



NATIONAL STRATEGY OF  
GEORGIA ON FIGHT AGAINST  
TERRORISM

Contents

- 1. Introduction ..... 2
- 2. Analysis of Existing Situation ..... 3
  - 2.1. Terrorist Organizations ..... 3
  - 2.2. Regional Context ..... 5
  - 2.3. Legislative and Institutional Framework ..... 6
    - 2.3.1. Overview of Legislation ..... 6
    - 2.3.2. Institutional Mechanisms ..... 9
- 3. General Vision ..... 11
- 4. National Counterterrorism Vision ..... 12
  - 4.1. Collection and Analysis of Information Related to Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalization .... 14
  - 4.2. Prevention ..... 16
  - 4.3. Protection ..... 18
  - 4.4. Preparedness ..... 21
  - 4.5. Prosecution ..... 23
  - 4.6. Development of Legislative Framework ..... 25
  - 4.7. International Cooperation ..... 26
- 5. Agencies Responsible for the Efforts Envisaged by the Strategy ..... 29
- 6. Institutional Oversight, Accountability and Strategy Revision Mechanisms ..... 31

## 1. Introduction

The National Strategy of Georgia of 2019-2021 on Fight against Terrorism and its three-year Action Plan represent the vision of the state of Georgia in terms of the fight against terrorism and extremism. The National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism encompasses seven basic directions: collection of terrorism-related information, prevention, protection, preparedness, prosecution, development of legislative framework and international cooperation.

The general goal of the Strategy is to establish the vision of the state of Georgia in terms of the fight against terrorism and extremism, as well as to determine the ways in which the state, international partners, private sector and civil society should operate collectively in order to handle the threats stemming from terrorist organizations, extremist groups and their certain supporters.

The Strategy is based on the Threat Assessment Document of Georgia, the National Security Concept of Georgia, as well as the national legislation and international obligations undertaken by Georgia.

For the purposes of this Strategy, terrorist and extremist challenges are most reviewed jointly. The state goals and objectives as well as expected outcomes are also presented in accordance with this principle.

***Terrorism** - Violence or intimidation to use violence directed against individuals or legal entities, destruction-damage or threat of destruction-damage of buildings, means of transport, communication and other material objects using weapons, explosives, nuclear, chemical, biological or other human life and health threatening substances, or by abduction or hostage-taking, for the purposes of forcing the authorities, and/or any of its agencies or the international organization to take certain actions or refrain from taking certain actions in the unlawful interests of the terrorists.*

***Terrorist** – An individual who participates in terrorist activities.*

***Extremism** – A system of ideas, ideology that does not recognize the principle of equality, promotes hatred, intolerance, violence, threatens democratic structure and the rule of law in the country.*

***Extremist/s** – An individual or a group of individuals that share extremist ideology or a system of ideas, and due to this motivation gets involved in unlawful activities.*

*Radicalization - A process, in which a person might go beyond the limits of law when disseminating his/her own beliefs and promoting certain ideology, and get involved in terrorist and/or extremist activity. This process demonstrates the willingness of a person to consent to and/or, if necessary, use violent methods for the sake of the objectives of the ideology supported by him/her.*

To effectively implement the goals of the Strategy, it is essential to combat the polarization of the society. No doubt this kind of a society is rather vulnerable to the dissemination of terrorist and extremist ideology.

Effective fight against terrorism requires consolidated efforts from all the partners indicated in the Strategy and the Action Plan. The state and the society must jointly ensure the protection of the rule of justice, the principles of democracy and the free society. The Strategy underlines the active involvement of the civil society and private sector in counterterrorism efforts.

The document mainly focuses on the protection of the state and the society against terrorist and extremist threats. Furthermore, it is clear that nowadays the mentioned threats and challenges are interconnected with the global trends of terrorism, therefore, the Strategy pays special attention to international cooperation.

## 2. Analysis of Existing Situation

Threats linked with terrorism and extremism still represent a significant challenge to the contemporary world. Recent developments have made it clear that terrorist/extremist organizations and groups are capable of transforming local, regional conflicts into global, international confrontations; they are capable to plan and carry out terrorist attacks in different countries and radicalize a part of the population. The ongoing combat activities taking place in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya and other countries of the world have created unprecedented opportunities for the dissemination of terrorist ideas, as well as for the radicalization of the groups vulnerable to the mentioned ideas.

### 2.1. Terrorist Organizations

The civilized world has faced a number of significant challenges stemming from terrorist/extremist organizations, including radicalization of its own citizens; their travel to different countries of the world to take part in ongoing combat activities there; return of

radicalized individuals with combat experience, and carrying out terrorist attacks by terrorist/extremist groups and/or certain individuals.

Regardless of international efforts, the so-called "Islamic State" (hereinafter referred as "Daesh") remains to be the most vivid manifestation of global terrorism. Over a certain period of time, it was a terrorist organization with unprecedented military, financial, governing and ideological capabilities. In the past years "Daesh" was mainly engaged in carrying out large-scale military activities. After losing the territories and weakening its positions, the organization no longer has the capacity to carry out the above-mentioned activities and, consequently, it has changed its strategy of actions, which has led to new challenges facing the contemporary world.

In the course of new tactics, carrying out the acts of terrorism beyond the conflict zone has become the main tool of "Daesh". This organization seeks to radicalize and recruit more and more individuals using modern technologies, including the internet and social media. Over the past years, "Daesh" has been inciting its supporters to travel to Syria and Iraq. Today the terrorist organization using internet and social networks, compels radicalized individuals to carry out terrorist attacks in their residential areas.

Several dozens of Georgian citizens have fought in the ranks of "Daesh" in various times. Some of them have gained considerable influence in terrorist ranks and have even reached the top of hierarchy of a terrorist organization. "Daesh" managed to gain a certain number of supporters in Georgia, however, due to special operations carried out by the law enforcement agencies and the target-oriented policy conducted by the state, the number of supporters of "Daesh" has dramatically reduced in Georgia. Nevertheless, certain supporters of the mentioned organization might still be in Georgia, who, if necessary, will act in accordance with the instructions received from the organization. However, in order to avoid the threats the state is constantly implementing relevant activities. Citizens of Georgia fighting in the ranks of "Daesh" in Syria and Iraq, who might decide to return to Georgia and their family members - still remain to be a challenge facing the country. The challenge is the foreign terrorists fighters of "Daesh" as well, who might attempt to travel to different countries across the world, through Georgia. Similar to the overall challenge, Georgia also faces the threats of radicalization and recruitment through the internet carried out by "Daesh".

Over the years "Al-Qaeda" has remained to be a particularly dangerous terrorist organization with significant capabilities. In the past years, it did not suffer losses similar to "Daesh". The so-called representations of the organization still operate in many countries across the world and are able to operate independently, as well as to carry out the tasks issued by the central leadership. Currently the armed groups subordinated to "Al-Qaeda" still exercise control over a certain territory in Syria.

Georgia is not a primary object of interest for the mentioned terrorist organization. Certain groups in Georgia might share the ideology of “Al-Qaeda”. Several dozens of Georgian citizens have fought in the ranks of armed groups supporting „Al-Qaeda“, during combat activities in Syria and Iraq. Some citizens of Georgia have even assumed the leadership position of the armed groups affiliated with “Al-Qaeda”. The possible threats against Georgia stemming from this organization might involve a terrorist attack carried out by a terrorist organization or its individual supporter; return attempts to Georgia of the Georgian citizens fighting in the groups supporting “Al-Qaeda”, as well as attempts of using the territory of Georgia as a transit route by foreign terrorist fighters supporting the organization.

„Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan“, the same as “Taliban” remains to be a main challenge in terms of international terrorism. The mentioned organization operates mainly in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and controls a significant part of the country’s territory. "Taliban" is capable of conducting military operations, carry out armed attacks and terrorist acts. In the process of planning and carrying out operations, terrorist groups which are members of the organization operate independently quite effectively, nevertheless, if necessary, "Taliban" makes use of the mechanism of the centralized governance as well. Over the recent years „Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” and “Daesh” have been actively opposing each other in Afghanistan, intending to redistribute influences.

"Taliban" poses a significant threat to Georgia, in particular, to the Georgian Defence Forces, who have been participating within the NATO international mission in the Afghan conflict since 2004. Over the past years, the mentioned terrorist organization had carried out a number of attacks against Georgian military, several dozens of Georgian military were killed in the fight against international terrorism and several hundreds were injured. Currently, within the NATO’s Resolute Support Mission the divisions of the Georgian Defence Forces are located in the city of Kabul, Balkh and Parwan provinces. These provinces represent the area of active actions of “Taliban”.

## 2.2. Regional Context

Although Georgia is not among the countries with high risk of terrorist attacks, the region-wide processes have a significant impact on the country. The developments taking place in the North Caucasus, Middle East and Central Asia have posed different types of threats to Georgia at various times.

In recent years, the Middle East has become a region with unprecedented terrorist activity. The conflicts ongoing in the countries of the region have had direct effect on the Georgian citizens. There were facts of travel of Georgian citizens in order to participate in the combat activities taking place in the region; attempts to return to Georgia by the individuals

involved in terrorism, and attempts to use the territory of the country as a transit route by foreign terrorist fighters travelling to the Middle East. Currently the situation in the Middle East is still tense. According to the geopolitical objectives of various states and groups operating in the region, the situation might extremely escalate on the ground what, with high probability, will have a negative impact on the security situation of Georgia.

As a matter of experience, the developments in the North Caucasus are of significant, and in certain cases of crucial importance for the security of Georgia. Currently, the terrorist activity is reduced in the mentioned region. Nowadays the "Daesh" and "Caucasus Emirate" groups operating in the North Caucasus represent decentralized terrorist organizations, with minimal personnel and limited financial opportunities. Obviously, these groups are capable of carrying out certain terrorist attacks, however at this stage they do not represent a significant challenge to the regional security. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the current ongoing processes in the North Caucasus, it is practically impossible to maintain stability in this region in the long-term perspective, and that is associated with significant threats for Georgia.

Georgia is part of the European security architecture, hence, over the recent years Georgia and a large number of European countries have been facing similar threats in terms of terrorism. However, unlike many European countries, terrorist attacks organized by the international terrorist organization have not been carried out in Georgia. It is noteworthy that the law enforcement agencies neutralized a group which was planning to carry out a terrorist attack in the country.

While discussing the existing security environment in Georgia in terms of terrorism, the territories occupied by the Russian Federation should be specifically emphasized. The situation in the occupied Tskhinvali region and Abkhazia, un-controlled by the central government of Georgia, and with the high level of corruption and crime on the ground, makes favourable environment for terrorist activities.

Citizens of foreign countries being possible supporters of terrorist organizations, who are present on the territory of Georgia, also represent a threat to the country. In most cases these individuals do not have historic, religious and cultural links to Georgia and the Georgian society, what makes it easier for the terrorist organizations to involve them in extremist activities.

## 2.3. Legislative and Institutional Framework

### 2.3.1. Overview of Legislation

In the direction of developing counterterrorism legislation, Georgia has taken important steps and adopted relevant normative acts, as well as conducted respective amendments to the existing legislation.

It should be noted, that the legislation of Georgia as well as the national conceptual documents in the field of security, including the National Security Concept of Georgia, the Threat Assessment Document of Georgia and the Law of Georgia On the Rules of Planning and Coordination of the National Security Policy, define the fight against international terrorism as one of the main directions of Georgian security policy. Law of Georgia on Combating Terrorism is a significant legal act in the field of countering terrorism. It defines the forms of organization of and legal grounds for the fight against terrorism, as well as the rules of coordination of relevant state authorities in the field of combating terrorism, the grounds for involvement of civil organizations and associations, and of citizens, their rights, obligations and their social security guarantees. The Law which has been amended several times due to the modern challenges, is significant since it defines the terms of "terrorism", "terrorist", "terrorist act", "terrorist purpose", "terrorist activity", "international terrorism", "terrorist group" and "terrorist organization", in accordance with the international standards. The provisions of the Law which determine the basic principles of combating terrorism, as well as the subjects who conduct the fight against terrorism, are worth noting.

In the Criminal Code of Georgia terrorist offenses are provided in Chapter XXXVIII under the Title of Offenses against the State. The Code widely criminalizes terrorism-related actions and establishes relevant criminal liability for individuals and legal entities. The Code defines what type of activities should be considered as a terrorist act. The list includes explosion, arson, attack on a person, use of weapon, as well as all the other activities which threaten human life, create risks of damaging significant property or resulting in other serious consequences. It should be noted that for the qualification of these actions as a terrorist act, each should be carried out with the terrorist purpose. This implies the intimidation of population or compulsion of the state authority, foreign state authority or an international organization to perform or not to perform certain action, or destabilization or destruction of fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country/foreign country/international organization.

It is noteworthy that in terms of combating terrorism, basic amendments were made to the Code in the years of 2013-2015. After the draft laws initiated by the Government of Georgia entered into force, a number of activities conducted with the terrorist purpose have become punishable. Furthermore, the Code has made punishable the following illegal activities: public support of terrorist activities, terrorist organization, provocation to carry out terrorist activities, association in a foreign country's terrorist organization or its assistance, formation of a terrorist organization, its membership, participation in its activities and recruiting individuals for this purpose, hostage-taking for the terrorist purpose, threat of committing a terrorist act, participation in international terrorism, failure to take measures to prevent an act of terrorism, etc. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the Code differentiates

cyberterrorism and technological terrorism from other terrorist acts. Also, the Code envisages the attack on a state-political official of Georgia and a person or institution under international protection under the category of terrorist acts.

It should be noted that Georgia is one of the first countries among the UN member states, which in 2015 fully criminalized the activities related to the travel of the so-called Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014). Consequently, as a result of legislative amendments, the Code has established criminal liability for crossing or attempt of crossing the state border of Georgia with the purpose of carrying out terrorist activity, preparing it or participating in such activities or in terrorist training.

The resolution of the Government of Georgia on Approving the Rules of Organizing Counterterrorist Activities in the Country and of Coordinating the Activities of the Subject in the Fight against Terrorism - is a significant part of the existing legislation in the field of combating terrorism. It obliges the subjects in the fight against terrorism, as well as other state authorities to provide any terrorism-related information to the Counterterrorism Center of the State Security Service of Georgia. Furthermore, the resolution of the Government of Georgia on Approving the Rules of Organization and Activities of the Operational Headquarter of Extreme Situation Management - is worth mentioning. It determines the activities of the Operational Headquarter which is created by the Government order, in order to suppress a terrorist act. The Operational Headquarter, headed by the State Security Service, is a mechanism of joint response to terrorist activities.

On the background of new challenges related to the travel of the so-called FTFs, the state devotes special attention to the development of legislative framework on border security and control, as well as on civil aviation safety. In this regard, the Law of Georgia on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons, the Law of Georgia on International Protection, other relevant laws and bylaws are worth mentioning, which envisage relevant restrictions on entering the country by a foreigner and granting relevant legal status to this foreigner, whose presence in the country represents a threat to the state security and/or public order of Georgia, including when there is the information, with high degree of probability, indicating the individual's link to terrorist and/or extremist organizations.

