



0227339033



ქანევაპუი გუაროს განყოფილებასთან და სხვა სუართაპორისო
ორგანიზაციებთან სუართაპელის ვუდგივი ნარმომადგენლობა

PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AT GENEVA.

OHCHR REGISTRY

30 NOV 2011

Recipients :.....SPD.....
.....
.....

N 8/165-02

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and in reference to its Verbal Note GVA-0616, dated 29 September 2011, has the honor to transmit herewith the response of the Government of Georgia to the questionnaire on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, elaborated by the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights, Farida Shaheed, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 10/23.

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

Enclosure: five page

30 November 2011

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Geneva

0227339033

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RIGHT TO ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS AND ITS APPLICATIONS**Assessing the benefits of science and its applications**

1. What legal, administrative and policy measures exist or are planned in your country:

a) To ensure that marginalized groups benefit from scientific progress and its applications, including, women, persons with disabilities, minority groups, rural communities and indigenous peoples?

Information is not available.

b) To promote research and development in areas specifically relevant to marginalized groups, by, for example, providing incentives for innovative research on neglected diseases?

Information is not available.

c) To ensure and facilitate broad access to information and communication technologies (e.g., computers, Internet and mobile phones)?

Nearly every rural community benefits from mobile communication/phones. Rural communities in general have an access to Internet, especially at public schools. Besides, number of pupils recently has been provided by net-books.

d) To identify and develop the scientific applications necessary for sustainable solutions to ensure the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, access to potable water and sanitation, and to address climate change?

Information is not available.

2. What are the key challenges faced in your country in undertaking research at the domestic level and ensuring access to scientific developments and its applications, particularly for marginalized groups?

Absence of strategy/program ensuring access to scientific developments and its applications for marginalized groups can be considered as a key challenge.

Scientific responsibility, safeguards and remedies

3. What legal, administrative, and policy mechanisms exist or are planned in your country:

a) To regulate and monitor scientific research and its applications in the private and public sector so as to provide safeguards against any infringement upon the full enjoyment of human rights? In particular, to safeguard the human rights of participants in research activities and applications by public and private scientific institutions (e.g. rights to information, free and informed consent)?

Administrative mechanisms (being developed by the Ministry of Education and Science as well as by its affiliated entities) ensure for participants of research activities free access to scientific

0227339033

information, transparency of funding mechanisms, merit base and impartial selection procedures for granting, etc. and thus safeguard the human rights of researchers and personnel involved.

b) To protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities whose traditional knowledge is utilized, in the development, dissemination and commercialization of scientific information and knowledge?

Information is not available.

c) To provide effective remedies and safeguards for any human rights violation related to scientific research or the applications of science or technology? (e.g. judicial review, national human rights institutions or ombudspersons, and other administrative arrangements). Information is not available.

The rights of scientists and collaborative work

4. what measures have been put in place to recognize, respect and:

a) To freedom of expression, information and association?

Freedom of expression, information and association is basically ensured by Constitution of Georgia entered into force on 24 August, 1995, Article 24,26. European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols (Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Assembly and Association), that entered into force for Georgia on 20 May 1999 and many other Conventions, which were ratified by the Parliament of Georgia and accordingly Georgia is a party.

b) To collaborate with colleagues nationally and internationally, including through sharing data, samples, research findings, and other information, by travelling freely within and outside the country, and conducting joint research projects?

To collaborate with colleagues nationally and internationally, including through sharing data, samples, research findings, and other information, by travelling freely within and outside the country, and conducting joint research projects are foreseen in Constitution of Georgia, Article 22 (Freedom of Movement), „Law on Science and Technologies and their Development“ entered into force on 22 November 1994, „Law of Georgia on Higher Education“ entered into force on 21 December 2004, „Law on National Academy of Sciences“ entered into force on 14 December 2007.

Apart from the legal acts mentioned above, number of local regulations ensures absence of barriers for Georgian researchers to collaborate with colleagues nationally and internationally, for example Agreements between Georgia and other Countries on joint research projects.

The Parliament of Georgia is working on Compatibility of Georgian Legislation with the Standards of the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols in order to improve the protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in Georgia.

5. What legal, administrative, policy or other measures have been adopted/are under consideration to eliminate barriers to scientific communication and collaboration, such as censorship, restrictions on access to the Internet or on free availability of scientific literature and journals?

0227339033

The Constitution of Georgia prohibits censorship (Article 23) and guarantees all information to be available (Article 24) .

Currently Georgia has visa-free entry for citizens of EU Member States and for neighbor countries (excluding Russia). Still, Government of Georgia considers possible ways to easy entry of its citizens (students in the first place) to EU.

