

Report of the State Security Service of Georgia

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Tbilisi

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Providing state security is a challenge to any modern country. Protecting state security is vitally important for society wellbeing and peaceful development of the country.

It is the strong will of the State Security Service of Georgia in a commitment to ensure development and enhancement of democratic public order, economic freedom and constitutional state.

The Service is guided by the interests of the state and its citizens. The activities of the Service are carried out in the manner that ensures equal protection of state security as well as fundamental rights and freedoms of an individual. Conduct of the State Security Service of Georgia is based on the principles of legality, human rights and political neutrality.

The primary mission of SSG is to protect constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the military-economical potential from domestic and foreign threats and providing citizens with a secure environment.

During the reporting period, against the background of increasing challenges in worldwide and regional security architecture, the priorities of SSG in terms of national security protection were as follow: existence of the Russian Federation military forces on occupied territories and threats coming from it; activities carried out by special services of foreign countries conducted on the territory of Georgia against its interests; threats and challenges caused by corruption and offences by public servants; international terrorism; hybrid and conventional warfare threats; threats connected to CBRN material proliferation, etc.

Providing state security, taking into account its complexity and day-to-day difficulties, demands dynamic development and modernization of the Service. With this in mind, particular priority for the Service is to elaborate right personnel policy, establish effective management system and continuously renovate material-technical base. Further development of operative and analytical capabilities, enhancement of internal departmental and interagency coordination, as well as cooperation with international partners, is of vital importance for the Service.

In constantly changing and challenging environment, the State Security Service aims to eliminate every threat and challenge that country faces on an everyday basis in compliance with Constitution and state legislation.

Occupied Territories

The primary challenge for the State Security Service of Georgia is the existence of occupied territories. A large Russian military contingent in the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region and increasing militarization is an existential threat to the Georgian state.

Attempt by the Federation of Russia to annex occupied territories, discrimination of ethnic Georgian residents, restriction of free movement and access to education, illegal detention of the inhabitants (for illegal crossing of so-called border), so-called “borderization” process (installation of barbed-wires, fences, so-called border-signs and entrenching), a grave criminogenic situation in the occupied regions (ransom kidnappings, robberies, murders, attacks on the population), as well as Central Government

controlled airspace violation facts by Russian aircrafts and violation of the Law of Georgia on occupied territories, jeopardize security of our country.

Aiming at suppression of threats from occupied territories and prevention of Russian annexation processes, the State Security Service of Georgia conducts permanent monitoring on the ground, carries out an assessment of developments, implements relevant activities, actively participates in anti-annexation policy elaboration and implementation process. Within its competence, State Security Service of Georgia permanently provides appropriate state agencies and international partners with the information on threats coming from occupied territories and current developments on the ground.

The State Security Service of Georgia along with other responsible agencies implements the coordination of security activities on the ground along the occupation line by exercising every available mechanism in an attempt to protect state interests and human rights.

The State Security Service of Georgia participates in Geneva International Discussions. Four Discussion meetings were held in 2016 (35th, 36th, 37th and 38th). The special representative of SSSG discussed existing situation and challenges in occupied regions and in the vicinities of occupation line regarding security in the scope of a 1st working group which is dedicated to security issues.

On behalf of the Central Government, the State Security Service of Georgia is a leading agency in the scope of Incidents Prevention and Respond Mechanism (IPRM) format meetings. Within the above-mentioned mechanism, the State Security Service of Georgia systemically raises the issues on incidents¹ along the occupation line and on the occupied territories, violation of human rights and so-called “borderization” by the Russian occupation forces and de-facto government.

In the direction of occupied Abkhazia (Gali), as a result of the efforts of the Central Government and co-chairs of Geneva Discussions, in May 2016, the agreement on renewal of Gali meetings was achieved after 4-year pause. Last year 6 IPRM meetings were held in Gali and in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region (village Ergneti) 11 meetings took place.

One of the effective mechanisms established under IPRM is the so-called “hot line” which enables 24 hours communication between the State Security Service, European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM), Russian occupation forces and representatives of de facto governments of occupied territories. On behalf of the Central Government, the liaison officer of the State Security Service conducts communication with them through “hot line”, which is linked to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (the agency presented on occupation line and its surrounding territories) and other relevant agencies. Operational exchange of information through “hot line” facilitates prevention of incidents and tension along the occupation line and its surrounding territories, as well as their examination and solution in the shortest possible time. During the reporting period, “hot line” came to operation 1591 times.

