



**№ 49/43621**

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and in reference to its Note Verbale, dated 21 August 2015, has the honour to transmit herewith the reply from the Government of Georgia to the questionnaire “relationship between climate change and the enjoyment of the human right to health”.

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, 20 November 2015

Office of the High  
Commissioner for Human Rights  
Geneva

**Response of the Government of Georgia to the questionnaire on relationship between  
climate change and the enjoyment of the human right to health  
Resolution 29/15**

*1. Please describe, in your view, the relationship between climate change and the enjoyment of the right to health and any human rights obligations to mitigate and adapt to climate change that can be derived therefrom.*

Climate change is a cross-cutting issue affecting the various levels of human activity. Right to health and healthy environment is one of the basic rights that is guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia. However, the adverse impacts of climate change that results in increased heat waves, or extreme weather events can threaten the aforementioned right hence causing various implications for the state to ensure that its citizens can effectively exercise these rights.

*2. Please share a summary of any relevant data on the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of the human right to health including its underlying determinants (education, water and sanitation, food, housing, etc) disaggregated to the extent possible.*

Georgia's second and third national communications to the UNFCCC reflect populations' vulnerability towards the adverse effects of climate change. The second national communication focuses on the health situation on the whole territory of Georgia while the Third National Communication emphasizes more on the regions of Achara, Zemo Svaneti and Kakheti. Within the scope of these national communications, diseases that have increased due to warming in Georgia have been identified. These diseases are: Malaria; leishmaniasis; diarrhea epidemic and cardio vascular diseases.

According to the third national communication the assessment of the health situation in Georgia has been done according to the guidelines and recommendations of the WHO. Namely according to the list developed by the WHO regarding the diseases that are directly or indirectly related to Climate Change. It is envisaged to develop an action plan that will address the preparedness of population towards these diseases especially in the regions. However, it should be outlined that until now there has been no severe consequences due to climate change that could directly affect the enjoyment of human right to health in the country.

*3. Please describe existing national commitments, legislation and policy frameworks related to climate change mitigation and adaptation including any specific measures intended to prevent the worst impacts of climate change on the right to health; to ensure*

*access to information, transparency, participation and other procedural rights of persons affected by climate actions; to promote, protect and fulfil all human rights particularly those closely linked to the underlying determinants of health such as food, water and sanitation, housing etc, and to ensure that climate related actions respect, promote, protect and fulfil human rights. Please share any relevant information on the implementation of existing commitments to address climate change and its impacts.*

Georgia has currently prepared the document of Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) that was submitted to the UNFCCC. According to the document Georgia commits to reduce its GHG emissions by 15% (deviation from BAU) and b 25% in case of relevant international support. The INDC document is to be followed by the National Climate Action Plan that will define the measures of mitigation and adaptation activities to address the adverse effects of climate change. In terms of health, Red Cross also is planning to develop a strategy related to the health adaptation towards climate change and also an action plan to decrease the vulnerability towards the heat waves. Due to the negative effects of the heat waves on human health, especially in Tbilisi and Black Sea Coastal zone such action plan can become a strong tool to support vulnerable population. It is also important to develop a separate action plan for the high mountainous regions of Georgia that can assist the health sector to be prepared in case of the natural hazards and other catastrophes. Early warning systems can also benefit the local population to prevent and manage the diseases that have been increased due to climate change. Other issues related to food security is also been addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture as well as by National Food Agency. As Georgia has signed the Association Agreement with the EU it will gradually also adapt the legislation and frameworks to ensure food security and clean water and sanitation. As Georgia is also a signatory of the Aarhus Convention, it guarantees that the citizens are able to access the information related to the environmental matters.

*4. Please describe any relevant national accountability and oversight mechanisms designed to ensure access to remedy for those who suffer human rights harms as a result of climate change. Please highlight any relevant jurisprudence on this subject and indicate what measures, regulatory or otherwise (i.e. impact assessments) are in place to prevent harms caused by third parties.*

Georgian legislation acknowledges right for remedies for damage and this damage can be caused by environmental hazards, however, no specific legislation has been issued to address specifically remedies related to climate change. Additionally, insurance system to

protect against climate change is yet to be developed which could ensure the remedies against climate change events for those that would be insured against it.

*5. Please describe any concrete mitigation and adaptation measures being taken to address the impacts of climate change on the human right to health and good practices in this regard including those related to: international cooperation, local and community-based initiatives, private sector initiatives; development, application and diffusion of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and the exchange of relevant scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and legal information related to the climate system and climate change and the economic and social consequences of various response strategies.*

Due to the impacts of climate change on Georgian ecosystems, the country has engaged in number of mitigation and adaptation activities, however these activities and projects are not directly linked to the right to health. Clearly, the outcomes of many of the projects that reduce GHG emissions or increase the adaptive capacity of the community towards the impacts of climate change, indirectly effect the wellbeing of the population and overall positively impact on enjoying the right to health with its various dimensions, however, it can't be explicitly stated that their primary aim is to protect the right to health. Hence, it will be of great importance for the country to additionally develop projects and activities that address the issue of direct climate change impact and health, which currently are limited to developing a strategic approach for the readiness during the heat waves and natural hazards in the regions of Georgia as has been already mentioned above.