Furthermore, in order to properly implement the UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017), significant legislative amendment has been undertaken, on the basis of which international air carriers are required to provide free-of-charge Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) to the competent authority - LEPL Operational-Technical Agency of Georgia of the State Security Service. Also, the resolution № 174 of 10 April 2018 of the Government of Georgia approved the rules of providing API and PNR by the air carrier to the competent authority.

In order to suppress financing of terrorism, the Law of Georgia on Facilitating the Prevention of Illicit Income Legalization should be noted. According to the Law and in order to facilitate suppressing the financing of terrorism, LEPL – Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia is obliged to immediately provide, upon a reasonable doubt, the State Security Service of Georgia with any information related to the financing of terrorism. And in case of confirmation of such facts, legal entities as well as individuals shall be subject to criminal liability under the Criminal Code of Georgia. In addition to criminal measures, the national legislation also envisages the possibility of issuing an order by the court on freezing assets of the individuals and/or legal entities related to terrorism, through administrative court proceedings, on the basis of a motion of the Government Commission on Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions (the latter being established by the resolution of the Government of Georgia), and in accordance with the UN international lists. Enforcement of the measures envisaged by the court order, namely, freezing assets is carried out by the National Bureau of Enforcement. This is one of the most efficient mechanisms of the state to ensure that terrorists no longer have direct or indirect financial and other material support in order to carry out terrorist activities.

### 2.3.2. Institutional Mechanisms

In order to protect the country against extremist and terrorist threats, joint efforts of the state agencies of Georgia are required. The Government of Georgia conducts the organization of the country's fight against extremism and terrorism, and provides this effort with various resources, while the following subjects are directly involved in the fight against terrorism: the State Security Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Intelligence Service, Special State Protection Service and Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia. Also, other public agencies and organizations play an important role in the fight against terrorism.

The State Security Service of Georgia is the lead agency in the unified system of the country's fight against extremism and terrorism, ensuring detection, prevention and suppression of terrorist crimes, through the application of special and criminal intelligence activities; collecting information on the activities of foreign and international terrorist organizations and conducting the systemization of this information. The Service coordinates the activities of the subjects in the fight against terrorism through its structural subdivision – Counterterrorism Center. In case of emergency situations resulted from terrorist activities, a temporary authority - Emergency Situations Management Operative Command is formed, with the leadership of the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia. The main objective of the Command is to carry out special activities with the aim of preventing and suppressing

terrorist crime, as well as ensuring public security, neutralizing terrorists and preventing or reducing to the minimum the expected outcomes from the act of terrorism and/or other crimes conducted with the terrorist purpose.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia plays an important role in the fight against terrorism, which might be the first responder to the terrorist activity and the crime. The Ministry ensures the protection of public security and the law and order, the security of the land border and maritime space, as well as the protection of state border and border regime at Border Crossing Points. Development of the Community Officer project and strengthening the Community Oriented Policing approaches within the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are especially worth mentioning, which aim at proactive communication and close cooperation with the society including, the identification of the risks of possible radicalization, extremism and terrorism, and the threat prevention. Development of the Intelligence-Led Policing model is also important, which aims at proactive approach towards organized crime, operational exchange of information among agencies, development of unified system of information management and analysis, assessment of threats and risks.

The Emergency Management Service ensures the agreement of transportation routes of dangerous goods, preparation of conclusions on physical protection related to the licensing of nuclear and radiation activities, carrying out the measures necessary for response to emergency situations and organizing necessary works to be conducted in an emergency situation zone.

The functions of the LEPL – Agency of Nuclear and Radiation Safety are important in terms of prevention, as well as at the stage of responding to nuclear and radiological emergency situations. The scope of competence of the Agency of Nuclear and Radiation Safety covers the following: granting licenses and permits to the persons conducting nuclear and radiation activities, conducting inspection and control over the fulfilment of radiation security and physical safety requirements set by the legislation. Responding to the cases of nuclear and radiological emergency situation – incident, illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials, radiation alarms at Border Crossing Points, customs and transport terminals, conducting expert assessments, preparing relevant conclusions, as well as carrying out safe transportation and disposal of the nuclear and/or radioactive sources seized as a result of the above-mentioned cases to the storage facility of radioactive waste, provided that its physical protection is ensured.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia is involved in the fight against terrorism, within its scope of competence. Divisions of the Defence Forces of Georgia fight against international terrorist organizations under the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Furthermore, in case a terrorist act is conducted in the territory of Georgia, the decision on using the Defence Forces is taken in accordance to the rules prescribed by the Constitution of Georgia.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia protects the computer and communication networks of the Ministry against cyber terrorism attacks. The Ministry within its scope of competence participates in detection, prevention and suppression of cyber-attacks on national level. Furthermore, military intelligence divisions of the Defence Forces gather and process information on international terrorist and extremist organizations operating outside Georgia.

The Georgian Intelligence Service participates in counterterrorism operations, within its scope of competence. In terms of counterterrorism, the main function of the Service is collecting/processing the information on foreign and international terrorist organizations operating outside Georgia, and submitting this information to relevant agencies.

The Special State Protection Service of Georgia, within the scope of powers and objectives set by the legislation, ensures the collection and analysis of information, conducts protection functions and respective complex measures, takes relevant measures necessary for the prevention and constant preparedness in order to ensure the security of the individuals and facilities under its protection, as well as to suppress and neutralize the threats and terrorist acts against them.

In terms of protecting the country against extremist and terrorist threats, it is especially important to identify and suppress the sources of the financing of terrorism. Fight against money laundering and financing of terrorism in Georgia is carried out in a complex format, through the joint efforts of various institutions. Legislation defines the monitoring entities which are supervised by the following bodies: National Bank of Georgia, Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Ministry of Finance of Georgia and a state subordinate agency under its system - Service of Accounting, Reporting and Auditing Supervision, LEPL – Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia and LEPL – Georgian Bar Association. LEPL – Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia represents an important component of the national institutional set-up on combating financing of terrorism. The Service analyzes the information on suspicious transactions received from monitoring entities; in case there is a reasonable doubt that a transaction is implemented for the purpose of committing illicit income legalization, financing of terrorism or other crimes, the Financial Monitoring Service forwards relevant information to law enforcement agencies.

Within the unified system of the fight against extremism and terrorism, the Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia is granted with the exclusive power to conduct criminal prosecution over terrorist crime. In order to carry out this function, the Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia will continue to provide procedural guidance over investigation, and in exceptional cases will conduct investigation to the full extent, and will support the state prosecution in courts.

### 3. General Vision

Individuals involved in terrorism and extremism belong to certain ethnic and/or religious groups, however, the state of Georgia deems it unacceptable to link specific religion and/or ethnicity, nationality to terrorism and/or extremism.

Since gaining independence up to date Georgia has become the target of extremist and terrorist activities, including terrorist attacks, on a number of cases. This experience and the global context clearly shows that terrorist threats and challenges are changing, and consequently they require a constant assessment/analysis of strategic environment and threats.

Over the past years, the threats stemming from terrorism have significantly changed in the world. This has also affected Georgia. The developments in Syria and Iraq have contributed to the radicalization of certain citizens of Georgia. Supporters of the ideas of terrorist organizations are present in the territory of Georgia.

Certain public groups or organizations in Georgia preach hatred, support violence and are extremist in terms of the essence of their activities. The state confronts these ideas/ideologies and will not allow the possibility of their realization in real life.

A terrorist attack cannot be ruled out. Therefore, the state and the society should be ready for an adequate response to the attack, in order to timely minimize the extent of damage and deal with ongoing or completed terrorist attack.