¹ Incidents in the frames of the IPRM are considered: illegal detentions conducted on the charges of illegal crossing of the occupation line, kidnapping, robbery, violations of airspace controlled by the Central Government by the Russian air vehicles and various types of violations.

One of the main challenges for the State Security Service of Georgia is illegal detentions carried out by Russian occupation forces along the occupation line for illegal crossing of the so-called border. In the direction of Tskhinvali region, in 2016 134 individuals were illegally charged, and 132 of them were released (one individual was released in 2017, whilst one of the detainees is in illegal detention up to date). The State Security Service of Georgia has registered² 193 illegal detentions in the direction of occupied Abkhazia. Majority of illegally detained individuals are the residents of occupied Gali region. The State Security Service of Georgia exercises every mechanism and leverage at its disposal, “hot line” and IPRM meetings among them, to timely release illegal detainees.

The State Security Service of Georgia pays particular attention to cooperation with the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia. Despite the fact that EUMM is not given the right by occupation forces to run its mandate in occupied regions and conduct monitoring, the Mission (along with relevant units of Ministry of Internal Affairs and State Security Service of Georgia) is one of the most significant contributors for maintaining peace and stability. At the same time, it represents the only international monitoring mechanism in the region.

The State Security Service of Georgia attaches great importance to cooperation with the representatives of the United Nations (UN) in Georgia as well as Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The role of the EU, the UN and the OSCE is noteworthy in Geneva Discussions and IPRM meetings.

The Service also actively cooperates with the International Committee of the Red Cross on the issues related to the emergency medical aid for the population of the occupied Tskhinvali Region and their movement to the territory controlled by the Georgian Central Government.

The State Security Service is involved in trilateral meetings organized under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which envisages the search of missing and deceased persons during armed conflicts in the 90s’ and Russia-Georgia War in 2008. It’s worth noting, that at the end of 2013, by the initiative of de-facto Tskhinvali representatives trilateral meetings were suspended. By the SSSG and Red Cross international committee mutual effort, the format has been reestablished, and two meetings have been held³ during the reporting period.

The State Security Service within its mandate, reports the information on current development on occupied territories and across the occupation line to the high-rank representatives of partner countries, as wells as representatives of international organizations and media. With this purpose, in

² The number of individuals detained for the so-called illegal crossing of border in the direction of occupied Abkhazia, registered by the Central Government, amounts to 10-15% of the total number.

³ A similar mechanism regarding occupied Abkhazia is being conducted in the bilateral format (representatives of occupied Abkhazia and Central Government of Georgia), and on behalf of the Central Government of Georgia the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia is involved in it.

2016 the Service organized 27 visits⁴ of high-rank officials and media representatives at the occupation line.

Counterintelligence Activities

One of the main components of the State Security Service is counterintelligence activities. During the reporting period, the Service was revealing and neutralizing the objectives of external foreign intelligence services operating within our borders, providing decision-making officials with timely and precise information, protecting government circles and security structures from foreign intelligence penetration. Counterintelligence activities were addressed to protecting state secrets and state security regime, as well as providing armed forces of Georgia with counterintelligence.

Foreign intelligence agencies are constantly striving from legal and illegal positions to penetrate government bodies and state security structures, gain access to state secrets, incite or/and recruit particular individuals, obtain information on developments in Georgia's political, military and economic processes. Their primary aspiration is to influence domestic as well as the foreign policy of the country.

In an attempt to neutralize the above-mentioned, the State Security Service of Georgia permanently studied activities, plans and applied forces and means, forms of activities and methods, objects of interest and connections of foreign intelligence services acting in Georgia, as well as carried out activities to reveal and suppress activities addressed against the state interests.

In order to fully fulfil counterintelligence tasks, permanent monitoring of operative situation was carried out. As a result of control on the increased flow of foreign citizens, individuals with possible connections to foreign special forces in their activities have been revealed. Their contacts with Georgian citizens have been established. The operative study of the contingent is underway to prevent possible illegal actions.

Special forces of different countries are striving to obtain intelligence information, correspondingly achieve the desired effect through non-violent methods, so-called "Soft Power" concept. They use "Social Diplomacy" and "Information Diversion" components in an active manner. To neutralize this, complex and systematic legitimate activities were being carried out in an effort to reveal forces involved in the operation and explore the funding sources, as well as to identify individuals, who might be acting on the orders of foreign special services.

Important subjects for the economic development, the economic policy of the government as well as the study of Georgian market and economic potential, represent the field of the interest of the foreign special services. Economic espionage threatens not only the activities of individual companies but also impacts negatively on the development of the country. To neutralize these threats and to ensure

⁴ Representatives of the UK, Germany, Lithuania, Belarus, Austria, Latvia, the US, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paraguay, Slovakia and France visited the occupation line.

economic security of the country, the Service had carried out appropriate measures, including the identification of persons who could act on the orders of foreign special services.

