



Foreign Policy Strategy

2006-2009

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present *The Georgian Foreign Policy Strategy for the years 2006 – 2009*.

After the Rose Revolution, Georgia embarked on a comprehensive reform process aimed at establishing democratic governance and the rule of law, securing sustainable economic growth and restoring territorial integrity peacefully – in sum, turning Georgia into a European State with strong institutions, fully integrated into European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

The growing strength of the Georgian State should be reflected in the welfare and security of its citizens.

The Foreign Service is a guide that leads our country in the international arena where the interests of different national actors intersect.

We are assigned an honorable mission - to protect the interests of our country and our citizens in the international arena and secure a dignified place for our country in the world community of states.

To accomplish this mission, we elaborated the Georgian Foreign Policy Strategy for 2006 – 2009. The document lays out strategic objectives for Georgian foreign policy, the medium term tasks of the Foreign Service to accomplish these objectives and the actions to undertake these tasks.

This is the first time the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has prepared this type of document. It lays out the foundation for the new approaches of conducting foreign policy, which fully complies with the positive changes underway in our country.

Given the importance of our mission, the Ministry will mobilize adequate resources and capabilities, while the men and women of Georgian Foreign Service will not spare their efforts to fulfill the objectives put forth in the strategy, thus contributing to building a stable, safe and democratic Georgia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Bezhushvili'.

Gela Bezhushvili
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Foreword

To fulfill the mission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has elaborated the Strategy for the years 2006 – 2009, which adheres to the requirements as defined in the *National Security Concept of Georgia*.

The Strategy is a conceptual framework, which ensures that the Foreign Service, as an integral part of the Government, can perform its duties in accordance with the will of the President and Parliament of Georgia.

The Strategy defines the objectives of the Foreign Service for the year 2006 – 2009, in accordance with its mission, which seeks promotion of national interests, protection of the rights of its citizens abroad and contribution to the world community.

The Strategy will help employees of the Ministry to see their duties as a valuable part of the whole, and guide and organize their activities and actions along the lines of established policy.

The Strategy encapsulates the medium term vision for the foreign policy priorities that will guide our activities and actions in coming years. It defines four principal strategic objectives of the Foreign Service. For each strategic objective of Georgia's foreign policy, we identify a number of specific strategic priorities to be pursued by the Foreign Service.

The Strategy also describes the country's multilateral and bilateral relations, which serve the purpose of achieving strategic goals of the diplomatic service.

The Strategy will be the central managerial tool against which the performance of the structures of the Foreign Service – the Ministry, diplomatic missions and consular services abroad -- will be measured. It will ensure that strategic planning will govern performance targets and overall resource requirements. On the completion of the planning cycle, the achievements of the Foreign Service will be assessed based on the pre-defined targets set out by this Strategy and corresponding performance plans.

Given the pace and dynamism of the processes developing in the modern world, the Strategy will be periodically revised and amended, if necessary.

Mission of the Foreign Service

Georgia's foreign policy priorities are based on the values established in the modern democratic world. This interrelation allows us to ensure international support in accomplishing our objectives.

Stemming from the above, we formulate the mission of the Foreign Service and the values and principles that are essential to its fulfillment.

Mission

Promote national interests of Georgia, protect the rights of Georgian citizens abroad, and contribute to a better world community.

Georgia's Foreign Service – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diplomatic Missions and Consular Services -- serve fundamental national interests and values anchored in the *National Security Concept* and expressed in the President's vision that drive the overall goal of our foreign policy – to enhance the security and international status of Georgia, ascertain Georgia's appropriate and dignified position in the system of international relations, and promote the interests of the country in an increasingly globalized world.

In today's interdependent world, national security and prosperity cannot be achieved in isolation from the rest of the world. For our security to be lasting we need to support global security. Our independence and freedom depend on respect of the sovereignty of other states of the world. The well-being and economic prosperity of other states and regions will influence the welfare of Georgian citizens. And consolidation of democracy in Georgia can only be achieved through strengthening democratic developments on a global scale. We will pursue a foreign policy that is conscious of these principles and faithful to these beliefs.

To reach this vision, Georgian foreign policy of 21st century will strive to bring about international actions that advance the national interests of Georgia and Georgian citizens, as well as to make a contribution to building a world community in which there is enduring peace and security, an expanding democracy and lasting prosperity.



STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Independent, Secure and Stable Country

The objective of the Foreign Service is to support the efforts of the Georgian government aimed at strengthening state independence and forming a stable and secure country. In order to achieve this goal, our diplomacy will concentrate on the issues of peaceful resolution of internal/frozen conflicts in Georgia and restoration of territorial integrity, as well as on forming an international environment favorable to our national interests. This is one of the main preconditions for a free and sovereign nation as well as for ensuring the lives and security of our citizens.

