

Donor Coordination Meeting

Tuesday, July 17, 2007, 12:00
Business and Economic Centre
Parliament of Georgia

AGENDA

- Welcoming note by Mrs. Nino Nakashidze
- Short update of running projects
- Brief Presentation of Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities (by CPR)
- Brief Overview of the Developments in the Modification of the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure (by NDI)
- Presentation of the Activities of Eurasia Foundation (by Eurasia Foundation)
- Miscellaneous

The meeting was chaired by Mrs. Nino Nakashidze, MP, Speaker-Appointed Coordinator for International Donor Projects.

1. Short update of running projects

Ms. Khatuna Khvichia (NDI) reported about the organizational (staff) changes in NDI. Mr. Jim Hart left the organization and a new person has been already selected; Ms. Khvichia will also leave NDI to continue her studies abroad. Ms. Natia Jikia will replace her and newly recruited Mr. Davit Jejelava will join the parliamentary project as an assistant.

Regarding the NDI activities, most of its work was focused on modification of Rules of Procedure (ROP). At this stage, the negotiations are taking place with the majority in respect of the changes made by the ROP working group¹.

In addition, in July the organization conducted a communications workshop for Democratic Front faction and is planning another training in communications jointly with IABP in September.

¹ The group is chaired by Ms. Khatuna Gogorishvili, Chairperson of the Rules and Procedure Committee and is comprised of staff members from different parliamentary units

The question was asked whether NDI applies evaluation forms as a method of assessment of their trainings: the organization does not use such forms however the quality and results of the trainings are regularly discussed at the follow-up consultations with the training participants.

Ms. Nakashidze suggested NDI to conduct a special training for parliamentary staff who would later assist the MPs in drafting their MP questions. Although NDI organizes the similar type of trainings for its interns, the organization has not involved the parliamentary staff itself.

Ms. Khvichia also informed the participants that the next round of NDI's internship program will commence and internship positions will be announced shortly.

Ms. Manana Salukvadze reported that UNDP continues its work in its main directions. The project assisted the Parliament and CPR in covering all the printing costs of the Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities. The UNDP also purchased a number of technical equipments; in the framework of assisting the Parliament's representation office in the Western Georgia, the project conducted a training for the majoritarian MPs' staff members. UNDP continues to support the National Library through creating its new web-site, assisting in digitalization and codification of library catalogues and training of the staff.

As well as that, UNDP constantly updates the Parliament's web-portal and with the Project's support the first bureau meeting of the Parliament will take place in Batumi in September.

Mr. Bernhard Schloer (EUSPGeorgia) briefed the participants about the major activities for the past months. In the framework of establishing and coordinating PCA Unit, the Project is currently recruiting experts of different fields, such as: energy, e-signature, etc. The Project also organized a visit to Polish Saeime for the purpose of sharing information on law-approximation issues. The Saeime has expressed its will to sign an official agreement with the Georgian Parliament in the field of ICT development. The organization also wishes to involve the Ukrainian parliament in ICT development process as it is one of the leading parliaments in terms of developed ICT system.

Regarding establishing Eurovoc, EUSPGeorgia finalized the selection process of translators. At the later stage, the Project intends to involve the linguistic experts who will review the quality of translations. The EUSPGeorgia's team leader had a meeting in Brussels with Eurovoc experts who gave a positive evaluation to the Project's approach towards establishing Eurovoc.

As for the future plans, EUSPGeorgia intends to assess the usefulness of subscribed web-pages and reveal the most and least used ones. In addition, the Project will assist the EU Information Centre which is to be established at the Ajarian Supreme Council with the Polish Government's support.

EUSPGeorgia also plans to arrange a coordination meeting on the Parliament's IT strategy. But since UNDP is actively involved in supporting the Parliament's IT system, Ms. Nakashidze proposed to arrange a joint meeting of UNDP, EUSPGeorgia and the Parliament's IT Department to discuss all the problems and challenges in the mentioned direction.

Mr. Oliver Reisner (EC Delegation) added that the Civic Education component of the EUSPGeorgia is also underway. It aims to raise public awareness on the parliamentary work and its activities. Shortly the Project will announce a tender to contract a Georgian NGO which shall implement this program.

As Mr. Archil Bakuradze (IABP Georgia) briefed the participants, the organization is continuing its work in major directions of its activities and shortly it plans to do impact analysis of its program that has been running for 2 years now.