Structures involved in the provision of national security, obtaining and possessing secret information, detecting and neutralizing activities carried out by foreign special services also represent the target of the enemy. In the reporting period, the systematic mode of operation was directed to the prevention of access of the foreign security services into the security and intelligence agencies. Also, preventive measures against information leakage and dissemination of disinformation, as well as identifying channels of penetration for foreign spies and appropriate countermeasures have been taken in the agencies mentioned above.

On a permanent basis, information was provided to Prime Minister, as well as senior officials of other government agencies and political decision-makers on the activities carried out by foreign special services, on applied forces and means, operative forms and methods, as well as threats that come from them and countermeasures to be taken.

To ensure counterintelligence of the Georgian Armed Forces, the activities of the Service were addressed to prevent penetration of foreign special services in the structure of Armed Forces, detection and suppression of destructive and anti-state activities conducted by individuals. In the above-mentioned direction, operative activities are conducted against 99 individuals.

Special services of interested countries, strive actively to obtain information which falls into the category of state secrets. To protect state secrecy, continued activities on domestic threats and information leakage prevention, strengthening security measures and raising staff awareness, as well as revelation of individuals who were trying to use authorized security clearance against the state interests, is being carried out.

In the direction mentioned above, during the reporting period, security clearance has been issued for 164 organizations (81 state agencies, 83 LEPLs) (permit-form №4) while 12 organization were denied to get the security clearance due to revealed factual circumstances, low level of credibility and reliability.

152 state establishments were inspected for documenting appropriate permits granting state establishments/legal entity the right to carry out activities related to state secrets and security protection regime.

3525 individual candidates applying for security clearance underwent examination procedure. The issues of expediency for accessing NATO classified information were determined towards 468 individuals who possess individual security clearances; 450 individuals were provided methodic-organizational assistance regarding activities related to state secrets and security protection regime.

During the reporting period, investigation was launched on 17 criminal cases. 21 individuals have been brought to criminal justice.

On 20th of August, 2016, 7 citizens of Georgia were detained on the fact of preparation of terrorist act committed by a group, unlawful purchase, storage and carrying of firearms, ammunition and explosives for terrorist purposes (envisaged by article 323, part I and part II, subparagraph “a”, also article 323¹ part I of the Criminal Code of Georgia). Investigation established, that the persons mentioned above were preparing the explosion on open section of Russia-Armenia pipeline in the vicinities of village Saguramo, on the River Aragvi. All seven persons have been charged under various criminal qualifications. The Tbilisi City Court is currently examining the merits of the case.

Against the background of increasing challenges and technological progress, the State Security Service of Georgia pays particular attention to the protection of entities posing a high risk to state security. In accordance with the Law of Georgia on State Security Service, list of entities posing a high risk of state security is adopted, overall 25 entities (Decree №584 of Government of Georgia of 18th November 2015). During 2016, the agreement between the State Security Service of Georgia and entities posing a high risk to state security was signed. The above-mentioned provides functioning of a new institution, which on the grounds of cooperation agreement envisages secondment of a representative of the State Security Service of Georgia in the relevant entity. The representative provides appropriate assistance and consultation to the relevant organization on the issues of protection of state security.

In the course of counterintelligence provision of these entities, a thorough examination of certain subjects (individuals and organizations) have been carried out. Complex activities have been conducted regarding some connections worthy of attention, which resulted in obtaining information carrying operative significance. Interests of foreign special services in the entities posing high risk to state security as well as intelligence penetration attempts have been revealed. Respective operative activities are being carried on a permanent basis in the entities which pose a high risk to state security to enhance their security and provide them with counterintelligence.

Taking into consideration the threats, operative control is carried out over the science and research institutes, as well as particular organizations functioning in Georgia dealing with the projects of the security classification level of “Confidential”, also dealing with manufacturing, purchase, maintenance, sale, usage, transportation and import and export of industrial and military purpose substances.

Bearing in mind migration processes provoked by warfare in Middle East, consistent monitoring of migration channels is being conducted. During the reporting period, increase in foreign applicants' number seeking various statuses of residence in Georgia was observed. Subsequently, counterintelligence activities are being conducted aimed at exploring possible links with special services of foreign countries of permanent and temporary residents as well as individuals who have dual citizenships.

