

State Minister for Reconciliation and Civil Equality of Georgia Ketevan Tsikhelashvili:

“Our policy of peace provides for 8 main objectives.”

Implementation of a **peaceful, coherent, pragmatic and principled policy** is the main objective of the Government of Georgia and the strategic line of conflict resolution, which is focused on the restoration of integrity and the country development;

Georgia’s policy of peace includes two main directions: de-occupation of the country and **reconciliation** of the communities separated by the conflict. At the same time, it is associated with the common vision of the future in the united European Georgia, where rights and identity of all citizens and ethnic groups are protected.

Consequently, democratic development, stability and economic prosperity of Georgia, as well as creation of a state of European model, is one of the keys to conflict resolution.

The unresolved conflict and the current situation do not serve the interests of either Georgian, or Abkhazian, or Ossetian communities. That’s why it is necessary that the peace process acquires more dynamics.

The primary interest of the Government of Georgia is peace and stability in the country and the region, which should not be identified as an attempt to stabilize the current situation. The conflict resolution is the very precondition for sustainable peace and stability.

Therefore, the policy of the Government of Georgia is aimed at taking more dynamic and effective actions, reconciliation and confidence-building, improvement of the situation of the conflict-affected communities, transformation of the current situation and, consequently, creation of a firm basis for a peaceful and full-scale resolution of the conflict.

The policy of peace provides for 8 main objectives.”

8 objectives of the policy of peace:

Objective 1:

Protection and provision of peace

The Government of Georgia takes efforts in maintaining peace, neutralizing security risks and possible provocations, strengthening integrity and independence of the internationally recognized borders, and maintaining unwavering adherence to the European and Euro-Atlantic integration and economic development, which is a precondition for achieving peaceful and successful resolution of conflicts. **The conflict resolution policy is uniquely peaceful.** Georgia’s choice and its development course are not aimed against anyone. Georgia is interested in the

security of the region; it is and will remain a reliable partner that forms its policy on the basis of democratic values and principles of international law.

Objective 2:

De-occupation and de-escalation – with regard to Russia

Georgia will continue its efforts towards the de-occupation, remaining implacable and principled in this direction both in the format of international negotiations with Russia, (Geneva international discussions) and in mobilizing international pressure and effectively using all relevant political, diplomatic and legal mechanisms.

At the same time, steps are being taken towards the **de-escalation** and normalization of relations in certain areas (Abashidze-Karasin format), which confirms the peaceful and constructive approaches of Georgia.

Objective 3:

Direct dialogue, confidence-building, reconciliation – with regard to the Abkhazian and Ossetian communities

There are many factors distancing us from each other, but there are also many things that unite us. It is not only the past, but also the future-oriented vision. The experience of coexistence, links to relatives and mixed families make a bond between us, but also the tough conflict experience, which constantly should remind us of two things that are in the common interests:

- We must prevent reoccurrence of the war, confrontation, involvement in provocations.
- We must care for a better, peaceful future.
- Caring for the peaceful future does necessarily include elimination of conflicts, dialoguing and reconciliation.

Objective 4:

Cooperation based on mutual interests, status-neutral and humanitarian formats of problems solving

The current situation and the unresolved conflict do not serve the interests of either Georgian, or Abkhazian, or Ossetian people.

We are ready to discuss jointly with Abkhazian and Ossetian communities our common interests, pragmatic ways out, and new initiatives, prospects for the development and better future, which would help the population to improve the current severe situation. It is possible

to solve a number of issues without politicization, through agreement, taking into account humanitarian principles, or, in some cases, using status-neutral formulas and mechanisms.

Objective 5:

Taking care of the conflict-affected people

The principal value of the Government of Georgia is a person, human dignity and human rights. Accordingly, priority is given to the care of the affected population. Our objective is to create opportunities for them to have a dignified present and future, so that they do not become hostages of a long-term process of full-scale resolution of the conflict. Here we can identify three target groups, and priority is given to:

- **The population living adjacent to the dividing lines**, addressing their needs and supporting social and economic development of these regions;
- **Residents of the occupied territories**, protection of their rights and improvement of their humanitarian conditions, regardless of their ethnic origins [however, taking into account that, due to the existing reality, the ethnic Georgian population of Gali district is particularly vulnerable]
- **Internally displaced persons** - on the one hand, improvement of their social and economic conditions in the current places of their residence, and, on the other hand, the efforts aimed at the implementation of their inalienable right to return to their homes.

Objective 6:

Offering **more services and opportunities** in the state space of Georgia/**easing access** for residents of the occupied territories

Even more steps will be taken and specific initiatives will be implemented to expand and simplify access of the population of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region to the benefits and services created by the state for the rest of citizens of Georgia, and, at the same time, give them the opportunity of becoming involved in the economic and social development process of the country and receiving appropriate benefits.

Objective 7:

Sharing the new opportunities and benefits arising from the formats of cooperation and rapprochement with EU and other partners

The Government of Georgia takes effective steps in this direction, so that similar to the population living in the controlled territory, the people living in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia could feel the benefits and new opportunities related to the European integration process of Georgia and other cooperation formats. It is noteworthy that these

benefits include not only **tangible and measurable objectives**, such as better education, better healthcare, free travel perspective, trade, social and economic well-being, but also other, no less important benefits, such as **protected identity, originality**, which is actually at risk against the background of the Russification carried out currently in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/ South Ossetia regions.

Objective 8:

Mobilization of international support to the peace policy objectives, effective cooperation with the international community, partners; effective use/activation of international mechanisms;

Georgia's policy of involvement and reconciliation is implemented with **active support of international partners**. The international community strongly supports Georgia's territorial integrity and independence. We shall actively cooperate with our partners in the future as well, so that along with the non-recognition policy, the **involvement policy** continues and becomes more active with regard to the above priority objectives; particularly **in the area of confidence-building and encouraging contacts between the nations**, in which the public diplomacy, civil society and private sector have great potential.

The most important part of this process is Georgia's **policy of involvement and reconciliation**, which, in turn, provides for concrete steps and new initiatives.

To achieve the abovementioned objectives, the Government of Georgia will take efforts under broad public involvement, through dialogue, joint participation and international support.