Part of the territory of Georgia is occupied by the Russian Federation. Past experience has shown, that terrorist threats stem from these regions. Georgia will continue the de-occupation policy with the support of international organizations and foreign partners, and will strive to deal with the terrorist threats originating from the occupied territories by all means at its disposal.

For the purposes of protecting own citizens and other persons against terrorist threats, Georgia will obtain terrorism-related information through all legal methods available at its disposal and will actively cooperate with civil society, private sector and foreign partners in this direction.

Effective legislation is required in order to combat terrorism and extremism. The state has developed legal framework, however in order to deal with the new challenges emerging over the time, will continue to elaborate effective legislation.

The Georgian authorities will actively cooperate with partner countries in the process of implementation of this Strategy and the counterterrorism activities.

#### **4. National Counterterrorism Vision**

According to the Strategy, the national counterterrorism vision is based on seven basic directions: obtaining and analyzing terrorism, extremism and radicalization-related information, prevention, protection, preparedness, prosecution, development of legislative framework and international cooperation.

The direction of obtaining and analyzing information aims at active participation of the state, private sector and civil society, in order to ensure that any terrorism, extremism and radicalization-related information is not ignored. On the basis of analyzing the mentioned information, the state will define the measures to be carried out in the directions of prevention, protection, preparedness and prosecution.

The state vision of Georgia is that in the course of fight against terrorism and extremism, preventive measures are given a priority. Respectively, the component of prevention is given a special significance in the National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism.

Along with the preventive measures, Georgia will develop its protective capabilities in order to minimize the threat of committing terrorist attacks in the country.

Notwithstanding all the above-mentioned, the state is not immune against terrorist attacks. Consequently, the present Strategy aims at developing the component of preparedness.

In case of committing a terrorist act, the state will administer justice. Through active participation of relevant authorities, legal mechanisms of prosecution will be developed. As a result of investigation, the state will ensure that individual/individuals participating in the commission of a crime with the terrorist purpose, are identified and brought to criminal justice.

In order to effectively handle terrorist and extremist challenges, the state's goal is to develop flexible legislation corresponding to international standards and being adopted to modern challenges.

The state considers that the terrorist and extremist challenges existing in the country are closely linked to the ongoing processes in the world in this regard. Hence, one of the main directions of the Strategy is to enhance cooperation with international partners in the fight against terrorism/extremism and all its manifestations.

In the course of implementation of this Strategy and the counterterrorism activities, the state relies on the following basic principles:

1. Legitimacy and rule of justice;
2. Protection of and respect for the rights and freedoms of individuals and legal entities;
3. Prohibition of discrimination;
4. Prioritization of ensuring the security of human life and health in the course of combating terrorism;
5. Prioritization of implementing preventive measures;
6. Complex application of legal, political, social-economic, information and other means;
7. Conduct negotiations with terrorists, in order to prevent the expected results of the crimes of terrorist nature;

8. Unified leadership over the forces and means involved in the counterterrorism operation;
9. Non-disclosure of tactics and technical means of conducting counterterrorism operations, as well as the composition of the mentioned operations;
10. Inevitability of the punishment for terrorist activities;
11. Sovereign equality of states in terms of using special investigative techniques among states in the course of cooperation on international level;
12. Operationality and continuity;
13. Protection of the rule of conspiracy;
14. Civic participation.

#### 4.1. Collection and Analysis of Information Related to Terrorism, Extremism and Radicalization

The state's <b>goal</b> is timely collection and analysis of terrorism, extremism and radicalization-related information, and based thereon planning and implementation of respective measures.
<b>Objectives</b>
The state having the information on terrorism and extremism in light of the ongoing worldwide developments, as well as in relation to the existing challenges facing the country.
Information collection and analysis by the agencies whose activities are not directly connected to the fight against terrorism and extremism.
In the direction of researching terrorism, extremism and radicalization, dialogue with scientific community, academia, experts and other circles interested in this process.
Public awareness raising in the direction of terrorism, extremism and radicalization and activating cooperation by citizens with relevant state agencies.
State agencies sharing the information and analysis on terrorism, extremism and radicalization obtained within their scope of competence, with the State Security Service.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
The state is informed on the threats and challenges related to terrorism and extremism, and based on this information carries out respective prevention, protection, preparedness and prosecution measures.

Timely collection and analysis of the information is vital for the state in order to effectively address the constantly changing threats and challenges related to terrorism, extremism and radicalization. This will provide the opportunity to timely detect the threats and challenges facing the country, as well as to specify the steps to be taken in terms of

prevention, protection, preparedness, prosecution, development of legislative framework and international cooperation. The process of information collection and analysis will be carried out by relevant state agencies, in compliance with the regulations set forth by the law, and with active participation of the private sector and civil society.

Relevant agencies will collect the information on terrorism, extremism and radicalization-related activities, both within the territory of Georgia and outside the country. The state will collect, process and analyze information, including on possible terrorist attacks against the interest of Georgia within the territory of Georgia and/or overseas; on identities, whereabouts, travel, possible contacts, plans, activities and available resources of terrorists, extremists and individuals connected to them; on financing of terrorism, as well as networks and methods being exploited with this purpose; on groups vulnerable to radicalization. In the course of collecting and processing information in the mentioned direction, the state will act in compliance with the requirements envisaged by the law and in full respect for human rights.

Successful counterterrorism activities require a complex approach. In this respect, particular attention will be attached to the agencies acting *inter alia* in the fields of education, culture, sports, health as well as social security. Private sector, within its scope of competence, will contribute greatly to the process of collecting the information on terrorism and extremism, identifying and analyzing the threats. Hence, attention will be focused on retraining the personnel in various agencies and increasing their number, if necessary.

Georgia will support the development of research projects. In cooperation with the academia and experts, Georgia will explore the trends of evolution of radicalization, extremism and terrorism, existing situation and anticipated threats on national as well as global arena. The knowledge and opinions shared by the above-mentioned groups will be used at all stages of the counterterrorism activities, as needed.

International experience has demonstrated that terrorists, extremists and radicalized individuals, while carrying out their activities and preparing attacks, often fall under the radar of the society. In most cases, the process of radicalization of an individual is carried out in front of the individual's inner circle. However, the mentioned circle does not possess the proper information in terms of identification of the ongoing process and the expected threats. In this direction the state will support awareness raising of citizens.

At the stage of investigating terrorist attacks perpetrated in various countries worldwide it has been established, that before the terrorist acts were committed, various state agencies had possessed the significant information and, had the information been mutually exchanged, the terrorist attack might had been avoided. Considering the above-mentioned, the State Security Service of Georgia, on the basis of information at its disposal, will pursue counterterrorism activities in the country through providing information to relevant state agencies and carrying out coordination with them, if needed.

## 4.2. Prevention

Georgia's <b>goal</b> is timely detection of dissemination of terrorist/extremist ideology, radicalization, recruitment, financing of terrorism/extremism and terrorist attacks, and handling them at the initial stage.
<b>Objectives</b>
Timely identification of terrorist/extremist narrative and preventing the dissemination of terrorism ideology.
Identifying and analyzing the factors facilitating the dissemination of terrorism/extremist ideology, and developing the ways of dealing with them.
Prevention of using religion for terrorist/extremist purposes.
Supporting awareness raising of the groups vulnerable to the dissemination of terrorist and extremist ideas.
Implementation of various types of projects for and with the participation of the groups vulnerable to the terrorist and extremist ideas.
De-radicalization and re-socialization of the individuals convicted in terrorism.
Raising public awareness for the purposes of timely responding to the detection of radicalization, extremism and terrorism threats.
Studying the challenges that women and girls face in terms of terrorism and extremism.
Designing special approaches for children and the youth in terms of prevention of radicalization, de-radicalization and re-socialization.
Countering the financing of terrorist and extremist organizations/groups. In this regard, strengthening the monitoring over the money transfers from abroad.
Advancing control system for suppressing the transfer of cash and securities, bypassing or circumventing the system of remittances and customs control on the border.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
Terrorism/extremist challenges are identified and handled at the initial stage.