During the reporting period, as a result of the study of the relevant materials and as a result of conducted operative activities, specific categories were identified, which were denied the resident permit in Georgia. The facts of presenting false documents by 1786 individuals have been revealed.

The State Security Service of Georgia is implementing round-the-clock monitoring movement of foreigners on border checkpoints in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi International Airports, including to

reveal individuals of operative interest and their contacts. During the reporting period, up to 800 foreign citizens were denied entry into the country.

Fight against Terrorism

One of the main priorities of the State Security Service of Georgia is the fight against terrorism. In the modern world, unpredictable terrorism-related threats have not been reduced. Despite international endeavor, so-called Islamic State remains most pronounced manifestation of global terrorism. In 2016 other international terrorist organizations maintained their positions and capabilities. Thus, threats associated with them did not reduce.

Georgia is not among the countries with high risk of terrorist attacks. Still, there are particular challenges in this respect. Islamic State and other extremist groups gained supporters in certain regions of the country. Those who disseminate radical ideology strive to make use of religious beliefs and little awareness of particular part of society for their own interests.

It is important, that number of people willing to join terrorist activities, radicalized citizens have been decreased.

The primary task of the State Security Service of Georgia regarding fight against terrorism is to protect the state, its interests and citizens from every form of terrorist activities. During the reporting period, a number of measures have been carried out in this regard.

The above-mentioned course of action aimed at detecting and suppressing activities carried out by international terrorist organization and their affiliates on the territory of Georgia. Conduct of the Service was also addressed to detecting facts of using country's territory as transit in order to participate in military developments taking place in Syria and Iraq. Active operative control of individuals and organizations promoting radical ideology was carried out.

During 2016, investigation of 9 criminal cases was launched on the ground of various types of terrorist activities; criminal prosecution of several individuals were initiated. It's worth mentioning, that several resonance criminal cases which were launched in 2015, were concluded in favor of the prosecution.

On March 7th, 2016, so-called representative of Islamic State - Aiup Borchashvili and members of his group (G. Kuprava, G. Khutunishvili and D. Phirisebia) were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment by Tbilisi City Court. In August 2016, David Borchashvili was found guilty of membership in the terrorist organization and sentenced to imprisonment. It is worth-noting that Sharkhan Margoshvili who had been imprisoned for illegal crossing of border since 2014, was accused of membership in the terrorist organization, envisaged by article 327 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, on the grounds of new evidence found in August 2016.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service of Georgia revealed several individuals within the borders of Georgia related to terrorist activities. Investigation under article 327 of the Criminal Code of Georgia was launched on 28th of December against a foreign citizen, who was trying to establish a group in support of Islamic State. Measures envisaged by the law have been carried out

against the group comprised of 15 international students, who were supporting terrorist ideology through extremist slogans.

During 2016, the State Security Service of Georgia implemented activities aiming at revealing and suppressing terrorism funding facts. Control of individuals operating undercover business and charity organizations who might carry financial interests of terrorist organizations was implemented. Up to 20 foreign individuals were revealed, who had established legal entities involved in suspicious financial activities. On 2nd of July, 2016, criminal investigation under article 331 part I of the Criminal Code of Georgia on funding of terrorist activities, has been launched against a citizen of Georgia. The investigation is in progress.

Several Islamic State supporters, Georgian citizens living abroad, have been revealed, who using various internet resources, in particular so-called blogs and social media, supported the ideology of terrorist organization. In April and October of 2016, investigations were launched against mentioned individuals under article 328 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, which envisages membership or providing support to terrorist activities.

The State Security Service actively operated to prevent the use of Georgian territory as transit by those individuals who were interested in taking part in the combat operations in Syria and Iraq. An individual assisting Islamic State affiliates in traveling to conflict zones has been revealed. The latter also helped terrorist organization affiliates to receive various types of messages. Investigation is in progress on the case mentioned above.

During the reporting period, relevant activities were carried out on the permanent basis to prevent Georgian citizens from taking part in combat operations. Information exchange between SSSG and relevant agencies of partner states was carried out constantly regarding the members or/and individuals connected to terrorist organizations, as well as transit-travelers. In the scope of the above-mentioned cooperation, several hundreds of individuals have been enlisted on border-control. Overall, in counter-terrorism direction, 1 500 individuals have been enlisted on Georgian border control, 750 individuals have been forbidden to enter Georgia.

In an effort to prevent travelling/entering the country on terrorism purposes, border control is duly carried out, in cooperation with MIA. Visitors are being interviewed. Every border-check point is equipped with nuclear and radioactive material detectors. Personnel involved in border management activities are being retrained on a permanent basis, in the field of detection fake travel documents among them.