Territorial Integrity

The inviolability of the internationally recognized state borders and provision of constitutional order on Georgia's territory.

- **Implement the Peace Plan for South Ossetia/Tskhinvali Region.** The Foreign Service will ensure active participation of the international community in the implementation of the Peace Plan. This work will continue on both multilateral (OSCE, European Union), as well as bilateral levels, primarily with the United States and the Russian Federation.
- **Develop a joint Peace Plan for Abkhazia and start its implementation.** Development of a comprehensive Peace Plan for Abkhazia and commencement of its implementation is of utmost importance for restoring territorial integrity. With the purpose of attracting support from the international community, the diplomatic service will continue to work with those international organizations and partner countries that are facilitating negotiations for development of the Abkhaz Peace Plan and supporting the peace process. In this regard, relations with the UN, as well as bilateral relations with the countries of Secretary General's Group of Friends of Georgia are priorities.
- **Increase the effectiveness of the negotiation mechanisms.** The Foreign Service will continue its efforts to diversify participation of international monitors in the process of negotiations, including states and international organizations, which will prevent attempts to escalate the situation underscore our readiness to carry out an open policy.
- **Internationalize the peacekeeping forces.** Impartial peacekeeping forces represent a necessary precondition for avoiding resumption of hostilities. Georgia's diplomatic service will actively work towards internationalization of peacekeeping forces in the conflict zones.
- **Create a favorable environment for internally displaced persons and refugees and commence the process of their return.** The Foreign Service will work to facilitate establishment of a joint UN and OSCE human rights office

in the Gali region, as well as deployment of police forces under the aegis of the UN. In addition, we will work towards more active engagement of international humanitarian agencies and missions.

- **Provide the latest and objective information.** The Georgian Foreign Service will ensure timely dissemination of the latest information concerning developments in the conflict zones as well as our peace initiatives.

Strengthening National Security

Strengthen the state and its institutions and foster an international environment favorable to national security.

- **Support formation of a favorable environment for secure development of the state.** The Foreign Service will continue active cooperation in bilateral, multilateral and regional formats towards strengthening Georgia's security and strengthening international support for our sovereignty.
- **Increase defense capability based on the Euro-Atlantic security paradigm.** A full scale reform is underway in the defense sector aimed at creating a defense system compatible with European and Euro-Atlantic security standards. The objective of the diplomatic service is to support successful implementation of defense reforms by attracting the help of friendly states and ensuring experience-sharing with Georgia.
- **Enhance the security of state borders.** Work will continue to complete delimitation and demarcation of the state borders. We will intensify the efforts to attract international support for improving border control and management mechanisms.
- **Respond to new threats.** Georgia is developing effective measures against international terrorism, money laundering, and trafficking in human beings, drugs arms and explosives. The Foreign Service will, within its sphere of competence, support the fight against these threats and challenges, as well as participate in creation of an effective crisis management system by attracting help and know-how from our strategic partners.

Regional Stability

Minimize harm to the national interests of Georgia from regional threats by promoting peace, stability and cooperation in the region.

- **Counter regional threats.** Strengthening international participation in conflict resolution and avoiding new threats in the Black Sea region is of the utmost importance. With this in mind, we will actively cooperate in solving the existing conflicts on our territory, as well as in the Caucasus and the wider Black Sea region. In particular, solution of the problems existing in the relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan is prerequisite to boosting regional cooperation and developing mutually beneficial trilateral regional projects. Therefore, Georgia will

continue to play the role of connecting bridge to facilitate constructive dialogue between these two countries. Furthermore, it is a priority to deepen regional cooperation against international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal trade of arms and drugs, as well as human trafficking and illegal migration.

- **Further regional cooperation.** Georgia already possesses positive examples of transnational regional projects. The aim of our diplomatic service is to use this experience to support development and implementation of new joint projects in the sphere of economy, energy and transport.
- **Actively participate in existing regional cooperation mechanisms.** Cooperation will be deepened under the frameworks of such regional organizations and initiatives as Community of Democratic Choice (CDC), Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, GUAM and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).
- **Strengthen Black Sea regional dimension.** Georgia's diplomatic service will work in coordination with partners and international institutions to strengthen the Black Sea dimension of European and Euro-Atlantic structures and to develop a regional cooperation program for the wider Black Sea region that will encompass issues such as strengthening security, democratic development, good governance and stable market economy.

European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

Establish Georgia's place in the common European family by deepening integration with the EU and joining NATO.