In the process of combating terrorism and extremism, the state pays special attention to the prevention. The prevention-based measures require a complex approach and multi-level involvement that implies active cooperation of law enforcement agencies and other state institutions, educational institutions and organizations, private sector, civil society, religious and cultural organizations, as well as certain authoritative religious individuals to jointly combat various manifestations of terrorism, extremism and radicalization.

Terrorist and extremist organizations/groups have their own ideology that plays a decisive role in the radicalization and recruitment process of individuals. Terrorist attacks and other violent activities are justified/encouraged by this very ideology. Extremist and terrorist ideology has its own narrative, which is multi-faceted and often adjusted to specific ethnic, religious and social target-groups. In order to support the ideology, narrative often interprets the ethnic, religious, social and political processes at the local and global levels, in its own favour.

Significant part of the narrative of some terrorist organizations and extremist groups is devoted to religion. Terrorists, extremists, radicalized individuals and their supporters identify the goals of the above-mentioned organizations with religious commitments. Individuals not having relevant religious awareness and knowledge, are easily influenced by the narratives of this kind.

Internet, especially social media is the basic platform for disseminating terrorist/extremist ideology. Terrorist/extremist organizations exploit this method for the purposes of communicating with the wide audience, for their radicalization, recruitment, disseminating messages of threats in the society, as well as for the other purposes.

Social and economic problems contribute to the dissemination of terrorist/extremist ideology. Few possibilities of employment and income are additional drivers of radicalization in regard to the individuals vulnerable to extremist ideas. Recruiters offer financial or other type of assistance to the citizens in exchange to becoming a member of or supporting a terrorist organization. On a number of cases this has served as the basis for travelling to Syria and Iraq by the citizens of Georgia in order to join the ongoing combat operations. In this direction the state pays due attention to the infrastructure and regional development, in order to create a respectful environment for the population by implementing long-term profit-oriented infrastructure projects in the regions of the country and by raising opportunities for effective application of local resources.

Various forms of discrimination and stigmatization of certain groups of the population serve as the factor facilitating terrorism, extremism and radicalization. The state, together with active participation of civil society, ensures protection of the rights and freedoms of its citizens, regardless of their race, color, language, sex, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic and social affiliation, origin, property and social status, place of residence, as well as their civic equality and involvement in public life. Ideology and/or the set of ideas that does not recognize the above-mentioned principle of equality and promotes or supports hatred, intolerance, violence and at the same time poses a threat to the country's democratic order and the rule of law, will be considered as extremism by the state.

International practice shows that radicalized individuals in penitentiary establishments might recruit other convicted inmates. Special programs will be implemented to enable de-

radicalization and re-socialization of the convicted individuals. In this regard, close cooperation of the authorities, civil society and religious organizations is essential.

Every citizen should contribute greatly to the identification of terrorist threats at an early stage, as well as to the initial phase of the process of addressing radicalization. Relying on the best practices of international partners, Georgia will take measures to raise awareness of the civil society in this direction, in order to ensure that the society is not influenced by terrorist/extremist ideology and certain narratives, as well as to ensure timely response in case of detecting the radicalization, extremist and terrorist threats.

In terms of preventing terrorism and extremism the state clearly acknowledges the special role of women and girls. Georgia recognizes the negative impact that terrorism, extremism and radicalization have on women and girls. The state believes that equal and active participation of women in planning and developing the preventive measures, as well as in their implementation will determine the success of this approach.

As known, children and the youth represent one of the main targets of terrorist and extremist ideas. Over the recent years, there have been numerous examples of children's radicalization and their involvement in the terrorist/extremist activities, throughout the world.

International terrorist organizations have strong financial capabilities. Certain interest groups provide financial support to extremist organizations and groups. In an effort to seek funds, terrorist and extremist organizations apply multitier methods that are difficult to detect. Financial flows to the country which serve various purposes, are used to support extremism and terrorism in certain cases. The state aims to suppress this process.

In the course of implementation of the preventive measures at the national level, the state will rely on successful international practices and will protect human rights and freedoms.

**4.3. Protection**

The state’s <b>goal</b> is to protect its own population, state borders, civil aviation, critical infrastructure, places of public assembly and cyberspace against terrorist/extremist activities and attacks.
<b>Objectives</b>
Suppression of the movement of terrorists, extremists and individuals related to the mentioned activities across the country’s borders.
Enhancing land border, sea and air space protection, as well as border-migration control capabilities.
Improving capabilities in terms of detecting forged travel documents.

Comprehensive equipment and preparation of the agencies responsible for maritime space security.
Conducting respective protection measures along the occupation line and adjoining territories, in line with the undertaken international obligations and in compliance with the international agreements.
Supporting the extension of the activities of international monitoring missions in order to assess the existing situation in the occupied territories in terms of terrorism, to monitor it and to detect the threats.
Enhancing the risk-based screening systems at the airports of Georgia.
Developing automated screening systems of security.
Developing special protection mechanisms for the critical infrastructure objects/subjects against terrorist attacks.
Protecting diplomatic missions and their representatives in Georgia.
Developing special mechanisms for the protection of places of public assembly against terrorist attacks.
Enhancing existing capabilities in terms of cybersecurity.
Protecting the internet against the dissemination of terrorist and extremist ideas and violent messaging.
Suppressing acquisition of firearms, explosives and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials/substances by terrorists and extremists.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
Protection of state border, civil aviation, critical infrastructure, places of public assembly and cyberspace is strengthened against terrorist/extremist activities and attacks, also the movement of terrorists, extremists and individuals related to the mentioned activities across the state borders is suppressed.

Protection of the state and society against all possible manifestations of terrorism is highly important for Georgia. Strong defensive capabilities substantially mitigate the threat of terrorist attacks in the country. The state will protect its borders, civil aviation, critical infrastructure, places of public assembly and cyberspace against terrorist/extremist activities and attacks. Georgia shall not allow the knowledge, weapons and materials necessary to carry out a terrorist attack, to fall into the hands of terrorists.

In terms of combating terrorism and extremism, Georgia pays particular attention to the protection of the state border. The phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters that had activated during the ongoing conflict in Syria and Iraq, once again demonstrated to the modern world the necessity to effectively protect borders in the process of fight against terrorism. Georgia shall not allow the movement of terrorists, extremists and individuals affiliated to such

activities along its borders. In this regard, the state will strengthen its border protection capabilities.

Territories of Georgia are occupied by the Russian Federation, due to what the central government cannot exercise control over the sections of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region of the Georgian-Russian border. Grave criminogenic situation, corruption and uncontrolled situation in the occupied territories, create advantageous environment for terrorist activities in these regions. In order to effectively handle the terrorist and extremist threats coming from the occupied territories, Georgia will actively cooperate with partner countries and international organizations.

Georgia will pay particular attention to civil aviation security and will ensure that all the procedures of protecting civil aviation security are carried out with the involvement of passengers, with respect to their rights and with the protection of their personal belongings. International experience has shown that civil aviation is one of the main targets of terrorists. A number of terrorist attacks have been committed using civil aircrafts, as well as directly against civil aircrafts, and many attacks have been suppressed at the preparation and/or implementation stage. Over the years, airports have also often become the targets of terrorist attacks.

Protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks is vital for the country. Georgia will additionally define the list of objects which belong to critical infrastructure and the damage and/or destruction of which will significantly impede the functioning of the state. The state will additionally elaborate special mechanisms in order to protect the mentioned objects against terrorist threats.

The major targets of terrorist attacks are the places of public assembly. Over the last years, several commercial and public events in different countries across the world which were attended by a large number of citizens, have become the targets of terrorists. Such attacks are considerably easier for terrorist organizations to carry out, while the consequences, in terms of casualties and spreading fear, are much more serious. Therefore, modern video surveillance system, including facial and suspicious behavior recognition video-analytical system is being actively introduced at all priority locations.

Cyberspace and the internet represent relatively new area of terrorist/extremist activities. Georgia actively uses cyberspace in order to carry out important state functions. A large section of private sector and non-commercial organizations offers a wide range of services to the public through the internet. Terrorist and extremist organizations have gained the knowledge and capabilities to attack cyberspace. They successfully use the internet and cyberspace to communicate, as well as to share ideas and violent messages.

Terrorist organizations and their individual supporters use easily accessible tools to carry out attacks. Over the recent years, attacks are permanently conducted using cold, sharp and

blunt weapons, as well as using vehicles. It is significantly difficult for the state to impose restrictions on objects of everyday use, being in free circulation, however international experience will be considered in this regard and optimal safety measures will be elaborated together with partner countries and organizations.

In parallel to the mentioned process, Georgia will not allow the possession of firearms, explosive devices, ammunition and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials/substances by terrorists and extremists.

The state will ensure the security of diplomatic missions and their representatives in Georgia, at the proper level.

#### 4.4. Preparedness

Georgia's <b>goal</b> is to handle the consequences of a terrorist attack, the inflicted or expected damage, as well as the situation caused by a terrorist act - rapidly and effectively.
<b>Objectives</b>
Enhancing interagency coordination in the direction of counterterrorism activities.
Strengthening capabilities of the agencies countering terrorism and of the first response teams.
Protecting the lives and health of people, compensating the damage inflicted during a terrorist attack and afterwards, as well as in the course of a counterterrorism operation.
Developing action plans on emergency situations caused by terrorist attacks and/or terrorist activities committed against private and public buildings, means of transportation and public assembly places.
Identifying the groups facing threats of terrorist attacks and determining through direct communication with them, the probability of the attack. Enhancing their preparedness capabilities.
Identifying possible terrorist fighters returning from the conflict zone and determining the probability of the attack to be carried out by them.
State's active cooperation with civil society and media sector during a terrorist attack and a counterterrorism operation, in accordance with the right to freedom of speech and expression.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
Vulnerabilities of the state and the society towards the consequences of a terrorist attack are minimized.

Notwithstanding the efforts taken by the state, there is a possibility of a criminal activity for the terrorist purpose to take place in the country. Consequently, it is of vital

importance for Georgia to be prepared to cope with the consequences of a terrorist attack. The state shall minimize the damage expected or inflicted as a result of a terrorist attack and, in the shortest possible time, be able to recover from the situation created due to the terrorist act.

International experience has demonstrated that terrorist organizations and their supporters use the lack of coordination among state agencies and unpreparedness of the society, while committing attacks. In this regard, it is important to continue interagency cooperation as well as communication with private sector, civil society and international partners.

During the terrorist attacks and in the course of counterterrorism operations, in order to protect the lives and health of the people, the primary importance is attached to enhancement of the capabilities of relevant agencies, in order to empower them to efficiently handle the outcomes of a terrorist attack.

International experience has shown that any building, means of transportation and place of public assembly may become the target of terrorist attacks. The state will take relevant steps in order to be ready for handling the outcomes in case a terrorist attack is carried out against a relevant object.

Globally, terrorist/extremist organizations and their supporters commit attacks against particular ethnic, religious, political or other groups or specific persons. Georgia is not immune against similar threats, as well.

The main aim of a terrorist attack is the intimidation of the state and the society, which is why it is unexpected and is directed against civilians. Civilians should avoid fear, panic and feeling of insecurity in case of a terrorist attack. In this regard, the state will establish proper communication with the society from the very moment of a terrorist attack and throughout the whole process, effective communication plans will be elaborated based on the monitoring and analysis of public attitudes.

Information support is especially important for terrorist and extremist organizations to intimidate the masses and attract potential supporters. Accordingly, the preparedness of the media in case of an attack is vital and in certain cases has critical importance. The media shall provide the society with the information regarding ongoing processes and existing threats, while maintaining civil peace and stability during this process. When disseminating information on terrorist attacks, the media shall not endanger counterterrorism measures taken by the state.

The state shall not allow the polarization of the society under the pretext of a terrorist attack and the imposition of the responsibility on any ethnic, religious and public group. In this regard, the state shall consider an incitement against any ethnic, religious or public group as extremism.

According to the legislation of Georgia, in case of an extreme situation caused by terrorist attacks and activities, the Government of Georgia on the basis of a resolution creates an Operational Headquarter on Extreme Situation Management, which is headed by the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia. The Operational Headquarter is directly in charge of the counterterrorism operation. It aims to prevent and suppress criminal activities of terrorist nature, ensure human safety, neutralize terrorists and minimize expected outcomes of a terrorist attack and/or other crimes committed for terrorist purposes. Structure of the Operational Headquarter as well as tasks and functions of structural units are determined by the head of the Headquarter. Since the beginning till the very end of a counterterrorism operation, every participant of the operation is subordinate to the head of the Operational Headquarter.

**4.5. Prosecution**

Georgia’s <b>goal</b> is the execution of justice and avoiding criminal infringement.
<b>Objectives</b>
Conducting rapid, effective and objective investigation.
Identifying persons having committed a crime.
Establishing special legal regulations for obtaining terrorism-related evidence.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
Terrorism-related criminal activity is prevented, detected, suppressed; criminals are brought to justice.

Execution of justice plays a decisive role in fight against terrorism. Notwithstanding the prevention and protection measures taken by the state, still the possibility of terrorist attacks and other manifestations of terrorism cannot be entirely ruled out. Hence in certain cases, criminal activities are prepared and committed.

Prosecution of an individual charged with the crime of terrorism is a complex process, which involves participation of various state authorities.

The State Security Service carries out investigation of the crimes provided in Chapter XXXVIII (Terrorism) of the Criminal Code of Georgia.

The issue of tackling terrorism challenges is largely dependent on the timely and efficient investigation. The Counterterrorism Center of the State Security Service will immediately launch an investigation into the circumstances detected in the process of collecting the critical information related to terrorism, or at the stage of carrying out prevention measures, that might contain the elements of the crime envisaged by the Chapter on Terrorism of Criminal Code of Georgia. In terms of conducting timely investigation, close cooperation between the

State Security Service and law enforcement agencies, oversight authorities and other subjects has a crucial importance.

The State Security Service through special and criminal intelligence measures, will detect the crime of terrorism, prevent relevant threats and suppress terrorist activities. Procedural oversight over investigation of the crimes envisaged by the Terrorism Chapter, and criminal prosecution are conducted by the Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia.

It is of the crucial significance to carry out investigative activities in a timely manner, in order to rapidly identify the facts related to the crime and avoid expected severe consequences.

One of the main goals of investigation is to gather evidence, at the further stage for these evidence to be presented before the court. Due to the necessity to immediately respond to terrorist threats and considering the possible expected wide-scale threats, it is crucial to have proper/different-from-other-criminal-activities-approaches in the course of gathering terrorism-related evidence. It is essential that the terrorism-related investigative (procedural) activities are conducted in a manner that ensures the efficiency of the investigation. In this regard, it is important to establish special legal regulations for obtaining terrorism-related evidence, what will require a high degree of caution to avoid illegitimate restriction of human rights and freedoms. For this purposes, emphasis should be made on active cooperation with competent institutions of European and other partner countries in terms of sharing their best practices, ensuring the protection against such risks.