The State Security Service of Georgia actively cooperates with partner states and international organizations. Partnership with the USA, Israel, Great Britain and Germany in terms of enhancing counterterrorism capabilities (investigative and analytical training courses), exchange of operative information, planning joint activities within the borders and out of the country is especially noteworthy.

Particular attention was drawn to enhancing readiness and response capabilities regarding terrorism threats. The process of passportization of state strategic objects and their facilities that are potential targets of terrorist attacks continued, as well as the risk analysis process. Security measures assessment of public gathering places (so-called easy targets) with a high risk of attacks was undergoing. Terrorism combat special divisions were given training/retraining regarding tactic, mine-clearing, as well as detecting and neutralizing mass destruction materials activities.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Security; Fight against proliferation of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction

Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) security represents one of the main elements of the state security. The State Security Service of Georgia chairs Interagency Coordination Council for Combating CBRN Threats within the scope of which National Strategy on CBRN Threat Reduction and National Action Plan were elaborated.

Organized by the State Security Service of Georgia, a meeting of Interagency Coordination Council for Combating CBRN Threats was held on 13th of May, 2016, during which member agencies presented the annual report of National Action Plan. The meeting was also attended by representatives from UNICRI, the US Embassy and members of EU delegation to Georgia, who highly appreciated progress achieved by Georgia in the field of CBRN security.

In spring 2016, Georgia joined G7 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. During the Partnership meeting which took place in Tokyo, the representative of the State Security Service of Georgia presented CBRN Action Plan. The plan mentioned above also became the subject of discussion in Vienna on 7th of December, 2016 in the scope of International Conference on Nuclear Security of International Atomic Energy Agency.

In terms of enhancing Georgia's CBRN security capabilities, international events held within the reporting period in Georgia are of particular importance. From May 30th to June 2nd, 2016, Georgia hosted CBRN Science and Consequence Management World Congress for the second time, which was held with efforts of the State Security Service of Georgia and International Organizing Committee. The event brought together up to 200 representatives from 30 countries. On 6-7th of October, 2nd Tbilisi International Forum for Regional Security was held on the issue of nuclear and radiological challenges in the Black Sea region.

In June, Georgia-US bilateral dialogue against nuclear smuggling was held, organized by the State Security Service of Georgia and the US Embassy in Tbilisi, where Georgian representatives presented the report on the implementation of action plan against nuclear material smuggling, mutually signed by Georgia and the U.S. American partners stressed Georgia's success in the implementation of the above-mentioned plan, in particular, activities carried out by the State Security Service of Georgia against illicit trafficking of radioactive materials.

Particular attention is paid to the fight against illicit trafficking of CBRN substances and materials. As a result of operative activities, 2 facts of illegal handling of radioactive materials were suppressed. On

14th of April, a special prefabricated container with Uranium 238 (depleted Uranium) was seized, 6 individuals were detained. On April 25th, 1665.5 gr. of radioactive substance (81 pieces of cylindrical-shaped subjects), which contained Uranium 235 and Uranium 238, was seized, 6 individuals were detained.

The State Security Service ensures technical and software maintenance of radioactive control systems at the state border. In nuclear and radioactive substance detection field, Service is the main partner of the U.S. Energy Department.

The State Security Service of Georgia continues close cooperation with partner states and organization aiming at enhancing CBRN security capabilities. In this regard, cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), relevant structures of the EU, International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as with the governments of the U.S., Great Britain, Poland and Sweden are worth mentioning.

Fight against Corruption

The State Security Service of Georgia attaches great importance to the fight against corruption. Corruption endangers unimpeded functioning of the public sector, weakens the public trust towards state institutions, and hinders the democratic and stable development of the country. Corrupted public servants represent potential targets of foreign special services and criminal groups. Based on the above mentioned, the State Security Service of Georgia, within its competence, is actively involved in the process of fight against corruption.

One of the main priorities of the State Security Service is prevention, early detection and elimination of malfeasance, conflict of interests in public service and corruption facts, as well as crimes against economic grounds, economic activities and monetary system.

In order to establish modern standards and approaches in the fight against corruption, as well as to gain best international practices in the fight against corruption in state authorities, the Service actively cooperates with international partners. During the reporting period, officers of State Security Service actively participated in conferences, trainings, seminars and working meetings organized in the framework of international cooperation held in Georgia, as well as beyond the borders of the country.

Within its competence, the Service was actively involved in Georgian National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2015-2016 Action Plan implementation process. Also, within the competence of the State Security Service, amendments to National Anti-Corruption Strategy of Georgia have been made and Georgian National Anti-Corruption Strategy Action Plan 2017-2018 has been elaborated.