On the whole, Georgian Legislation is in line with the requirements to the European Convention and other legislative Acts.

Participatory decision-making and transparency

6. What measures are put in place to ensure dissemination of information about ongoing scientific research and its applications, including potentially adverse effects of emerging areas of research and its applications, to the public at large?

Information is not available.

7. What opportunities exist for meaningful public participation in decision-making about existing and new developments in science and technology?

Main topics concerning: the emerging trends of national science and technology development as well as providing financial and legal support of priority areas are widely discussed at various levels among policy makers, science society and other stakeholders.

8. What steps have/are being taken to promote quality science education at all levels for all, in particular for girls, rural populations and the poor?

Information is not available.

International cooperation, achievements and challenges

9. Is the development and application of science and technology integrated in international cooperation policies, such as direct development assistance programs? If so, please provide details.

Information on direct integration of science and technology development and application in assistance programs is not available. Still, being a party of various bilateral agreements in science and technological development concluded with leading entities of developed countries (e.g. U.S. Civilian Research and development Foundation CNRS, National Center of Scientific Research of France. – CNRS, National Research Council of Italy – CNR, etc.) as well as with relevant international organisations (e.g. Science and Technology Center in Ukraine) Georgia is ultimately involved in respective international cooperation policies.

10. What are the key obstacles and challenges to international cooperation and what steps have been taken to address these? Please provide details.

Key challenges to international cooperation Georgia has faced currently are most likely as following:

0227339033

- (i) *Insufficient awareness/utilisation of the best/good international practice for the development of a coherent national policy and strategy in science and technological development;*
- (ii) *Need in effective funding instruments geared to encouragement of international cooperation at institutional and individual levels (e.g. financial support of bottom-up initiatives, exchange of researchers, internship of young promising scientists abroad);*
- (iii) *Lack of expertise of local stakeholders (including policy makers) in the field of science and technological development on the "rules of the game" in this field at international level.*

The following steps have been taken to address above mentioned challenges:

- (i) *To widen the scope of international cooperation in the field of science and technological development with existing partners and to set up activities with new partners on the base of jointly funded programs and projects. (In last years Georgia has implemented joint programs with USA, France and Italy. The similar activities with Germany and Turkey are in agenda);*
- (ii) *To participate in international programs/projects and networks focused on creation of policies and strategies in diverse fields of science and technological development and harmonization of these policies and strategies with best international standards (Currently Georgia is involved in implementation of more than 30 projects funded mainly by EU 7-th Framework Program in Research and Technological Development -- FP7);*
- (iii) *To introduce best international practices in the selected topics of science and technological development through series of consultations and training sessions with wide involvement of international experts, decision makers, businessmen and other stakeholders.*

11. What are the achievements in the field of scientific progress and its applications? Please provide details.

Institutional reforms

In 2010 Georgia proceeded with an optimisation of the S&T institutional structure focussing mainly on: (i) further harmonisation of research and higher education and (ii) improvement of funding schemes and instruments in support of innovative science and technological development.

Respectively, around 50 research institutes have been integrated into the country's main universities and thus nowadays research organisations of Georgia are represented by 25 universities, a Centre of Life Sciences and four research institutes of technical profile.

On the other hand, in accordance with the Presidential Decree #428 of 16 June 2010 Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (SRNSF) was established by merging two main funding entities: the Georgia National Science Foundation and the Rustaveli Foundation for Georgian Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences.

National programmes in science and technological development

In 2010 SRNSF earmarked more than 10 million Euros for implementation of the following national programmes:

1. *The State Grants for Fundamental and Applied Studies;*

0227339033

2. *Presidential Grants for Young Scientists;*
3. *Grants for Outgoing Internship of Young Scientists;*
4. *Grants for Research Infrastructure; (v) Short-term Individual Travel Grants;*
5. *Grants for Organisation of Conference;*
6. *Grants for development E-Dictionary and E-Scientific Journal.*

More than 250 grants have been provided in 2010 in support of Georgian researchers and engineers.

International cooperation

Participation in international science and technological development programmes apart from the establishment of a long-term fruitful cooperation with foreign colleagues provides a tangible financial support to Georgian researchers (around 70 million USD).

The main funding sources are as follows:

1. *NATO SPS -- around 150 projects with an overall budget of 10.5 million USD;*
2. *CRDF -- around 170 projects with an overall budget of 7.5 million USD.*
3. *ISTC -- around 150 projects with an overall budget of 29.5 million USD.*
4. *STCU-- around 100 projects with an overall budget of 10.0 million USD.*
5. *EU FP7 -- around 30 projects with an overall budget (for Georgian participants) of 3.0 million USD.*
6. *INTAS (before 2007) -- around 220 projects with an overall budget of more than 6.5 million USD*