Given the presence of IABP in the Armenian Parliament and the close cooperation of the Georgian and Armenian Offices, the IABP Georgia is planning to organize a visit of Armenian MPs to the Georgian Parliament in autumn for the purpose of sharing information and developing further cooperation.

Mr. Goga Kvaratskhelia (IABP Georgia) reported that the IABP's one of the directions – Business Fellowship Program – is continuing. The Program aims to get the MPs familiar with the activities of various companies and businesses. In July and August 2 fellowships (company attachments) are planned: in Tbilvino and BCI Aldagi. The companies were selected due to the problems they face with the current legislation that regulates relevant sectors. During the visit of the MPs to the mentioned companies, all the problems will be discussed.

As for the IABP's separate program – *Members Outside Interests*, it is suspended at this stage, since the Parliament itself does not yet have a defined vision on how it shall regulate MPs' business interests. Consequently, it is difficult to run the program without the Parliament's clear strategy regarding the issue.

The representatives of the IABP Georgia also informed about the initiative to launch a separate project which entails to establish a translation bureau to translate the laws and draft laws and make them available to business sector. The initiative sparked the discussion among the donors who skeptically assessed the idea, particularly regarding the issue of official translations (officially approving the translated drafts and laws in force). Mr. Schloer remarked that the foreign parliaments do not use this practice of translating laws to avoid the risk of misinterpretations and erroneous translations.

Mr. Zaza Chelidze, Manager of the Business and Economic Centre (BEC), presented a list of researches undertaken by the BEC in the form of inquiries, standard notes and economic researches. He also informed about the planned launch of the BEC web-site in September.

Ms. Tamar Karosanidze (TI Georgia) reported of TI's major activities for the past months. The organization conducted 44 meetings of majoritarian MPs with their constituencies. The meetings focused on draft laws and recent developments in the Parliament. The draft amendments to the Constitution together with the Venice Commission's conclusion were also discussed.

TI Georgia also conducted focus group meetings on the changes to the law on privatization and law on common courts. The results of the meetings were disseminated among all interested parties.

The organization continues to work on committee reports and a report for Policy Economy Committee is already published. Trainings are also taking place for parliamentary staff and staff of majoritarian MPs' bureaus.

Mr. Bacho Nadiradze (CPR) informed the participants of the visit of Delegation of Bavarian MPs (Bavaria's Regional Parliament – Landtag) to the Georgian Parliament. The aim of the delegation was to get familiar with the Georgian legislature, particularly in terms of analyzing its Rules of Procedure and the opposition status in the Parliament. For this purpose, the delegation met with all parliamentary factions and with the parliamentary leadership. The follow-up of the visit is planned for the fall.

2. Brief Presentation of the Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities (by CPR)

Ms. Sopho Guruli (CPR) distributed the Journal on Parliamentary Reform Activities and briefly spoke of the Journal's new appearance in terms of both the contents and the structure and the design.

3. Brief Overview of the Developments in the Modification of the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure (by NDI)

Due to time-constraints the brief overview of the on-going changes to the ROP did not take place.

4. Presentation of the Activities of the Eurasia Foundation

Mr. Zaal Anjaparidze (Eurasia Foundation) made a PowerPoint presentation of the activities of the Foundation. The participants of the meeting had a chance to get familiar with the Foundation's fields of interest that can lay as a basis for further cooperation with the Parliament and the donors.

Agreements Reached and Requests Made:

- *According to N. Nakashidze, the next large-scale donor meeting chaired by the Speaker will take place in September;*
- *Ms. Nakashidze proposed to NDI to organize a series of trainings for parliamentary staff in drafting MP's questions;*
- *With the participants' request, EUSPGeorgia/EC Delegation will notify all the donor projects of the launch of the tender related to contracting a Georgian NGO to implement the Project's Civic Education component.*

List of Participants

Name	Organisation
Nino Nakashidze	Parliament of Georgia
Sophie Guruli Bacho Nadiradze	Centre for Parliamentary Reform (CPR)
Khatuna Khvichia Davit Jejelava	National-Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)
Manana Salukvadze	UNDP
Bernhard Schloer	EUSPGeorgia
Archil Bakuradze Goga Kvaratskhelia Zaza Chelidze	The International Association of Business and Parliament (IABP) BEC Manager
Tamar Karosanidze	Transparency International Georgia (TI)
Oliver Reisner	EC Delegation
Teona Gamtsemidze	OSCE Mission in Georgia
Zaal Anjaparidze	Eurasia Foundation
Tea Mdivani	Finance and Budget Committee, Parliament