- **Maintain the dynamics of integration aimed at membership in the North-Atlantic Alliance.** The ongoing task of the diplomatic service is continuous support of our declared objective of NATO membership. To increase trust and responsiveness of NATO it is necessary to ensure a targeted and objective political dialogue with the Alliance in the 26+1 framework, as well as on bilateral basis.
- **Advance through NATO membership mechanisms.** The Foreign Service will exert its efforts towards Georgia's inclusion in Intensified Dialogue with NATO and successful completion of this process. Likewise, we will work to attract support of NATO member countries for Georgia to embark upon a NATO Membership Action Plan.
- **Raise public awareness about NATO through public diplomacy.** Raising public awareness about NATO is of crucial importance for deepening Georgia's integration into NATO. For this purpose, the Ministry will continue to support the work of the NATO Information Centre in Tbilisi and its branches in Batumi and Telavi. It will also facilitate effective implementation of the *Public Information Strategy on Georgia's integration with NATO*.

- **Closer relations with EU institutions and deepening of political dialogue.** Within the next three years our task is to achieve more active involvement of the EU in Georgia and the South Caucasus. For that purpose, we will intensify relations with the European Commission, European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, as well as with the office of the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. Effective use of the cooperation mechanisms envisioned under the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement is also very important. Gradual integration with the EU is a long-term foreign policy goal of Georgia.
- **Adopt and implement the European Neighborhood Policy Action Plan (ENP AP).** In this context, the major task is implementation of the priorities laid out in the ENP AP. It is very important for the ENP AP to be based on the *principles of differentiation and joint ownership* envisaged in the ENP strategy paper. Successful implementation of the ENP AP will move Georgia's relations with the EU to a higher level. The Foreign Service will also ensure effective use of the resources envisaged in *the European Neighborhood Policy Instrument (ENPI)*.
- **Deepen mutually favorable relations with the European Union.** The Foreign Service will work to deepen mutually beneficial relations between the EU and Georgia in the spheres of security, democracy, trade, transportation, energy, infrastructure development, education and culture.

Prosperity and Democracy

Creation of a prosperous democratic and state is the basic goal of the Government of Georgia. The efforts of the Foreign Service will be directed towards the mobilization of international support for the ongoing democratic transformations, which, in turn, will secure sustainability and irreversibility of these processes.

Economic Development and Security

Support economic growth and stable development, expand opportunities for Georgia's businesses, ensure economic and energy security.

- **Support economic growth, stability and prosperity.** The Foreign Service, within its area of competence, will support the diversification of the goods and services markets. Such policy will render the Georgian exports less vulnerable to political and financial changes. Such policy will render the Georgian exports less vulnerable to political and financial changes.
- **Promote foreign direct investments.** The Foreign Service will enhance its efforts to attract foreign direct investment, which will be achieved through acquainting interested parties with relevant legal base and agreements, as well as through providing information on Georgia's economic and export potential.
- **Ensure energy security and fully exploit the potential of the transportation corridor.** Diversification of energy sources and expansion of the geographic scope of partnerships is a priority. These apply both to the diversification of suppliers and of fuels. The significance of energy security in the international arena increases Georgia's role in European energy security. In this connection, the ability of Georgia to take advantage of its favorable geographic location, transforming it into a focal point for regional transit is crucial.
- **Promote regional projects.** Large-scale regional economic projects, encompassing entire Caucasus and wider Black Sea region, will be major driving forces for boosting jobs, growth and competitiveness. Georgia has already acquired useful experience implementing transnational projects and we will continue to bring these relations to qualitatively new levels. To this end, the Foreign Service will take an active part in the planning and implementation of joint regional projects.
- **Exploit multilateral formats.** Membership in international organizations - such as WTO, BSEC, Organization for Democracy and Economic Development and GUAM - will be fully used to boost trade and strengthen economic and trade relations.
- **Promote and stimulate development of tourism.** The Ministry will work to create Georgia's image as a tourist country and to promote sectoral tourism (student and youth, holiday and recreation, ecotourism, adventure tourism, active

tourism, rural, agricultural and wine tourism, resort and climate tourism etc.). We will also work to facilitate the entrance of tourists and, through the support of foreign representatives, will provide information to tourists interested in visiting Georgia.

Democracy, Civil Society and Human Rights

Promote democratic institutions and good governance, strengthen civil society, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

- **Further internal democratic reforms.** Democratic governance is the only guarantee of a secure and stable environment; therefore, we will strive to establish such an environment for the good of our citizens.
- **Ensure respect for human rights, civil liberties and religious freedom.** The Foreign Service will make its contribution to the cause of strengthening these rights and freedoms. Close cooperation with major reputable international agencies working on these issues, and heeding their reports, will be one of the principle directions of the Ministry's activity.
- **Fight corruption.** The Foreign Service will contribute to the ongoing fight with corruption and nepotism. We cooperate with countries that have been successful in fighting corruption to study their experience in formats such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Council of Europe's Group of States Against Corruption. To make Georgia a role model as an effective fighter of corruption in the post-Soviet space, diplomatic efforts will be made to intensify such cooperation.
- **Participate in international democratic fora.** To make democratic changes systematic and irreversible it is necessary to secure support and experience-sharing from successful democracies, which is one of the priorities of our foreign policy. In this respect, the task of the diplomatic service is ensuring Georgia's active participation in the *World Forum of Democratic Community*. Georgia's active and innovative participation in the *Community of Democratic Choice (CDC)* is also a diplomatic priority. These will contribute to the realization of Georgia's function as a role-model of democratic transformation.

