



The Government of Georgia should not undermine the role of state institutions

We would like to respond to the ongoing discussion and uncertainty regarding the next National Security Council meeting.

The President of Georgia on 15 October decided to convene the National Security Council for 28 October. The reason for convening the National Security Council was the treaty that the Russian Federation is planning to sign with the separatist government of Abkhazia. Later, on 17 October, the Parliament of Georgia adopted a statement that condemned Russian attempt to the occupied Abkhazia. The statement of the Parliament once again confirmed the gravity of the situation and showed the necessity of reaction from the Government of Georgia.

However, the National Security Council meeting on 28 October is questioned due to the position of some of the Council members (members of the Government of Georgia). According to the Minister of Defence Irakli Alasania, the date of the National Security Council coincides with his visit to Germany. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Maia Panjikidze and the State Minister Aleksi Petriashvili also questioned the relevance of having the National Security Council on 28 October, as some of the Council members would not be in Tbilisi. It should be noted that the state visit of the President of Georgia to the Kingdom of Belgium, which was planned for the late October, had already been cancelled.

According to the Georgian legislation, the National Security Council is an advisory body to the President of Georgia, which is created to draft highest political decisions concerning national security-related internal and external policies. The Council also addresses those important issues of internal and external policies that are directly

related to safeguarding state defence and security. The situation around the treaty between Russia and the de-facto Republic of Abkhazia falls under the competences of the National Security Council. According to the Article 99.1 of the Constitution of Georgia the National Security Council is headed by the President of Georgia. According to the Article 3 of the Georgian law on the National Security Council, the National Security Council is convened and chaired by the President of Georgia. Permanent members of the Council are the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of Finance and the National Security Secretary. The President can decide to invite others to the National Security Council.

This is not the first instance when some of the crucial activities of state institutions are impeded due to the disagreement between the President and the Government.

Discussion and arguments between different institutions or officials are part of a healthy democratic process. However, recently, the tensions between different authorities of Georgia go behind such process and threaten both the effective work of Government, as well as the reputation of state institutions and the trust of citizens towards these institutions. It is also disappointing that the cause of controversy and discussion are often minor issues rather than fundamental problems of Georgia development.

We urge all the relevant officials to respect the constitutional functions of state institutions and act in accordance with the law and national interests of Georgia.

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