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**ECRI CONCLUSIONS
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS
IN RESPECT OF GEORGIA SUBJECT TO INTERIM FOLLOW-UP**

Adopted on 20 June 2013¹

¹ Any developments which occurred after 15 September 2011, date on which the response of the Georgian authorities to ECRI's request for information on measures taken to implement the recommendations chosen for interim follow-up was received, are not taken into account in this analysis.

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FOREWORD

As part of the fourth round of ECRI's monitoring work, a new process of interim follow-up has been introduced with respect to a small number of specific recommendations made in each of ECRI's country reports.

Accordingly and in line with the guidelines for the fourth round of ECRI's country-by-country work brought to the attention of the Ministers' Deputies on 7 February 2007¹, not later than two years following the publication of each report, ECRI addresses a communication to the Government concerned asking what has been done in respect of the specific recommendations for which priority follow-up was requested.

At the same time, ECRI gathers relevant information itself. On the basis of this information and the response from the Government, ECRI draws up its conclusions on the way in which its recommendations have been followed up.

It should be noted that these conclusions concern only the specific interim recommendations and do not aim at providing a comprehensive analysis of all developments in the fight against racism and intolerance in the State concerned.

¹ CM/Del/Dec(2007)986/4.1.

1. *In its report on Georgia (fourth monitoring cycle) published on 15 June 2010, ECRI strongly urged the Georgian authorities to continue and reinforce their efforts in reforming the teaching of Georgian to pupils belonging to ethnic minorities. To this purpose, ECRI recommended in particular that the teachers who are trained in teaching Georgian as a second language know the language of the ethnic minority pupils whom they will teach and that the textbooks on Georgian as a second language be distributed free of charge to all pupils concerned. ECRI recommended that the Georgian authorities organise school partnerships and exchanges between Georgian speaking schools and non-Georgian speaking schools, in particular schools based in the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions, with a view to promoting contacts between pupils of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.*

ECRI has been informed by the Georgian authorities that the Teachers' Professional Development Centre under the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) started to implement the "Georgian Language for Future Success" programme in June 2011, in order to improve the integration of ethnic minorities. Within the framework of this programme, new textbooks were published and distributed free of charge. In order to support the process of teaching the Georgian language and to assist the local teachers in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli and Kakheti, Georgian language teachers and volunteer teachers are deployed in these regions.

Non-governmental sources have raised concerns about the effectiveness of and the progress achieved under this programme, because the Georgian language level of the above-mentioned local teachers could not be measured since the examination scheduled for the autumn of 2012 did not take place. There is no information about a new date for this examination.

The Georgian authorities have further indicated that the MES implemented several exchange and school twinning programmes and held summer camps in order to promote contacts between children of different regions and cultures.

ECRI welcomes these efforts which require strengthening and the results of which should be assessed. However, ECRI concludes that the recommendation has been followed only in part.

2. *In its report on Georgia (fourth monitoring cycle), ECRI recommended that the Georgian authorities launch an awareness-raising campaign among the Georgian population in general, and in particular the Armenian population living in the region from which the Meskhetian Turks originate, in order to explain the historical reasons for these persons' return and to avoid any forms of intolerant reaction against them from members of the majority population as well as from the local population living in the areas where Meskhetian Turks will be returning. ECRI also recommended that the Georgian authorities reinforce their efforts towards measures in favour of the integration of Meskhetian Turks, notably by devising a comprehensive strategy in this respect, which would address issues such as language learning, access to education and employment.*

The Georgian authorities have informed ECRI that awareness-raising campaigns have already been launched in different regions of Georgia, such as Kvemo-Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Adjara, Imereti, Guria and Gori, to inform the local population about important aspects of the repatriation process; "relevant training" has also been organised for civil servants and local government officials.

ECRI has also been informed that NGOs in the above-mentioned regions have conducted activities, such as photo exhibitions, round tables, training programmes and awareness-raising campaigns, targeting local authorities, school teachers and civil society.

ECRI appreciates the efforts made, which however appear to be rather general in nature; moreover they do not target the entire Georgian population. ECRI concludes that the first part of the recommendation has been partially fulfilled.

As for the second part of the recommendation, the Georgian authorities have informed ECRI that, on 1 March 2011, the Interagency Governmental Council on the Repatriation of Forcefully Deported Persons from the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia during the 40s of XX Century by the Former USSR (the Council) was created by Ordinance No.111 in order to coordinate the activities of state agencies involved in the repatriation process. The draft strategy, which is one of the primary tasks of a special group established under this Council, is in the process of revision and will be open for public discussion in the very near future.

Non-governmental sources have informed ECRI that the Meskhetian families that have returned on their own initiative still face integration problems, since they have neither repatriate status nor Georgian citizenship. ECRI considers that the authorities have not taken all necessary measures to solve the different problems raised during the repatriation process. The most important such step would be the finalisation of the strategy as quickly as possible. ECRI concludes that the second part of the recommendation has been partially fulfilled.

3. In its report on Georgia (fourth monitoring cycle), ECRI strongly recommended that the Georgian authorities make further efforts to improve the quality of the curriculum of the Zurab Zhvania Public Administration School, in particular in so far as teaching Georgian to ethnic minorities is concerned. It also strongly recommended that the authorities develop a mechanism for assisting this school's graduates, in particular those belonging to ethnic minorities, in finding a job in public administration in accordance with their level of education.

The Georgian authorities have informed ECRI that the Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration (ZZSPA) delivers special Georgian language and administration training programmes for persons belonging to ethnic minorities. The ZZSPA places special emphasis on teaching Georgian language to non-Georgian speaking teachers and local government officials. For this purpose, the School manages the Georgian Language Houses in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli and Kakheti since 1 October 2011. The curriculum of the Georgian Language Houses and the ZZSPA is unified, which enables students to pursue studies at the ZZSPA after attending the basic training on Georgian language at the Language Houses. Nowadays, the ZZSPA is mainly oriented to in-service training – for those who already work in local government and/or schools.

ECRI notes the measures taken in order to improve the quality of the curriculum of the ZZSPA. However, ECRI considers that the ZZSPA has become a language school instead of a school preparing ethnic-minority members for work. ECRI also notes with regret that no information has been provided about mechanisms for assisting ZZSPA graduates in finding a job in the public administration.

Under these circumstances, ECRI concludes that the recommendation has not been fulfilled.

