



**STATEMENT BY MS. NELI SHIOLASHVILI, COUNSELOR,
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRD COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 28 (a), ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

**11 OCTOBER 2011
NEW YORK**

Mr. Chairman,

Since it is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor in this Committee, let me convey our sincere congratulations on your election as the Chair of the Committee and wish you and other members of the Bureau a very successful session.

Mr. Chairman,

In discussing the challenges, related to gender equality worldwide, I would like to stress the important role of the UN WOMEN and express Georgia's support to all initiatives undertaken by this entity.

Georgia fully cooperates with the UN human rights machinery in the gender related issues. Most recently Georgia accepted a number of relevant recommendations during its Universal Periodic Review process in the UN Human Rights Council.

The next periodic report on the implementation of the CEDAW Convention is due on November 25, 2011 and Georgia will submit it timely. The Government of Georgia continues to consider gender equality and empowerment of women to be one of the priorities on its national agenda.

The law "On Gender Equity" adopted last year is major step forward in improving gender issues at the legislative level. For the implementation of the law, Action Plan for years 2011 – 2013 has been approved by the Parliament. This plan calls for concrete steps to assure gender equality in various fields of civil life.

The plan also envisages the elaboration of special action plan in addressing Georgia's national obligations under UNSC Resolution 1325. The working group, composed of representatives of Government agencies and NGOs, has been set up which is expected to produce an action plan by the end of the year.

Education and awareness rising are among priority areas of the action plan. The National Education Plan and the teachers' professional standards will be revised to adopt the principles of

gender equality. The plan aims to conduct periodic surveys and regular media campaigns on gender equality.

The action plan also prioritizes gender analysis of budgeting at every level. We do acknowledge that gender budget is a major financial tool for introducing gender equality and social integrity. Gender aspects are being taken into consideration in healthcare and social security as well, with a particular attention to rural population. The Plan focuses on reproductive care component in rural doctors' retraining program to increase the quality of the provided services.

Distinguished colleagues,

The ongoing reforms have been having a positive impact on women's social and political conditions in the country. Women's representation has been increased - we have more women in the cabinet ministers than ever before, and we have women occupying vice-ministerial positions at every ministry. Certainly, a lot still remains to be done in this direction.

Mr. Chairman,

It will be impossible to guarantee decent civil roles and engagement for women unless they are protected in personal relationships and we have violence free family environment. The Law on Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection of and Support to Its Victims, substantially amended in 2009, represents a commitment to address domestic violence through a wide range of social and legal services.

Distinguished colleagues,

While addressing gender related issues, special attention has to be given to the conditions of the most vulnerable groups, first and foremost - forcefully displaced persons – victims of several waves of ethnic cleansing. Conflict and internal displacement continues to negatively influence their status in every field of social life. Although Georgia spares no efforts to provide its over 400 000 IDPs, most of the women and girls, with decent living conditions and financial support the foreign military invasion and subsequent occupation of 20% of our territories have further aggravated conditions of those living under the occupation. Gross, massive and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms still occur in both regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. Unfortunately, human rights watchdogs and International missions are banned from monitoring the humanitarian and human rights situation in the occupied territories, thus leaving these regions off the United Nations radars.

Mr. Chairman,

As a responsible member of the international community Georgia has been committed to the international obligations it has undertaken as a signatory to all major international conventions combating and preventing gender based violence.

Today we have more effective tools to handle the gender-related issues, and as a part of wider international policy we are determined to continue our efforts aimed at improving the quality of life of women in our country.

Thank you.