Georgia's role in the International System

The Foreign Service will strengthen efforts to ensure Georgia's active participation in the international arena such as supporting the new wave of democratization, contributing to strengthening international security and cooperating on issues of energy security. Moreover, in order to enrich the world's cultural heritage, our task is to present and popularize Georgia's cultural and historical heritage abroad. All these will support the appreciation of Georgia's role in the international system and ensure our place in the system of international labor distribution.

Georgia's Outreach

Create positive and objective image of Georgia in the international arena.

- **Effectively project the country's full potential to the outer world.** The Foreign Service will actively use diplomatic channels to convey positive developments and success stories about Georgia to the world. We will regularly disseminate information about our positive contributions to strengthening international peace and security.
- **Effective public diplomacy.** Through effective and targeted public diplomacy, we will project Georgia's proper image and aspirations. We aim to explain our policies and positions to influential international fora more effectively as well as develop stronger people-to-people contacts.
- **Disseminate timely and accurate information to foreign audiences.** We will work to improve our ability to convey accurate information regarding the events that take place inside the country and reinforce international publicity of such events through efficient use of international fora.
- **Counter possible negative propaganda and disinformation.** The Foreign Service will employ diplomatic instruments to implement counterstrategies to hostile propaganda, disinformation and incorrect stereotypes.
- **Study and analysis of opinion of outside audiences.** In addition to conveying information to foreign audiences, we will read accurately the messages from the rest of the world. This two-way dialogue with foreign audiences will ensure accurate reading and analysis of public opinions about Georgia while planning our policies according to our national interests and values. For that purpose, it is necessary to identify what foreign publics care about, elaborate recommendations and respond accordingly.
- **Preserve and popularize Georgia's cultural and natural heritage.** The Foreign Service, within the limits of its competency, will apply efforts to create favorable conditions for preserving Georgia's cultural heritage. Special attention should be paid to ensuring special protection of the sites in the World Heritage List and to exploring opportunities for inclusion of other sites. We will also work to find, and return to Georgia, artifacts and items of cultural significance now in

foreign countries. At the same time, the Ministry and our missions abroad will ensure that Georgian culture and history are better known to the world's public audiences.

- **Exploit the potential of diasporas.** It is a task of Georgian diplomacy to mobilize and organize Georgian diasporas to support the goals of Georgia's agenda, including Georgia's active outreach in their respective states and attracting foreign investment to Georgia.

Consolidation of Democracy

Strengthen Georgia's contribution to promoting democracy in the international arena.

- **Support the new wave of democratization in Eurasia.** Georgia will support democratic processes through public statements, political declarations and development of innovative and effective partnerships in the international arena regarding democracy issues. In this regard, the main fora for cooperation will be the *Community of Democratic Choice*, devoted to strengthening ties between the emerging democracies in Eurasia, and *Community of Democracies*, to develop democratic cooperation in global level formats.
- **Cooperate with the countries that share democratic values.** In order to promote successful implementation of reforms based on the rule of law and sound governance principles, we will deepen cooperation with the new democracies. In this way, we will support democratic transformations in the international arena by demonstrating our preference for democracy.

International Security

Strengthen global security by contributing to international peace and stability.

- **Contribute to strengthening international security.** Georgia is not only a consumer, but also a contributor of security. It actively participates in peaceful and anti-terrorist operations of the international community. Georgia has already contributed its troops to the peaceful operations in Afghanistan. Currently Georgian military contingents are deployed in Kosovo and Iraq. Georgia's Foreign Service will work to ensure active participation in such operations and at the same time will work to make our commitments known to the international community.
- **Fight against international terrorism.** Georgia is a member of the anti-terrorist coalition and currently contributes to the fight against international terrorism. It is especially important to defend the energy infrastructure on our territory. We will strengthen efforts against illegal proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and will increase cooperation with the international community against using our territory for transit of weapons of mass destruction or their means of delivery. The fight against cyber-terrorism is also a priority. To ensure an effective fight against international terrorism, Georgia will cooperate with states of the region, in

particular with immediate neighbors: the Russian Federation, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.

Energy Security

Strengthen Euro-Atlantic energy security by supplying energy and diversifying routes of transportation.

