

Donor Coordination Meeting

Friday, May 19, 2008, 17:00
Conference / Briefing Room (#410)
Parliament of Georgia

AGENDA

- Welcoming note by Mrs. Nino Nakashidze, MP
- Short update on completed and on-going activities
- Projects and activities planned for a new parliamentary term

The final round of the donor coordination meeting was chaired by Mrs. Nino Nakashidze, MP. It was her last meeting as a Speaker-Appointed Coordinator for International Donor Projects. Mrs. Nakashidze expressed her appreciation to the donors for their productive cooperation and a hope that the work will continue in the next parliamentary term as the international assistance is still much needed in the Georgian Parliament.

Short update of running projects

The Centre for Parliamentary Reform (CPR) distributed the copies of the *Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities, 2007* (English version). Ms. Sopho Guruli (CPR) briefed the participants about the CPR's main activities during the past months, which included preparation of the mentioned Journal and organization of the 2nd study visit of the staff members of the Georgian Parliament to the European Parliament (EP).

The fourth edition of the Journal (published with UNDP support) is an improved version with a number of interviews and comments from MPs, staff members and foreign experts which makes the publication more lively, interesting and attractive for a reader. In addition, a focus laid on the staff (through incorporating their feedback in the Journal) motivates the latter in its work. The Centre sent the Journal to the embassies, international and non-governmental organizations. As soon as the Georgian version of the Journal is published, the CPR will distribute it in the Parliament.

The study visit to the EP prepared by the CPR with the support of EUSPGeorgia was successful. 19 staff members from different parliamentary departments participated in the event. As the result of the visit, the EP offered to launch a long-term fellowship program for Georgian staff members from the fall 2008.

At the end Ms. Guruli introduced CPR's new project assistant, Ms Tea Levidze, a former GIPA (Georgian Institute of Public Affairs) intern at the EU Integration Committee.

Mrs. Manana Salukvadze (UNDP) thanked Mrs. Nakashidze for an effective coordination and a full support of the UNDP project which is so far extended until December

Among other activities, UNDP Project:

- Contributed to HR development, especially at the National Library through recruitment and training of the staff;
- Trained staff members of the Parliament at the Training Centre;
- Published a set of normative acts and other legal documents for new MPs;
- Organized seminars and workshops for the staff of the Parliament, majoritarian MPs bureaus and representation office of the Parliament in West Georgia;
- Upon the Speaker's request, prepared a web-site on parliamentary elections 2008;
- Supported the publication of *Parliamentary Journal* (quarterly) and *Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities, 2007* (annual);
- Started to work on the educational web-site of the Parliament. The work was suspended until the new parliamentary term;
- Plans to open another parliamentary representation office in Georgia;

Mrs. Nino Lagvilava (UNDP's Gender and Politics Programme) stressed an important contribution of Mrs. Burjanadze in strengthening gender-balance in the Parliament through bringing into the Legislature a team comprised of very active and influential women parliamentarians. Mrs. Lagvilava expressed her hope that a new Speaker will equally uphold an idea of strong gender-representation in the Parliament and maintain the Gender Council formed under Mrs. Burjanadze's support. However, as the result of the elections, a decreasing number of women MPs in the political party lists and respectively in the Parliament shall be viewed as alarming.

During the previous months, the UNDP's Gender project:

- Conducted public awareness campaigns on gender issues;
- Trained MPs in leading an election campaign and election monitoring;
- Drafted a document, which describes the current state of affairs regarding women representation in the political parties and in the next Parliament.

Mrs Nakashidze suggested to support an opening of a day care centre for children of the Parliament's staff members in order to create better working conditions for women

Mr. Bernhard Schloer (EUSPGeorgia) thanked Mrs Nakashidze for a flexible and understanding approach towards the donor projects in the reform process, and listed the Project's fulfilled activities:

- On 28 April and 5 May, EUSPGeorgia held official openings of EU Information and Documents Centres in Tbilisi and Batumi. The Project published various informational booklets and fact sheets about the Centres. It will also plan a separate event for MPs and staff on how to use the Centres' resources; at the same time, the Batumi Centre and its one staff needs intensive support to activate its work. It is important in order to include both Centres in the network of similar centers of Europe;
- Work on Eurovoc will be completed in September;
- Translation of a book on legal methodology is still underway as well as the book – EU for Children;

- The Project will continue to plan conferences and study visits to national parliaments for the Georgian staff;
- EUSPGeorgia participated at the GTZ Conference on IT issues, where a need in building common IT network and strategy was emphasized. The Project had an idea to send Georgian staff members to Ukraine for professional development purposes and develop a twinning project;

Mrs. Manana Salukvadze (UNDP) asked the EUSPGeorgia team to inform them of any important events regarding the Parliament's ICT issues as the UNDP has been a leading organization over the years in supporting the Parliament's ICT development. Mrs. Nakashidze also stressed the importance of coordinated work among the donors, particularly in case of overlapping activities.