As a result of criminal intelligence and investigative activities carried out by State Security Service and in some cases alongside the General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, several public servants were detained. Among them were: head of district unit of Nadzaladevi administrative unit under Tbilisi Municipality – on the fact of bribe-taking; head of Baghdati Municipality – on the fact of abuse of official authority and embezzlement in large quantities; director and deputy of Senaki Municipality Children and Youth Center – on the fact of bribe-taking; member of Aspindza Municipality Assembly,

chairman of Budgetary-Finance, Economics and Property Management Commission – on the fact of bribe-taking; deputy head of security service under Tbilisi Municipality City Hall – on the fact of bribe-taking.

Also, head of Imereti Regional Division of the MIA Central Criminal Police Department, a detective of the same division and deputy head of unit of the Aviation Security Division of MIA LEPL - Security Police - were detained on the facts of bribe-taking.

On January 15th, 2016, as a result of joint activities carried out by General Prosecutor's Office and State Security Service of Georgia, 5 employees of LTD Company Mekanizatori were detained for embezzlement in large quantities and appropriating state funds by organized group. The criminal scheme caused GEL 260 000 damage to the state.

On 18th of June, 2016 the employee of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia was detained on the fact of bribe-taking. The detainee demanded and received USD 7 000 from the internally displaced person for the exchange of providing assistance in getting the apartment.

Anti-Corruption Agency under the State Security Service of Georgia launched investigation on 47 criminal cases from 1st January, 2016 to 31st of December 2016, including: 22 cases on the facts of bribe-taking, 2 cases on the facts of bribe-giving, 8 cases on the facts of swindling, 5 cases on commercial bribe, 4 cases on the fact of abuse of official authority, 2 cases on the facts of appropriation or embezzlement, 2 cases on the fact of service negligence and other crimes. During the reporting period, 59 individuals were brought to criminal charges on 32 criminal cases.

Analytical Activities

High-level analytical capabilities represent one of the main instruments of the State Security Service of Georgia in terms of fighting against threats and challenges that country faces. Consequently, during the reporting period, the State Security Service of Georgia provided swift procession of information and high-level analysis.

Analytical team of the State Security Service of Georgia conducted systematization of information, relevant analysis of developments, forecasting threats and elaborating recommendations in a qualified and highly professional manner to provide information to the SSSG senior officials. During the reporting period, analysts prepared up to 1000 analytical and information notes, various types of recommendations were elaborated.

In order to improve analytical activities, the methodology employed during processing and analyzing of the open-source and closed-source information was being systematically upgraded, methods of cooperation and coordination between structural units were being improved, which is crucial for the timely access to the data during the analytical processing. Various permanent and temporary working groups are created to respond to the existing threats and challenges that the country faces.

The State Security Service of Georgia attaches great importance to regular professional retraining and skills development of analytics. In this regard, international partners are significant contributors.

The use of external analytical resources and close cooperation with various research centers, academic circles and relevant agencies, also serves efficiency enhancement of analytical activities.

Protection of personal data

Access to public information

The State Security Service of Georgia paid particular attention to the protection of personal data. The control responsibility of Personal Data Protection Inspector envisages supervision over covert investigative activities. Consequently covert surveillance of the telephone conversations was possible only by means of two-level, so-called “two-key” system. The above-mentioned eliminates activation of objects without the consent of the inspector.

The State Security Service of Georgia had active cooperation with the Inspector in this direction and conducted every essential activity to contribute to the effective control implementation. Representatives of the Inspector’s office got familiarized with internal legal documents, which regulate procedural and organizational issues concerning the conduct of covert investigative activities.

During the reporting period, the Inspector carried out a planned inspection at Operative-technical Department of State Security Service of Georgia. The inspection was aimed at checking technical, organizational and procedural issues concerning secret surveillance of telephone conversations, retrieving and pinpointing information from communication channel/computer system, as well as use of data banks. Upon the conclusion of the inspection, relevant observations and recommendations elaborated by the Inspector, were taken into consideration by relevant unit of the State Security Service of Georgia.

Pursuant to the Georgian legislation the State Security Service within its competence provided access to public information. From January 1st to December 31st of 2016, 658 public information requests were received, of which 458 were satisfied, 8 partially satisfied, 130 sent for further action, and 62 were not satisfied.

In order to provide transparency and access to public information on the activities of the State Security Service of Georgia, the official web page of the Service was created (ssg.gov.ge). Furthermore, at the beginning of August 2016, SSSG Hotline 123 started to operate.