- **Display the potential of new energy corridors via Georgia.** For Georgia it is of the utmost importance to present properly the potential of the region as a transport corridor for energy resources. The Diplomatic Service will work to stimulate Euro-Atlantic interest and involvement in developing alternative energy projects and new routes for energy transportation.
- **Implementation of the Euro-Atlantic Energy Security Strategy.** Georgia attaches the utmost importance to elaboration of a Euro-Atlantic Energy Security Strategy, which will be based on balance of interests of energy producer, transit and consumer countries. The EU's active participation is necessary to elaborate the Euro-Atlantic Energy Security Strategy, the cornerstone of which will be to identify alternative ways of transporting Caspian Sea energy resources to European markets with the aim of ending Europe's dangerous dependence on a single provider and, at the same time, promoting stability and prosperity in the transit countries.

Georgian Citizens Abroad

Providing care and protection to Georgian citizens abroad is among the principal and most important responsibilities of the Foreign Service. This mission is carried out at our 37 Embassies and Consulates in many countries. Our commitment is to help Georgians travel, do business, and study all over the world. Defending the rights and freedoms of Georgian citizens is one of our principal obligations, even if they reside abroad illegally.

Rights and Interests of Georgian Citizens

Support Georgian citizens abroad and defend their rights.

- **Develop the network of diplomatic and consular missions.** The Ministry will enhance the efficiency of its diplomatic missions and consular services and establish new representations in accordance with foreign policy priorities and the needs of Georgian citizens.
- **Defend the rights and liberties of Georgian citizens.** One of the principal activities of foreign missions is to ensure legal protection of the rights and freedoms of Georgian citizens living abroad, in accordance with local and international law.
- **Promote Georgian labor migration.** The Ministry will enhance its work with foreign countries to create a proper legal basis for Georgian labor migrants, providing for their legal employment.
- **Prevent human trafficking and protect its victims.** Georgian diplomatic representations and consulates abroad will intensify their collaboration with local law enforcement agencies and international organizations to safeguard the rights of Georgian citizens who become victims of trafficking, as well as to fight against those involved in trafficking.
- **Provide necessary information for Georgian citizens abroad.** We will use the latest technological facilities to deliver appropriate information to our citizens about their rights, freedoms and obligations. A special division will be established in the Consular Department of the Ministry, responsible for providing Georgian citizens with necessary information and appropriate consultations about traveling requirements.
- **Liberalise and simplify the issuance of foreign visas for Georgians.** In order to facilitate visa issuance procedures for Georgian citizens, we will conclude appropriate visa treaties and agreements with the friendly states.
- **Provide assistance in crises and emergencies.** Our obligation is to provide Georgian citizens, as far as possible, with timely appropriate assistance in such cases as natural disaster, terrorist attack, crimes, arrest, imprisonment, illness, death, disappearance, passport loss, repatriation etc. The consular registration

system will be improved to enable to reach Georgian citizens in distress and render him/her requisite assistance.

- **Improve the legislation.** In order to provide defense of Georgian citizens' rights effectively, the Ministry, according to its competency, will review existing legislation, requesting necessary alterations of Parliament, elaborating new suggestions about joining existing conventions, and concluding new agreements.

Travel, Work and Study Abroad

Assist Georgian citizens to travel, live and conduct business abroad safely.

- **Assist travelers.** Securing legal protection of the rights and liberties of Georgian tourists and travelers will be the responsibility of the Foreign Service, which it will exercise through the embassies and consulates. Moreover, if necessary, the Foreign Service will warn Georgian citizens about possible dangers that might await them abroad.
- **Ensure legal protection and promotion of legal businesses of Georgian citizens abroad.** With the assistance of our diplomatic and trade representations stationed abroad, as well as through the intermediary of foreign missions accredited in Georgia, the state will strive to create favorable conditions for our businesses and enterprises abroad. We will also ensure full observance of the personal and business rights of our business people in foreign countries.
- **Promote educational and cultural exchange.** The Foreign Service will work with international agencies specializing in international education, with other governments and NGOs in order to ensure a vigorous exchange of students.
- **Fully integrate Georgia into the creation of the United European System of Higher Education, i.e. the Bologna Process.** We will forge partnerships for facilitation and furtherance of the students' and professors' mobility to and from Georgia by ensuring the harmonization of academic degrees and quality assurance standards throughout Europe.

MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

In the global world of today, multilateral diplomacy plays a decisive role in reaching the goals of common security, which are based on such values as democracy, liberty, human rights, rule of law and free markets. Georgia's active involvement in the functioning of a multitude of global and regional organizations is one of the main mechanisms for realization of national interests, enabling us at the same time to contribute to the strengthening of international peace, stability and welfare.