In the course of criminal prosecution, the state aims at suppressing illegal activities related to terrorism. The Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia is the prosecuting authority. Upon the collection of relevant evidence through investigative activities, judicial review begins during which the Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia supports prosecution on behalf of the state. For the purposes of preventing the cases when an individual charged with terrorism is hiding and/or is otherwise interfering with the investigation, the Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia refers to the court in order to apply the measure of restraint against the charged individual. The court decides upon the guilt of the individual charged with terrorism, and in case the latter is proven guilty, the court imposes a sentence on him/her.

The threat of terrorism is constantly changing. Certain organizations and their supporters while planning and carrying out terrorist attacks, as well as recruiting citizens and financing terrorism, resort to new methods which are unknown to the law enforcement agencies. In order to address this process, the state will continuously assess the prosecution capabilities and in case of identifying new methods and threats, will act accordingly.

In the course of prosecuting individuals charged with terrorism, the state grants initial consideration to the rule of law and implements the mentioned process in compliance with the protection of fundamental human rights. At the current stage of the fight against terrorism,

the state will act based on the successful international experience and in active cooperation with the partner countries.

#### 4.6. Development of Legislative Framework

The state’s <b>goal</b> is to have a flexible legislation, conforming to international standards and being adapted to modern challenges.
<b>Objectives</b>
Analysis and further development of existing normative framework in order to address the growing and changing terrorist threats.
Advancing the legislation on state border protection and control, security of travel documents, migration, granting citizenship, asylum system and legal status of aliens.
Further advancement of existing legislative framework on the fight against the financing of terrorism.
<b>Expected outcomes</b>
The state has an effective and flexible legislation to respond to terrorist and extremist challenges.

One of the main preconditions for effective fight against terrorism and extremism is flexible legislation, conforming to international standards and being adapted to modern challenges. In response to the growing and changing terrorist threats, the state continues to constantly develop and advance the existing normative framework.

Despite of the fact that the state has a wide legislative framework to counter terrorism, the present document represents the first comprehensive national-level strategy in the field of preventing and combating terrorism, which clearly defines the state vision and its complex approach in terms of preventing and effectively responding to the threats related to terrorism and extremism.

It should be noted that a number of legislative amendments have been undertaken in Georgia in order to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies in terms of investigative activities, however in response to growing and changing terrorist threats, the state will regularly conduct an analysis of existing criminal legislation, and its revision in line with the threats and challenges.

In order to avoid the threat of possible arrival and transit of the so-called FTFs in the country, the state will take necessary steps to advance legislation on state border protection and control, security of travel documents, migration, granting the citizenship, asylum system and legal status of aliens. In this regard, existing legislative framework will be regularly analyzed, best international practice will be considered and legislation will be advanced as

necessary. In the course of this process the international treaties to which Georgia is a party, as well as international legal norms of universally recognized basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, and of refugee status - will be taken into consideration.

In order to prevent and suppress financing of terrorism and other material support thereto, it is important to develop relevant legislation. With active involvement of all relevant agencies, the state will elaborate the national money laundering and terrorism financing risk assessment (NRA) document, which will facilitate further advancement of legal mechanisms. The focus will be on the development of legal mechanisms in terms of registration of non-entrepreneurial and non-commercial legal entities, granting status and activities, as well as oversight in order to prevent using such organizations for financing of terrorism.

In order to prevent terrorism, legal mechanisms for suppressing the transfer of cash and securities bypassing or circumventing the system of remittances and customs control on the border – will be advanced. The state will continue to further implement recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). In this direction it is important to highlight the importance of using terrorism-related targeted financial sanctions within the context of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. In this regard, the activities of the Government Commission on Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions are worth mentioning. In order to facilitate the implementation of relevant UN Resolutions, the state will ensure the development of national legislation, by sharing the best practices and in cooperation with international partners.

It is noteworthy that due to advancing legal framework, the state has taken effective law enforcement measures against criminals related to international terrorism. However, taking into consideration that terrorists are rapidly acquiring modern technologies, changing their *modus operandi*, identifying the weaknesses or gaps of the legislation and using them in their favor, on this background it is important for the counterterrorism normative framework to be constantly analyzed and updated. In the course of this process, special attention will be paid *inter alia* to advancing the legal basis for obtaining information via operational and operational-technical means for counterterrorism purposes and accepting this information as evidence in criminal court proceedings.

Rapid identification of terrorist threats requires effective sharing of information to be ensured among relevant agencies, as well as civil society, private sector and international partners. Consequently, the state will continue to advance the legislative framework in order to further develop the exchange mechanisms of terrorism-related information.

#### 4.7. International Cooperation

Georgia's <b>goal</b> is to enhance cooperation with international partners in the direction of fight against terrorism/extremism and all its manifestations.
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<b>Objectives</b>
Acceding to relevant international instruments in the field of fight against terrorism.
Participation in antiterrorism activities, organized within international multilateral formats.
Cooperation with Europol and its respective structures, as well as Eurojust in the field of fight against terrorism.
Further enhancing existing cooperation with INTERPOL.
Developing and strengthening bilateral cooperation with countries, sharing experience and exchanging information on the fight against terrorism and enhancement of security.
Strengthening bilateral cooperation with respective services of partner and neighbouring countries and developing effective mechanisms for information exchange.
Strengthening international partnership in order to improve the capabilities of respective agencies in the field of preventing and combating terrorism.
<b>Expected outcome</b>
International cooperation with international partners is enhanced in the direction of fight against terrorism/extremist and all its manifestations, including various agreements having been concluded and/or being under the working process to be concluded.

International cooperation in the field of fight against terrorism and extremism is given a significant importance. In this direction, Georgia is actively involved in international effort and will continue to pursue the fight against terrorism and all its manifestations, alongside the international community.

Georgia has become an active member of the Global Coalition against Daesh from the very beginning and through its participation in multinational operations has been significantly contributing to the maintenance of global peace and security. Georgia is the party to the UN counterterrorism conventions/protocols, as well as to the conventions/protocols adopted within the framework of the Council of Europe. The provisions of the mentioned international treaties, as well as of the UN Security Council resolutions and other international legal instruments are implemented in the legislation of Georgia. Georgia continues the process of adhering to relevant international instruments in the field of fight against terrorism.

Georgia has signed international agreements with various international partners, including the European Union and Europol, on fight against terrorism, law enforcement cooperation, exchange and mutual protection of classified information. Concluding the above-mentioned agreements with the EU and NATO member states, as well as with other partner countries is of a particular priority for Georgia. Furthermore, Georgia will conclude an agreement with Eurojust.

Georgia attaches a significant importance to strengthening cooperation with international organizations on counterterrorism matters. The state remains dedicated to the

idea of enhancing cooperation with the NATO, EU, UN, Council of Europe, OSCE, as well as within other multilateral formats in the field of fight against terrorism. As regards the regional cooperation, Georgia cooperates with the partner countries *inter alia* on the basis of multilateral international legal instruments adopted within the framework of Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM). Participation of Georgia in various important cooperation formats in the field of fight against terrorism, including in the activities of Global Counterterrorism Forum, is worth mentioning. Besides, Georgia actively participates in the expert level meetings of the Council of Europe Counter-terrorism Committee (CDCT).