Legal base and relationship with courts

At the State Security Service of Georgia particular attention is paid to improving legal bases. During 2016, new legal acts elaboration process was in active progress, regarding the independent and full functioning of the State Security Service of Georgia. During the reporting period, with the purpose of the efficiency of the Service, more than 200 new legal acts were elaborated and issued. Also, the Service voiced its own position on up to 500 draft legal acts prepared by various state agencies.

As a result of active engagement of the State Security Service of Georgia, a state program for ensuring the security of civil aviation from unlawful activities was prepared, which determined responsibilities of relevant Ministries (agencies, enterprises) which deal with the safe and orderly functioning of civil aviation in terms of providing aviation security. The State Security Service of Georgia, within its competence, supervises and provides relevant recommendations and observations, in order to avoid unlawful activities in the field of aviation security. The Service also leads the aviation security maintenance activities and coordinates counterterrorism activities in the mentioned field.

Decree of the Head of State Security Service of Georgia on the establishment of the composition and activities of the commission envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Charter of Freedom, came into force, which aims at the recognition of the USSR special services employees and banning communist, totalitarian and fascist ideology and propaganda. The above-mentioned commission has started operation since May 1st, 2016.

Activities of the State Security Service of Georgia in terms of relations with the Common Courts is worth noting. During the reporting period the Common Courts were provided, without hindrance and on the bases of relevant court orders, with classified and unclassified information/evidences necessary for the hearings of cases. Up to 200 pieces of information/evidences were sent to the Common Courts during 2016. During the reporting period, the State Security Service of Georgia participated in 14 trial cases.

Human Resources and Material-technical base

Professional and competent personnel plays a decisive role in the work of the State Security Service of Georgia. Everyday conduct of operational officers, analysts, investigators, covert and non-covert staff, as well as middle and high-rank managers is carried out in accordance with the law, with high professional standards, in good faith, with high sense of responsibility and in accordance with the norms of ethics. Bearing this in mind, particular attention is paid to the HR management policy, which implies attracting and recruiting best resources with various academic education background and qualification, as well as envisages their motivation, development, encouragement and career growth.

Capabilities and competence of the SSSG human resources is being evaluated on a constant basis, in accordance to the existing challenges and necessary skills to cope with these challenges. The Service provides equal access to employment in terms of nationality, ethnicity, religion and gender.

Employees of the Service are provided with proper working conditions, including relevant allowance and social package. It is essential in terms of attracting new staff members, as well as for maintaining the existing personnel and for their further motivation, in particular bearing in mind that very frequently their activities contain risks.

Staff number of the State Security Service of Georgia amounts to 3850 units. The Service employs 3764 employees, of which 549 are women (14, 6%).

One of the priorities of the State Security Service of Georgia is the accessibility of professional education for employees. Ever-changing security environment creates the need for constant renewal of training

programs. In accordance with the existing and new special programs, operational officers of Counterintelligence and State Security Departments, Counterterrorism Center and Anti-Corruption Agency completed retraining courses. Overall, special retraining courses were completed by 361 employees in 2016.

In 2016, special course/program on the training of operational officers of the State Security Service of Georgia was elaborated and approved.

Particular attention is paid to the training of tactical units of the State Security Service of Georgia. In September 2016, Counterterrorism training/course for candidates of Special Operations Department of State Security Service of Georgia was launched.

Foreign specialists are actively engaged in retraining process of tactical units. The role of the U.S. is worth noting. Retraining study programs for personnel of combat divisions of the Special Operations Department, i.e. for snipers, machine-gunners, grenade launchers, penetrators, paramedics, operators and gunsmiths, have been elaborated and improved.

With the assistance of the U.S and coordination of the State Security Service of Georgia, a joint large-scale anti-terrorist exercise: Jackal Stone 2016 was conducted in August 2016, in which Georgian and American military, civilian and state agency representatives participated. The exercise involved hostage release and terrorist destruction, as well as CBRN material seizure activities. The training was conducted jointly, with the participation of US partners, as well as separately by a sole performance of the Georgian side. The exercise aimed at strengthening US-Georgian bilateral cooperation and enhancing capabilities of relevant Georgian agencies regarding fight against terrorism.

Personnel of the State Security Service is actively involved in training courses conducted with the support of partner countries in Georgia, as well as beyond the borders of the country.

Besides professional development and career growth aspects, the State Security Service attaches great importance to the detection of existing violations within the system, uprooting of misconduct, and controlling financial-economic activities of the units, examination of the legality and expediency of disposal of material and financial resources.