In addition, Mrs. Nakashidze inquired if EUSPGeorgia plans to open a EU Info Centre at the National Library. According to Mr. Schloer, the Project will first work on strengthening the existing Centres in Tbilisi and Batumi, assess their work and plan future openings accordingly.

Mr. Schloer also made a remark on the *Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities* and suggested to the CPR that the interviews in the Journal could have been more in-depth and equally asked to other staff members. However, both Mrs. Guruli and Mrs. Nakashidze held the opinion that this type of in-depth interviews could be used in needs assessment surveys and other research papers.

Mr. Archil Bakuradze (IABP) talked about the recent activities of the organization which are the following:

- IABP Georgia became a member of several business-oriented organizations which gives it a strong network to provide up-to-date information to the Parliament;
- The organization arranged a number of roundtables on draft laws, particularly those affecting agriculture, due to emerging interest towards this field;
- In the framework of FIAC (Foreign Investment Advisory Council), the organization jointly with the USAID will start a project on creating a translation service. The latter will prepare English translations of Georgian legislation and provide it to business organizations upon their request;

Mr. Giorgi Kvaratskhelia (IABP Georgia) added that the idea to create a translation service came from the business representatives who regularly face problems due to a lack of properly translated pieces of legislation.

Mr. Zaza Chelidze (IABP/BEC) informed the donors about the number of published inquiries (56) and standard notes (7) and remarked that the most frequently requested topics from MPs are those related to taxation, agriculture, energy and social issues.

Mr. Martin Clauke (EC Delegation) mentioned the twinning instruments of the EC available for Georgia. Mrs. Nakashidze informed that the staff of EU Integration Committee were already trained on how to use this instrument.

Mrs. Marie-Carin von Gumpfenberg (OSCE Mission) expressed her appreciation towards Mrs. Nakashidze for a very effective cooperation during the past years. She briefed the participants that the OSCE Mission will continue supporting the CPR which also depends on a new leadership of the Parliament.

As well as that, the OSCE Mission will continue working on:

- Election Code; and
- Strengthening the factions in the new Parliament, where the Mission could also use twinning programs.

Ms. Natia Jikia (NDI) mentioned that during the past months the organization was mostly involved in election-related issues. From the new parliamentary term, NDI will:

- Continue conducting legislative strengthening activities by arranging various workshops and roundtables;
- Focus on open legislative process by organizing open committee hearings;
- Continue its factions strengthening program;
- Recruit new parliamentary interns, but in a more limited numbers;
- Plan an induction seminar for new MPs.

Agreements Reached

- *Mrs. Guruli shared her idea on organizing a special presentation for new MPs in order to inform them of parliamentary reform projects and their activities. The donors supported the idea and agreed to discuss the issue further. Mr. Schloer and Ms. Birzniece (EUSPGeorgia) suggested preparing special leaflets, brochures or CDs which would contain information on donor activities in the Parliament.*
- *Mrs. Nakashidze offered the donor projects to submit to her their project reports for 2008 which she will introduce to a new parliamentary leadership and a new Speaker-Appointed Coordinator for International Donor Projects.*

List of Participants

Name	Organisation
Nino Nakashidze	Parliament of Georgia
Sophie Guruli Tea Levidze	CPR
Natia Jikia	NDI
Manana Salukvadze Kakha Demetrashvili	UNDP
Bernhard Schloer Inese Birzniece Ilmars Solims	EUSPGeorgia
Archil Bakuradze Giorgi Kvaratskhelia Zaza Chelidze	IABP Georgia BEC
Nino Lagvilava	Gender and Politics Programme (UNDP)
Marie-Carin von Gumpfenberg	OSCE Mission to Georgia
Martin Clauke	EC Delegation