

Appeal of the civil society organizations working on the issues of girls, women, children, persons with disabilities, and minorities

To the members of the State Constitutional Commission of Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia, and the Council on Gender Equality at the Parliament of Georgia

We, civil society organizations working on human rights issues, including gender equality and the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and other minority groups, would like to express our opinion about the work of the State Constitutional Commission of Georgia, which is not oriented at improving the human rights situation of the most vulnerable and oppressed groups. We were once again convinced in the aforementioned by the discussions which followed presentation of a recommendation, submitted the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), for the development of constitutional safeguards for gender equality at a meeting of the working group of the Commission. Presentation of this recommendations was followed by dismissive and sarcastic remarks on the part of the Commission members.

We believe that the rights of women and other vulnerable groups are not implemented properly, which is mostly caused by a lack of constitutional safeguards of substantive equality. The infringement on the dignity of women and minorities is manifested in the most visible way in the exercise of social, economic, cultural and political rights. For this reason, we believe it is crucial that the protection of vulnerable groups should become grounds for social consensus. The Constitution of Georgia should be the main mechanism for the achievement of substantive gender equality in the country, which will ensure equality of girls, women, persons with disabilities, and minority groups.

In view of all the aforementioned, we call upon:

- **Members of the State Constitutional Commission:**
 - To discuss the mechanisms for achieving real (substantive) equality of girls, women, persons with disabilities, and minority groups with an in-depth knowledge of and sensitivity to the issue, with the aim of full involvement of the aforementioned groups in social, economic, political and cultural life and improving their rights situation in general;
 - To involve organizations specializing in the issues of girls, women, persons with disabilities, and minorities in the work of the State Constitutional Commission with a relevant status;
 - To hold consultations with civil society organizations and groups working on gender equality issues to ensure that the needs of women, girls, persons with disabilities, and minorities will be reflected in the supreme law of Georgia.

- **The Parliament of Georgia:**
 - To exercise more care and responsibility in relation to the obligations undertaken by Georgia which aim to improve the rights situation of girls, women, persons with disabilities, and minority groups, and to ensure proper and timely fulfillment of these obligations.
- **The Council on Gender Equality at the Parliament of Georgia:**
 - To ensure that the Constitutional Commission works in accordance with the principles of gender and inclusive equality;
 - To conduct a detailed analysis of the proposed draft of the Constitution and to develop opinions for ensuring real equality;
 - To inform members of the Constitutional Commission of the principles, obligations, mechanisms, and means of achieving real equality.

We, the organizations working on human rights, including the issues of girls, women, persons with disabilities and minorities, express our readiness to hold meetings and consultations, if needed, both with the State Constitutional Commission of Georgia and representatives of any structure interested in the issue with the aim of sharing detailed information.

Signatory organizations:

1. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA);
2. International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED);
3. Gender Equality Network;
4. Women's Information Center;
5. International Center for Women's Education and Information;
6. Gender Fairness;
7. Gender Equality Network;
8. Sapari;
9. Women in Europe for a Common Future/Georgia (WECF/Georgia);
10. Equality Movement;
11. Women's Fund in Georgia;
12. Journalists' Network for Gender Equality;
13. Partnership for Human Rights;
14. Bridge – Innovation and Development;
15. Civic Initiatives for Democracy and Gender Equality;
16. Social Initiatives Group;
17. Children of the Sun – Down Syndrome;
18. Education and Labor Association;
19. Association “Art for the Public Interests”;
20. Telavi Gender Media Center;
21. Rustavi Gender Media Center;
22. Gori Gender Media Center;
23. Kutaisi Gender Media Center;
24. Zugdidi Gender Media Center;

25. Ozurgeti Gender Media Center;
26. Georgian Democracy Initiative;
27. Batumi Gender Media Center;
28. Akhaltsikhe Gender Media Center;
29. Center for Development of Civil Society and Democracy;
30. Integration – Euro-Atlantic Choice;
31. Center for Christian Women of Georgia;
32. Initiative group “Women for Georgia”;
33. Association “Support for People”;
34. N(N)LE We – For Sensible Future;
35. Article 42 of the Constitution;
36. Lagodekhi Regional Committee of Anti-Violence Network of Georgia;
37. House for Georgian Democracy;
38. Association “By European Time”;
39. Charity center “Tanaziari”;
40. Baltic to Black Sea Alliance – Georgia (BBSA – Georgia);
41. Society “Biliki”;
42. IDP Women’s Association “Consent”.
43. Association “Anika”;
44. Association “Hera XXI”;
45. N(N)LE Parents’ Bridge;
46. Association ”Caucasus Development Group”;
47. Coalition for Independent Living;
48. N(N)LE Women for Equality;
49. Kakheti Regional Development Foundation;
50. Fund of Women Entrepreneurs;
51. Union “Women’s Center”;
52. Active Aging Georgia;
53. Youth for Happy Future;
54. New Generation for Democratic Georgia;
55. Human Rights Center;
56. Anti-Violence Network of Georgia;
57. Center EMPATHY;
58. N(N)LE Civic Initiative;
59. Movement of Women of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti – “Mangi”;
60. Education Center;
61. Samtskhe-Javakheti Media Center;
62. NGO Parents’ Support;
63. Studio Mobile – Accent on Movement;
64. Community Foundation “Egrisi”;
65. N(N)LE Women for Health;
66. Association “Imedi” – IDP Women’s Movement for Peace;
67. Women of Multinational Georgia;
68. Union of Russian Women in Georgia;
69. N(N)LE Women’s Rights Community Initiative;
70. Association of Women of Kvemo Kartli “Woman and Universe”;

71. Women of Samtskhe-Javakheti for Peaceful Georgia;
72. Community Foundation “Toloshi”;
73. Union of Teachers “Education and Universe”;
74. Initiative Group of Disabled Women “Platform for New Opportunities”;
75. NEFA Foundation;
76. Coalition “Education for All – Georgia”;
77. CENN – Caucasus Environmental NGO Network;
78. Association “Toleranti”;
79. Georgian Trade Unions’ Confederation;
80. Union “Woman and Reality”.
81. Society for positive Changes
82. Youth organization of Karalety community