

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



NGOs Address to the Prime Minister of Georgia

Mr. Irakli,

As far as you know, in September 2011 Georgia joined the international initiative “Open Government Partnership - OGP”, initiator of which is the President of the United States Mr. Barak Obama. OGP is a key platform for development of government transparency and accountability through involvement of citizens, and improvement of innovations and technologies in the format of joint cooperation of the civil society and government. Today, OGP unites more than 60 states.

In April 2012 the Government of Georgia submitted its 2012-2013 action plan in the

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frames of OGP. The Secretariat of the Interagency Anticorruption Council (analytical department of the Ministry of Justice) is in charge to coordinate Georgia's participation in OGP. According to the government's action plan, in the frames of the undertaken obligations Georgia introduced decisive innovations in view of open governance, freedom of information, transparency and anticorruption achievements. Three prestigious UN prizes (the project of the house of justice, as the category for developing public service, electronic form of state procurement and online platform of property declarations of the high state officials, as the mechanism for prevention of corruption) should be considered as successes within the scope of undertaken obligations under the action plan.

With the support of the former prime-minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, key changes were implemented in terms of developing freedom of information within the scope of OGP. Namely, the standard of proactive publication and online retrieval of public information was introduced and it started functioning in practice. For successful implementation of the obligation, in the frames of OGP, Georgia was nominated among the most successful states and under the civil society initiative Georgia, as the OGP Bright Spots finalist, submitted its outcomes at the 2013 London summit, as the best example of fulfilling obligation under the action plan.

Mr. Barak Obama, also highlighted Georgia's success within the framework of OGP. In his statement concerning the inauguration of the President of Georgia, he mentioned the important progress achieved by Georgia for the past several years. Among other achievements, participation in OGP was named as an indicator for democracy development. "Georgia is making significant progress in consolidating democratic institutions, including through its commitments under the Open Government Partnership and its promotion of women's participation in public life, and is moving forward on the path to fulfilling its Euro-Atlantic aspirations."

In view of the achieved success, the Government of Georgia has the chance to appear in OGP management committee. There are already direct messages from the OGP secretariat. At this point, Georgia has to submit the renewed OGP action plan, which should cover 2013-2015 activities. In order to occupy the honorary place in the secretariat of this decisive international initiative, it is necessary to involve the supreme state official of the government in working on OGP issues as well as in platform for developing democratic institutions.

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We think that involvement of the government and especially the prime minister at the initial stage of elaborating the new activity plan is crucial for the success of the process. In order to state OGP priority at the international level, the government of Georgia should undertake key obligations that will be needs oriented and related to OGP decelerated principles. In this process, the government should ensure maximal involvement of public agencies and the society.

In view of the OGP importance we, the member NGOs of the Open Governance Georgia Forum, consider that your meeting with participant NGOs will stimulate better result, so that we were given chance to introduce to you in more details OGP challenges and perspectives. Moreover, we remain hopeful that at the meeting we will be able to hear from you future plans and perspectives of the government in terms of participation in OGP.

Members of the Forum:

- Georgian Young Lawyers' Association
- Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI)
- Transparency International Georgia
- Open Society Georgia Foundation
- Jump Start Georgia
- Economic Policy Research Center