Global Dimension

Georgia is an active participant of the **United Nations' (UN)** and its agencies' activities. Our aims are ensuring appropriate presentation of Georgia in the international arena through coordination of the relations with other member-states, exposure of the problematic issues that stand before Georgia today, as well as securing international support in solving these issues. The geopolitical realities of the world today bring to the agenda the issue of reforming the UN organizations, particularly of the Security Council. We believe that the UN should transform itself into a more flexible organization, capable of prompt and adequate reaction to contemporary threats, particularly when it comes to conflict resolution and prevention.

As a country with a long history and rich cultural heritage, for Georgia it is important that the role of the **United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in cultural heritage preservation is be strengthened. Having left the UNESCO Moscow regional Office in October 2005, Georgia is intent on finding a new regional format for cooperation with the organization. This would engage the country in a number of large-scale UNESCO-mandated regional projects.

Intense cooperation of our country with the international financial and trade organizations is very important for the improvement of living conditions of the population. The **World Bank** is playing a major role in ensuring economic growth and creating favorable conditions for the development of the private sector, as well as in improving social services and environmental protection. It is also advising the Government on the reform process. The **International Monetary Fund** provides Georgia with technical assistance programs and recommendations concerning economic policies, improvement of the tax system and management of loans to ensure economic growth. Membership in the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** is an important instrument for full-fledged Georgian integration into the global economic system. At the same time, the WTO is an important forum that allows us to call international attention to our country's problems. WTO membership offers additional leverage to solve these issues and helps establish civilized and equitable trade relations with our partners. Georgia is vitally interested in seeing Russia join the WTO as soon as possible, provided that it harmonizes its foreign trade regime with the provisions of the Organization agreements and does not exercise discriminatory trade policies against Georgia. We will also fully support and promote the accession of Ukraine and Kazakhstan to the WTO.

European and Euro-Atlantic Structures

Relations between Georgia and **NATO** are based on common values and on the belief that ensuring national security is impossible if the country is left to its own devices. The commonality of interests and values is the basis for fruitful relations with NATO and for Georgia's integration into the Organization. Georgia cooperates with the Alliance in the Partnership for Peace Program, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, and the NATO Planning and Research Process. 2004 brought a qualitatively new step in the relations between NATO and Georgia, as the Alliance approved the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) for our country. Partnership with NATO is contributing to strengthening democratic values, implementation of democratic reforms in the country establishment of overall stability. These factors are instrumental for transformation of Georgia into a reliable ally.

Common European values and the historic drive of the Georgian nation to return to its European home condition and shape the incremental cooperation between Georgia and **European Union (EU)**. As a result of a recent EU enlargement, European stability and security have become directly linked to those of the Black Sea region and the South Caucasus, which is duly reflected in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) Strategy Paper. Appointment of a special representative of the EU for the South Caucasus, along with the increased participation of the Union in the resolution of ongoing conflicts in Georgia are eloquent manifestations of profound interest of the EU towards the South Caucasus in general, and Georgia in particular. Georgia's partnership with the EU develops in the framework of ENP, which is an efficient mechanism for solving the country's medium-term goals.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is an important forum for securing international support for Georgia's interests. Georgia will continue close cooperation with OSCE on the issues that strengthen Georgian statehood such as conflict resolution, protection of human rights, democracy promotion, conduct of elections that comply with international standards, border monitoring and management and training of Georgian customs officers,. We strongly support enhancement of OSCE's efficiency, which implies improvement of consultation processes, increase in productivity and transparency and refinement in program planning to better outline the priorities.

By acceding to the **Council of Europe (CoE)**, Georgia took the first step towards integration into the European family. Cooperation within the framework of the CoE implies both sharing the general principles of the Organization and the ability to declare the position of Georgia from in the international arena, as well as active involvement of Georgia in the building of a new European home based on common values. Georgia and the CoE cooperate closely in strengthening of democracy, human rights protection, rule of law, fight against corruption, resolution of conflicts by peaceful means, institutional, legislative, legal and administrative reforms, etc. This co-operation furthers formation of a stronger state that meets European standards.

Regional Formats and Initiatives

One of the most important goals of Georgia's foreign policy is establishment of strong regional and inter-regional cooperation. Georgia aims to promote its

European identity and facilitate further realization of the idea of a united and free Europe through the Black sea regional format.

The principal goal of the **Commonwealth of Democratic Choice (CDC)** is the promotion of democracy in the Baltic, Black Sea and Caspian Sea regions. It has been universally acknowledged that the CDC is the natural sequel of the processes triggered by the Visegrad and Vilnius Groups aimed at removal of the old division lines and completion formation of an indivisible and free Europe.

Organization for Democracy and Development – GUAM is an important regional initiative that promotes democratic institutions, security enhancement and economic development of the member states. Special emphasis within the framework of GUAM is given to the issues of democracy and rule of law, protection of human rights, economic development, energy, transit, border protection and regional security.

Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC) Organization has considerable potential to enhance development in such spheres as transport, energy, agriculture, tourism, small-scale enterprises, science and technology. It is of paramount importance for Georgia to use these opportunities more effectively and to establish a fully-fledged partnership within the framework of the organization. At the same time, Georgia believes that the efficiency of the organization should be increased and it welcomes reforms being carried out in this direction.

Georgia will spare no resources to make the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** an effective organization, capable of solving some of our country's burning issues. If we do not succeed in attaining this goal, our CIS membership will be reconsidered.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Relations with Neighbors

Turkey is Georgia's leading regional partner, which supports our country's formation into a stable and strong country. Georgia and Turkey are strategic partners, particularly in such areas as trade, economy, energy, defense and security. Turkey's support for Georgia's territorial integrity is of great importance, as well as Turkey's support in the process of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and development of the Georgian Armed Forces. The partnership will deepen in the spheres of energy, trade and tourism in the coming years.

Establishment of good-neighborly and equal relations with **the Russian Federation** is one of the fundamental priorities of Georgia's foreign policy. Proceeding from this principle, Georgia is ready to develop mutually beneficial co-operation in the spheres of trade and economy, attract Russian investment, and conduct a dialogue on security issues. The set of agreements signed on March 31, 2006 on the withdrawal of Russian military bases from the territory of Georgia signifies a positive shift in the relations between the two countries. The Georgian leadership will ensure timely proper implementation of this agreement, along with the obligations undertaken by Russia at the OSCE's 1999 Istanbul Summit, including those regarding the Gudauta base in Abkhazia, Georgia. Georgia is striving to develop cooperation with Russia in the sphere of border protection. Carrying out an effective control of the Russo-Georgian state border will contribute to the effective fight against smuggling, organized crime and terrorism. We fully realize Russia's important role in a peaceful resolution of the conflicts on Georgian territory. Accordingly, ensuring positive participation of Russia in peaceful settlement of the conflicts and restoration of Georgian territorial integrity is one of the principal tasks of our foreign policy.

There are historically established good-neighborly ties between Georgia and **Armenia and Azerbaijan**. Intensification of partnership between the three states of the South Caucasus is of immense importance for the further development of the region. Georgia will deepen its strategic partnership with the Azerbaijan to attain energy security, fully exploit the potential of South Caucasus transport corridor and implement new large-scale regional projects. Georgia will continue close co-operation with Armenia over the broad spectrum of bilateral interests. Georgia supports wider participation of Armenia in regional projects and welcomes the intensification of Armenian partnership with European and Euro-Atlantic bodies, which should have a positive impact on regional security.

Relations with European States

Georgia's cooperation with European countries is of special importance for it to become firmly established in the European family. Historically, culturally, politically and geographically Georgia is a part of Europe; we fully share European liberal values. Democratic Georgia, integrated into the European community, will be a contributor to the stability and security in Europe. We will intensify our cooperation with **Germany**, which is planning to intensify its diplomacy in the South Caucasus. Georgia can become Germany's strategic partner in the region and develop a mutually beneficial cooperation in such spheres as energy security, conflict resolution, fighting against organized crime and illegal migration. The support of

Germany in Georgia's desire to accede the Euro-Atlantic space is of particular importance. In this regard, we will deepen our relations with other European states, in particular with **France, the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Greece.**

Instrumental for effective implementation of reforms and integration into NATO is exposure to the experience of Europe's new democracies. To this end, we will actively cooperate with **Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.**

Georgia will closely cooperate with **Romania and Bulgaria** on advancing democracy and peace in the Black Sea area, establishment of regional identity and European and Euro-Atlantic integration. We will also strengthen the existing strategic partnership with **Ukraine**, proceeding from our common goals and interests in foreign and security policy.

Global Relationships

Partnership with **the United States of America** will remain the principal direction of our bilateral relations. This partnership will continue to play the most decisive role to attain Georgia's strategic goals, which include strengthening national security, development of statehood and democratic institutions, peaceful resolution of the frozen internal conflicts and Euro-Atlantic integration. The strategic partnership between our countries is based upon common values and interests such as spread of democracy, combating international terrorism and attaining energy security.

It is also important for Georgia to develop close relations with the **People's Republic of China, India and Japan and South Korea**, which are among the world's most dynamic and fast-growing economies. Intensification of trade and economic ties with these countries, along with deepening cooperation in energy, transport and information technology will be a priority of our foreign policy.

Georgia will strengthen its economic ties with **Central Asian States**, in particular with **Kazakhstan**, to diversify energy supply routes, fully activate the Europe-Asia transport corridor that goes through Georgia, attract investment to Georgia and establish Georgian business in new markets.