During the reporting period, facts of violation of ethical standards, misconduct, improper performance of official duties and particular facts of illegal activities were revealed, which was followed by relevant response. Disciplinary action was imposed on 206 employees (including 4 dismissals from the Service, 33 severe reprimands, 13 reprimands, 11 admonition, etc.).

To properly cope with the challenges facing the SSSG, it is necessary to obtain suitable material-technical base and manage its constant renewal. During the reporting period communication and radio-communication infrastructure were renovated. Obsolete office and computer technology was replaced. Rehabilitation of amortized buildings was carried out. The infrastructure, sports grounds and training-fighting points needed for field training of special combat units were organized in accordance with the modern standards.

Interagency and International Cooperation

The State Security Service of Georgia attaches great importance to coordination between state agencies and enhancement of cooperation with partner states.

Improving and deepening of interagency and international cooperation is one of the most important components of national security. It is the long-term purpose of the State Security Service to acquire important role in shaping European and transatlantic security architecture, as a successful contributor. The latter is achievable through orderly interagency and enhanced international cooperation.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service had close cooperation ties with Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Defense of Georgia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice, as well as with Foreign Intelligence Service, State Security and Crisis management and Security Council and other state agencies. The State Security Service actively participated in a number of interagency councils and working groups organized therein. The State Security Service of Georgia engaged in the activities of Joint Marine Operations Management Center, the task of which is to establish the interagency mechanism which will timely detect and respond to prospective threats in maritime space of Georgia, in uninterrupted mode.

The State Security Service paid particular attention to strengthening cooperation ties with strategic partners, friendly states and international organization, as well as developing bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries.

11 international intergovernmental agreements were amended in the field of combating crime and law enforcement cooperation, on the basis of which the State Security Service of Georgia was additionally defined as a competent agency responsible for the implementation of the mentioned agreements.

The State Security Service of Georgia has actively started to exercise the powers of signing international agreements of interagency character. During 2016, interagency cooperation agreements were signed with relevant structures of various countries. So far agreements on the exchange and mutual protection of classified information are signed with 17 states.

During the reporting period, with the active participation of the State Security Service of Georgia, the Agreement between the Government of Georgia and the Government of the Republic of Poland on the Exchange and Mutual Protection of Classified Information entered into force on 1st of March, 2016. Furthermore on 23rd of June, 2016 Agreement between Georgia and the European Union on Security Procedures for Exchanging and Protecting Classified Information was signed in Brussels.

The Service processed drafts of 102 international agreements initiated in various fields. These drafts were legally analyzed, and the directions of the Service activities and the vision of the agency were appropriately reflected therein.

The State Security Service attaches considerable importance to the partnership with Georgia's strategic ally - United States of America. The Service, actively cooperates with the US Embassy, including with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), Export Control and Related Border Security

(EXBS) as well as within the scope of other programs. During 2016, 10 bilateral meetings were held on security cooperation issues in the US as well as in Georgia.

The State Security Service intensively cooperates with security attachés and diplomatic representatives of various countries accredited in Georgia. In the scope of the mentioned cooperation, information exchange and coordination are being carried out on a systematic basis.

The SSSG is actively involved in the preparation of relevant documents and implementation process of the national action plan of EU Association Agreement and Association Agenda. Within its own competence, the Service was engaged in planned activities under the EU-Georgia Visa-liberalization action plan implementation process, as well as in cooperation programs with the EU Eastern Partnership countries and planned activities under the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) framework.

The State Security Service actively participated in EU funded Programmatic Cooperation Framework (PCF) project – Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in Georgia.

Georgia is an active member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh and is involved in various anti-terrorism operations. The State Security Service also became a member of the Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER), aiming at elaboration of international legal and other types of documents in the field of combating terrorism under the scope of the Council of Europe.

On 22nd of June, 2016, the SSSG representative addressed the OSCE Security Committee with Georgia's volunteer report on the activities carried out in the fight against terrorism, at the OSCE headquarters in Vienna. The OSCE member states positively assessed the measures taken by Georgia in the fight against terrorism.

The SSSG has intense cooperation with NATO and its liaison office. The Service conducted activities under the Annual National Program (ANP) framework, as well as in the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package implementation process. The Service also actively works within the scope of NATO-Georgia Professional Development Program (PDP).

Considerable attention has been devoted towards deepening cooperation with the UN. Representatives of the Service participated in numerous activities organized by the UN. Within the competence of the State Security Service of Georgia, UN Security Council resolutions have been systematically studied and analyzed.