

# ECRI

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance  
Commission européenne contre le racisme et l'intolérance

## ECRI's Round Table in Georgia

Courtyard by Marriott Tbilisi Hotel  
Tbilisi, 12 June 2007

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

ECRI's Round Table in Georgia is part of a series of national round tables in the member States of the Council of Europe, which are organised by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in the framework of its Programme of action on relations with civil society.

These national round tables are regularly organised following the publication of ECRI's country monitoring reports, in which ECRI thoroughly analyses the situation as regards racism and intolerance in each country and makes suggestions and proposals as to how to tackle the problems identified.

The main aim of these round tables is to encourage reflection in the governmental and non-governmental circles concerned, by bringing together all the relevant national actors in this field, including government officials, representatives of national human rights institutions, representatives of local and regional authorities, parliamentarians, victims of discrimination, academics, NGOs etc. The objective is to develop together ideas as to how to solve the problems of racism in the country and to ensure the implementation of ECRI's specific recommendations.

The main themes of ECRI's Round Table in Georgia are: (1) ECRI's report on Georgia; (2) challenges ahead for the development of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in Georgia; (3) responding to racist incidents; and (4) building an integrated society in Georgia.

In its [second Report on Georgia](#), ECRI acknowledges that in recent years, Georgia has made progress in a number of the fields covered in this report. For example, Georgia has introduced new criminal law provisions to prohibit racial discrimination and incitement to racial hatred. Moreover, the authorities have taken steps to curb violent acts of religious intolerance. Finally, ECRI is satisfied that a civil integration programme has been launched for the country's ethnic and religious minorities and other minority groups.

At the same time ECRI observes that stereotypes and prejudice liable to cause discrimination persist among the majority population, particularly against ethnic minorities, non-traditional religious minorities, refugees from Chechnya and Meskhetian Turks. As a result non-Georgian speaking ethnic minorities continue to feel like second-class citizens and take little part in the country's public and political affairs and members of non-traditional religious minorities can still be exposed to physical attacks on them or

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their property. ECRI is therefore concerned that the authorities are insufficiently aware of the situation of these minority groups and do not monitor it sufficiently.

All of these issues will be discussed with representatives of the responsible governmental agencies and victims of discrimination in the light of [ECRI's General Policy Recommendation no.7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination](#) and the existing legislative and institutional framework for combating racism and racial discrimination in Georgia. A whole session will be dedicated to analysing who are the victims of racism and racial discrimination in Georgia, as well as how best to respond to racist incidents. Finally, the round table will focus on measures designed to promote the participation of minority groups in public life, with a special emphasis on governmental initiatives in this field.

ECRI hopes that an open debate among all relevant actors on these important issues will help to identify together effective ways of better implementing existing initiatives and will also provide the necessary impetus for further reform in Georgia.