The Middle East is a major geopolitical junction in today's world. The political processes developing in this region have repercussions in every corner of the world. Georgia is an active participant in the ongoing anti-terrorist operation in **Iraq**, and, together with the international community, will continue to contribute to establishment of peace and security in the region. Participation in the operation is also in line with the imperatives of our national security. With the millennia old strong ties between the Georgian and Jewish people, Georgia places a special emphasis on further development of relations with **Israel**, particularly with regard to economy, tourism and culture. Georgia is also interested in co-operation with **Iran** in such areas as transport and energy. Georgia attaches importance to intensification of economic and trade ties and establishment of co-operation in tourism with the **Egypt** and **Jordan.**

Diplomatic and Organizational Capacity

The Ministry has developed clear foreign policy priorities, identified strategic objectives and charted strategies on how to implement them. Poor management and inadequate resources, however, often hinder the implementation of stated goals. The challenge before the Ministry during the next three years, therefore, is formation of capable, qualified, and competent organization and personnel.

Organizational Improvement

With the development of strategic planning, the Ministry is introducing an innovative form of conducting the foreign affairs. Our next step is to ensure that our organizational capacity is fully aligned to achieve these goals. To increase the effectiveness of our work, a major objective will be to modernize the Ministry's information and communications technology and ensure its optimum utilization. To achieve the priorities laid out by this Strategy, we will:

- **Ensure unity of the Foreign Service.** A better united, well coordinated Foreign Service, adequately capable of acting as a cohesive system, is central to achieving our objectives. The Ministry will pursue increased strategic collaboration and communication among the sub-entities of the Foreign Service.
- **Establish a sustainable system of strategic planning.** We will establish the culture of strategic management of foreign policy, which envisions strategic planning, time, related action plans, resource planning and development of implementation criteria.
- **Streamline the decision-making process.** The Ministry will institutionalize organizational and employee empowerment by granting line managers and employees more flexibility in taking decisions.
- **Develop a modern and secure infrastructure and operational capabilities.** The Foreign Service's priorities will require secure and modern information technology and improved collection, analysis, communication and coordination of information. A key goal is to merge the Ministry's networks into a modern unified, secure, global information system that is proactive and centrally managed using the potential of the latest information and communication technologies. This will provide converged infrastructure and secure, quality access anytime and anywhere.
- **Create common sets of regulations to standardize administration.** In order to ensure cohesive and unified work of the Ministry, it is necessary to adopt standard operational procedures. This will ensure that communication among structural entities of the Ministry, as well as with other state organs, is conducted in accordance with single standards. The next step will be a special training program through which newly employed staff of the Ministry will become acquainted with the common sets of regulations and other important documents.

Human Resources

A highly skilled staff is a precondition to a successful foreign service. Employees of are required constantly to update their diplomatic, management, organizational and technical skills for the Foreign Service to fulfill its goals. In this direction, we will:

- **Develop a strategy of human resources management.** A strategy of human resources management will be developed with the purpose to ensure provision of the right staff at the right place in order to fulfill foreign policy goals.
- **Improve staff selection, preparation and professional retraining mechanisms.** The Ministry will improve the staff selection criteria and develop curricula for languages and management training. We will cooperate actively with foreign centers and institutes to increase staff professionalism.
- **Establish organizational and management culture.** We will establish an organizational culture that is outcome and consumer oriented, and will at the same time, provide training and learning, especially in leadership and management.

Planning and Resources

The Foreign Service will pay increased attention to creation of a culture based on planning and managing resources. Such forms of planning as performance management, which allows for assessment of the completed work, will be initiated. In addition, in order to achieve effective and target oriented financial spending, we will integrate processes of strategic planning and budgeting. To achieve these tasks, we will ensure:

- **Closer alignment of strategic planning and resource planning.** We will plan resource requirements and allocation based on the strategic planning process. Allocation and usage of the resources will be in accordance with strategic goals. Action (performance) plans will be developed that include targets to be achieved and reflect the established directions for spending the Ministry's physical, financial and human resources.
- **Standardized planning and performance procedures.** Work will be evaluated according to action (performance) plans. For each strategic goal, a standardized matrix will be developed showing the relationship among the performance goals, activities, resources, departments or diplomatic missions and partners that contribute to accomplishment of the strategic goal.
- **Effective financial management.** With limited resources, special importance must be given to correct financial management. For this purpose, the budgeting system will be improved as it is molded towards fulfilling the strategic goals of the diplomatic service. A financial control mechanism will be worked out to ensure targeted usage of funds.
- **Improvement of service.** For effective usage and transparency of procurement services, we will create a diverse and competitive environment for service providers, which can be achieved through procurement tenders, contracting out and outsourcing.