved tangible results. Healthier management of special penitentiary system and new approaches, focused more on rehabilitation and resocialization, have resulted the reduction of prison population;[[2]](#footnote-2)

We invested significant resources into developing institutional framework and infrastructure of the penal institutions; We also started projecting and building new small scale closed type prisons and strengthened healthcare system.

Obviously, this is not enough and we keep further improvement of material conditions of detention and penitentiary healthcare, introducing micro family-type prisons for juveniles, enhancing out of cell activities, advancing vocational trainings and employment opportunities for the inmates.

Your excellences, Georgia belongs to a small group of countries having special procedures for statelessness status determination. As a result of our comprehensive mechanisms for birth registration, the risk of child statelessness is minimized and a declining tendency is remained, during the recent 10 years[[3]](#footnote-3) the number of stateless persons decreased nearly 4 times.

I’d also like to use this opportunity and inform the distinguished delegates about the Covid-19 containment measures in penitentiary and public service delivery systems.

Thanks to the special conditions applied in Georgian penitentiary system since March 2020, there **was no single COVID-19 case among convicts**, by the end of December 2020.

Beyond that, the special operational procedures were introduced in Public Service Halls and Community Centers to prevent the possible spread of Covid-19 among staff and customers. Specially designed online services allowed the citizens to receive desired public services remotely. In case of urgent necessity, the customers visited the Public Service Halls by a prior appointment on the website [www.my.gov.ge](http://www.my.gov.ge).

Thank you for you kind attention.

1. Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As of December 31, 2020 – the total number of inmates is 9143, including 1646 remands and 7497 convicts (compared to the same period in 2019 respectively – total number – 9740, including 1805 remands and 7935 convicts). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Between 2011 and January 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)