

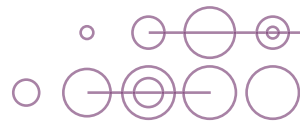
# Georgia's Statement

Georgia became a Pathfinding country in May 2018. As part of the Together to #EndViolence Solutions Summit Series, the Human Rights Secretariat on behalf of the Government of Georgia had made commitments to end violence against children and issued a *Leaders Statement*.

Key highlights from the Leaders Statement are as follows:

1. In 2022, the second National Human Rights Strategy and its implementation action plan will be approved, including concrete actions for tackling violence against children, based on the INSPIRE methodology.
2. A 2022-2026 strategy and 2022-2024 action plan to protect children living and working on the street will be approved.
3. In 2022, the center for psychological and social services for child victims will become operational.
4. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, awareness raising campaigns will be carried out on the prohibition of violence and child protection mechanisms.





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მთავრობის ადმინისტრაცია



ADMINISTRATION  
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA



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To the secretariat of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children

### **Statement of the Government of Georgia on ending violence against children**

Eliminating violence against children remains one of the top priorities for the Government of Georgia (hereinafter the GoG). Over the last few years, Georgia has made significant progress in identification, prevention and response to the facts of child abuse.

Georgia is a party to all relevant international treaties and agreements aimed towards eliminating all forms of violence against children. The country: signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse; Committed to implementing the Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals directly related to strengthening children’s rights; In 2017, became a partner of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children.

The international standards recognized by Georgia are reflected in national legislation. In 2015, The Juvenile Justice Code was approved, aimed at protecting the best interests of a child in juvenile proceedings. In 2016, the GoG approved Child Protection Referral Procedures to facilitate protection of children from all forms of violence through the robust coordinated system. After receiving a Pathfinder status, the country adopted Law on Social Work and the Code on the Rights of the Child.

The GoG prioritizes fights against sexual exploitation of children. In 2020, the Law on Fighting Crimes Against Sexual Freedom and Sexual Inviolability was adopted, that deprives persons convicted of crimes related to sexual abuse, to approach to or interact with children.

To promote the fulfillment of national and international obligations the GoG established the Interagency Commission for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Children’s Rights Issues. The measures to combat all forms of violence against children are integrated in the Georgia’s National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plans. Georgia is currently finalizing its work on the second national strategy, which includes key provisions for the protection of children’s rights.





Georgia has established the effective mechanisms of violence prevention and response. Police is entitled to issue a restraining order against a perpetrator. In addition, victims have the right to apply for a protective order, issued by the court.

The GoG permanently works on strengthening institutions responsible for protecting children's rights and carries out relevant structural reforms. In 2018, the Human Rights Protection Department was created under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which monitors the quality of investigation of crimes committed by and against children. Additionally, in 2020, the Juvenile Affairs Main Division was established, staffed with certified investigators, responsible for investigation of crimes committed by/against juveniles.

The Witness and Victim Coordinator Services were established to provide information and support to citizens, including juveniles.

In 2020, a Juvenile Referral Center was established, to implement rehabilitation and re-socialization programs for children in conflict with the law (below the age of criminal responsibility) and with difficult behavior.

To strengthen the juvenile coordination mechanism at the local level, multidisciplinary council meetings are held in the regions of Georgia on a regular basis, to discuss existing challenges and plans.

Since 2021, intensive trainings on crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability have been provided for specialized prosecutors and investigators. Furthermore, infrastructure projects are ongoing to set up child friendly environment in law-enforcement structural subunits.

With the support of UNICEF, the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the Victims of Human Trafficking launched a helpline for children – 111.

In 2020, the GoG approved the concept of a center for psychological and social services for the children victims of violence. The aim of the Center is to provide child victims with short and long-term psychosocial rehabilitation, prevent secondary victimization and conduct effective investigation.

The GoG puts great emphasis on raising awareness on prohibition and prevention of corporal punishment and bullying. In order to prevent bullying in schools, post conflict restorative approaches are being introduced to teachers and students. The whole-school model was piloted in 11 schools. Safety and public order in schools is ensured by resource officers. School Mediation concept has been developed and piloted.

Professionals working with children are dedicated to identifying cases of violent and response properly; their competence is continually enhanced through targeted trainings on destructive/violent behavior and prevention of bullying; positive parenting classes are offered as well.

Despite COVID-19 pandemic, relevant agencies continue to fight against child abuse. Remote services were implemented and a relevant protocol elaborated for professionals working with children (teachers, social workers).





Despite the progress made, prevention of corporal punishment, sexual violence and other forms of violence, children living and working in street remains a challenge for Georgia. In light of the aforementioned, the GoG intends to carry out the following measures:

- In 2022, the second National Human Rights Strategy and its implementation action plan will be approved, which contain concrete actions for tackling violence against children, based on the INSPIRE methodology;
- With the aim to protect children living and working in the street from all kinds of violence, including trafficking, 2022-2026 strategy and a relevant 2022-2024 action plan will be approved;
- To improve coordination between professionals the existing referral mechanism will be enhanced;
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs will continue to establish juvenile divisions within its structural units;
- The infrastructure project for creating child friendly environment will continue;
- More investigators and prosecutors will go through intensive courses on crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability;
- In 2022, the center for psychological and social services for the children victims will become operational;
- The Juvenile Referral Center's scope will be expanded and rehabilitation programs – upgraded;
- School mediation programs will be fully established for conflict resolution among students;
- New trainings and resources will be produced on prohibition of violence against children and bullying for professionals and parents;
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, awareness raising campaigns will be carried out on the prohibition of violence and child protection mechanisms.

Respectfully,

Administration of the Government of Georgia  
Head of the Human Rights Secretariat  
Peradze Maka