The country will continue active cooperation with international organizations and participation in antiterrorist activities organized by these organizations. Georgia's involvement in relevant international initiatives aiming at suppressing terrorism, detecting attempts of terrorism and elaborating response measures - is important. Furthermore, Georgia in compliance with its national interests, will participate in the process of elaboration and adoption of the documents in the field of fight against terrorism within the framework of international organizations. The country will enhance cooperation with Europol and its relevant structures on operational and strategic level in the field of fight against terrorism. Also, significant attention will be attained to further developing existing cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization - INTERPOL.

In order to conduct international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, network of liaison officers and security/police attaches of Georgia and other countries will be actively applied.

In terms of development of international cooperation in the field of fight against terrorism, Georgia has several priority directions. First and foremost, cooperation and coordination on international level is worth mentioning, which envisages contributing to the minimization and eradication of factors leading to the development of terrorism and extremism on global arena. The significant component of this effort is the continuation of Georgia's participation in peace-keeping missions overseas. Development/enhancement of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, experience-sharing and exchange of information in terms of fight against terrorism and strengthening security, are equally important. Furthermore, important direction of international cooperation is strengthening international partnership in order to improve the capabilities of relevant authorities in the field of fight against terrorism.

Efficient response to terrorism threats requires joint efforts, consequently, enhancement of bilateral cooperation with relevant authorities of partner countries, as well as development of effective mechanisms of information exchange are of high significance. The State Security Service of Georgia as the lead authority in the fight against terrorism, attaches

huge importance to the cooperation with relevant agencies of partner countries. Hence, negotiations and the initiation process of cooperation agreements with these authorities are conducted on active basis. Cooperation with the partner countries, including EU and NATO member countries, is worth mentioning. Information is exchanged and joint activities are planned on regular basis.

International cooperation with security and law-enforcement authorities of strategic partner and neighbouring countries of Georgia will be further strengthened through the country's active efforts. Special attention will be attained to the enhancement of cooperation in the law enforcement, as well as in the field of mutual legal assistance on criminal matters. Traditionally, Georgia will pay due significance to further strengthening cooperation in the field of fight against terrorism with its closest partner – the United States of America. Furthermore, Georgia will continue its active participation in the strategic level dialogs, trainings, conferences and working meetings, organized by the international organizations or partner countries in the field of fight against terrorism.

## 5. Agencies Responsible for the Efforts Envisaged by the Strategy

The joint efforts of the state authorities, private sector and civil society will be necessary for successful implementation of the National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism.

In the process of combating terrorism and extremism, the primary activity of the state will be obtaining terrorism and extremism-related information. State agencies, private sector and civil society will jointly ensure timely detection of terrorist/extremist threats, as well as sharing with the State Security Service all the information at their disposal and related to the above-mentioned issue.

In this process, special attention is devoted to the active participation of state agencies which may obtain terrorism and extremism-related information while performing their functions. It will be critically important that the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Georgian Intelligence Service, Special State Protection Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, LEPL Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia, National Bank of Georgia, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance of Georgia and other relevant authorities and institutions timely share the terrorism/extremism-related information obtained within the scope of their powers and competences, with the State Security Service.

In terms of obtaining and sharing the terrorism/extremism-related information, it is also important to have the involvement of private sector – participation of commercial banks, microfinance organizations, lawyers, insurance companies and other subjects of private sector with similar functions in regard to monitoring the contracts concluded and financial transactions carried out.

The contribution of the agencies such as the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia and Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, which might have access to the terrorism-related information within the scope of their competence, is vitally important in terms of obtaining information.

Civil society plays a decisive role in the process of obtaining the terrorism, extremism and radicalization-related information. In this regard, the state's efforts to ensure together with the civil society raising of the public awareness and the knowledge of the society are extremely important, in order to enable the citizens to identify threats and cooperate with the law enforcement agencies.

In the direction of prevention, the State Security Service will continue to carry out its law enforcement functions. Other state agencies, private sector and civil society will be involved in this process. Within the context of prevention, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture and other agencies will have important contributions, which implies development of prevention-based projects. By implementing these projects the state will be able to solve problems in the directions of education and employment, as well as in the social and economic fields.

The role of the Ministry of Justice is of a particular importance, which in cooperation with the civil society will elaborate and implement de-radicalization and re-socialization programs, in order to conduct de-radicalization of convicts in terrorism and avoid radicalization of other inmates in penitentiary establishments.

In the course of efforts against radicalization and recruitment for terrorist activities, important role will be played by different religious and cultural organizations, as well as certain authoritative religious individuals who will reveal false values of terrorist/extremist ideology, having nothing in common with the religion. In this process the LEPL State Agency for Religious Issues will play an important role.

In terms of conducting preventive activities, civil society's participation is especially important. Identification of terrorist threats by citizens and their active cooperation with law enforcement agencies, will result in the prevention of the crime of terrorism. The state will carry out relevant efforts in order to raise public awareness, to avoid discrimination and stigmatization of citizens, which is often a key driver of radicalization.

In the direction of protecting state border, the Ministry of Internal Affairs will continue to carry out important measures in order to prevent terrorists/extremists and individuals

related to them from entering the territory of the country. In terms of protecting the civil aviation security, public and private legal entities functioning in this field, including the LEPL Civil Aviation Agency and the LLC United Airports of Georgia, will play an important role. In order to ensure the protection of critical infrastructure, the state with the participation of private sector and civil society, based on the best international practices and through the consultations with foreign partners, will elaborate and implement effective mechanisms of protecting the critical infrastructure, possible targets of terrorists and places of public assembly against terrorist threats, and will develop the video surveillance system.

The state will continue an active work to combat using the internet for terrorist purposes and to protect the cyberspace against terrorist threats. Effective methods of combatting cyberterrorism will be developed through the involvement of international partners.

Enhancement of preparedness capabilities of the country is largely dependent on active cooperation among the state authorities, private sector and civil society. Alongside the active involvement of the State Security Service, participation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, as well as local government and self-government authorities and other agencies - is equally important.

Cooperation among the State Security Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Office of Prosecutor General of Georgia is of particular significance, in order to ensure rapid and effective prosecution process of individuals charged with terrorism, which involves several stages. In the same direction and in terms of advancing the Georgian criminal legislation, joint cooperation between the executive authority and the Parliament of Georgia is of critical importance.

In the course of implementation of the Strategy, Georgia will actively cooperate with partner countries and international organizations.

## 6. Institutional Oversight, Accountability and Strategy Revision Mechanisms

Oversight of the implementation process of the National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism and its Action Plan will be conducted by the Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration and Monitoring of Implementation of the National Strategy on Fight against Terrorism and Relevant Action Plan. The Commission's goal is to monitor the process of elaboration and implementation of this Strategy. The Commission has the authority to request and receive, in accordance with the rules set by the legislation, the information necessary for its activities from administrative agencies, as well as legal entities of private law.

While implementing the goals and objectives set by the present Strategy and its Action Plan, the agencies are accountable before the Commission. The Action Plan of the given Strategy will be implemented by respective agencies responsible for carrying out specific activities, as determined by the Action Plan. The resources necessary for the implementation of the present Strategy will be ensured within the framework of financing of respective agencies responsible for carrying out specific activities, as determined by the Action Plan, as for the off-budget organizations, the resources will be ensured within their own expenses. Furthermore, additional financing can be obtained from international donors in case of necessity envisaged by the Action Plan. The State Security Service of Georgia as the lead agency in conducting counterterrorism activities in the country, is accountable before the Parliament of Georgia and the Government of Georgia.

The National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism and its Action Plan is in force till the end of 2021. The Strategy and its Action Plan implementation report will be prepared once a year as well as in case of necessity. The Strategy can be reviewed upon the recommendation of the Government of Georgia and the Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration and Monitoring of Implementation of the National Strategy on Fight against Terrorism and Relevant Action Plan.