



# GEORGIA

Statement by Mr. Victor Dolidze, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva

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Dear Mr/Madam Chair,

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights underlines “Everyone has the right to a nationality.” Unfortunately, in today’s era of increasing conflicts and mass migrations of people, the problem of statelessness remains severe.

Georgia acceded to the “1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons” in December 2011. As a result Georgia joined those countries that have established special procedures for determination of the Stateless status.

Moreover, the legal amendments were introduced to several legal acts in order to harmonize Georgian Legislation with the abovementioned Convention (amendments to 11 legal acts).

Briefly after Georgia acceded to the “1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness” in 2014, “Organic Law on Georgian Citizenship” was adopted. The law reflects the principles of the 1961 Convention and 1997 European Convention on Nationality. In addition, number of new mechanisms on reduction and prevention of statelessness were further introduced.

Georgia also joined the Global Campaign to End Statelessness initiated by the UNHCR in 2014. Within the Campaign, the 2018-2019 Action Plan on the reduction and elimination of statelessness in Georgia was adopted in 2017.

Since 2008 the Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia has been closely cooperating with UNHCR within the framework of two-year project, that was focused on the registration of and providing documentation to internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskinali/ South Osetia.

Moreover, Special attention is paid to ensuring access to quality education and improving knowledge of the state language as an important tool of civic integration. Ethnic minorities have access to all levels of education (preschool, general, higher, vocational), also in their native languages. There are 211 non-Georgian language public schools and 76 non-Georgian language sectors in Georgia.

As a result of consistent and coordinated State policy on the reduction of statelessness, the number of the stateless persons has been significantly decreased in Georgia (from 1958 stateless persons in 2011 to 571 persons in 2018).

Having said that let me conclude by reiterating my Government's strong commitment to continue its good practices to tackle statelessness through the promotion and protection of the human rights of those in need.

Thank you.