
The Report of the State Security Service of Georgia
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Tbilisi

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Protecting national security of Georgia is the key objective of the State Security Service. In this regard, activities conducted by the Service were directed towards protection of constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity, military and economic potential, protection against internal and foreign threats and ensuring secure environment for the citizens of the country.

Armed conflicts taking place in various regions of the world; new tendencies of international terrorism; threat of rising of new hotbeds of military conflicts; increased capacities of foreign intelligence services in parallel with the development of modern technologies have had a negative impact on the security of Georgia throughout the reporting period.

Russian occupation, international terrorism, activities of foreign intelligence services, corruption and malfeasance represented a challenge to Georgia in 2018. In order to effectively address the above-mentioned, the activity of the Service was directed towards carrying out identification, prevention and suppression measures.

In the course of conducting its activities, the State Security Service equally protects state security and fundamental human rights and freedoms. The Service acts with respect to the principles of legality, rule of law and political neutrality.

With the purpose to fulfil entrusted powers properly, the State Security Service has been pursuing accurate HR policy and has been guided by efficient management system. Correspondingly, material-technical base has been renovated, operational and analytical capabilities of security officers have been developed. Intra-agency and interagency coordination, as well as cooperation with international partners have been actively conducted.

Occupied Territories

Occupation and illegal presence of the Russian military forces in the occupied regions represent a major threat to Georgia. In this regard, increasing militarization of occupied territories, discrimination of Georgian population on ethnic grounds, restriction of freedom of movement of the population and the unofficial annexation process carried out by Russia remain the main challenges for the state.

During the reporting period, Russian approach towards the occupied territories of Georgia remained unchanged and has been again manifested in implementation of unofficial annexation policy. So-called political and socio-economic processes in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region have been under a full control of the occupation forces. Activities of so-called political forces in the occupied territories have had a fully imitative character, since every “political party” or “union” on the ground is pro-Russian and the “careers” of so-called politicians are fully dependent on Russia’s “good will”.

In order to control processes in occupied Abkhazia, the occupation force is actively making use of artificially created “political-economic” instability and pushes de facto regime to make the decisions that Russia desires. While de facto regime of Tskhinvali region openly supports the idea of unification of the occupied territory with the Russian Federation.

The issue of synchronization of so-called customs services should be viewed in the context of annexation policy. During the reporting period, acquisition of Russian citizenship has still been encouraged in the occupied regions, as well as the elaboration of a mechanism to obtain the citizenship in a simplified manner has continued.

Occupied regions are still financially dependent on the central budget of the Russian Federation. According to existing data, in the reporting period, the share of direct financial assistance from the Russian Federation into the so-called state budget of de facto Abkhazia amounted to approximately 45% (USD 64 million), and approximately 86% (USD 113 million) – into the so-called budget of Tskhinvali region. Remaining shares of so-called budgets were supported by means of indirect financial aid from the Russian Federation.

In the reporting period, the Russian Federation has been still exploiting the occupied regions for its economic, financial and military goals. Increasing visits of de facto leaders to the occupied regions of Ukraine and cooperation launched with “mutual assistance” intentions (including in military field) should be underlined. It is noteworthy that in 2018, representation of Russian banking sector has started operating in the occupied Abkhazia, as it does in the Tskhinvali region; with high probability this is used by the Russian Federation for illegal financial operations. In this very period, using so-called Abkhazian bank cards has started in the territory of the Russian Federation. Economic relations between the occupied territories of Georgia and the Syrian Arab Republic has become active, the latter recognized so-called independence of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region in 2018.

Activities of Russian military contingent and special services represented in the occupied regions pose threat to the security of not only Georgia and other countries of the region, but to the European security as well.

During the reporting period scheduled rotations, modernization of armament and military-technical equipment have been conducted at the 7th and 4th military bases of the Russian southern military district illegally deployed in the occupied territories of Georgia. Dozens of different types of military exercises have been carried out in order to improve the combat capabilities and coordination of the subdivisions.

Occupation forces and de facto regimes have been deliberately creating different types of artificial barriers in terms of restriction of freedom of movement of local population.

Illegal process of so-called Borderization, manifested in the installation of barbwires, fences and so-called anti-fire dividing lines, as well as so-called border signs, etc - has continued.

In the reporting period the occupation forces have continued illegal detentions. The State Security Service has registered 100 facts of illegal detention in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region and 28 facts of illegal detention toward occupied Abkhazia.¹

Illegal detentions, so-called Borderization and restrictions imposed on freedom of movement gravely violate the rights of local population, deteriorate their economic condition, damage the security environment on the ground, and isolate the population residing along the occupation line.

In 2018 a tendency of the occupation force exploiting the occupied territories and existing situation on the ground, including illegal detentions and so-called Borderization, has been outlined in order to shape public opinion on certain issues in Georgia and to influence various, including political processes ongoing in the country.

Last year has made it clear that grave criminogenic situation in the occupied regions, total corruption, complete disregard for civil rights of local population, sense of impunity, as well as socio-economic problems on the ground pose threat to each and every individual residing in the occupied territories, despite of his/her ethnicity.

Problem of deliberate discrimination against ethnic Georgian population is still a severe issue, including the restrictions on the right to receive education in native language, the policy directed towards changing ethnic identity of the population and towards assimilation, the restriction on property rights of ethnic Georgian population residing in the territory controlled by the central government as well as in the occupied territories, and demolition of ethnic Georgians' houses to eliminate the possibility of their return.

Over the last year, human rights situation of ethnic Georgians in the occupied Gali district has remained severe. Civil and political rights of Gali population, including right to

¹ Inaccuracy in the number of detained individuals for the so-called illegal border crossing toward occupied Tskhinvali region, what has been registered by the central government – amounts to approximately 5%, while the number of illegal detentions in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia region, what has been identified by the central government – amounts to approximately 10-15% of the overall real number.

property, are extremely deteriorated due to illegal restrictions imposed by the occupation forces and the de facto regime. During the reporting period, the tendency has re-emerged according to which the rights of ethnic Georgians residing in Gali are in most cases directly related to the “change” of ethnic belonging by them. For this purpose, the occupation forces and de facto regime are actively exploiting the alleged concept of “Murzakan Abkhaz” and the so-called organizations created in order to establish the mentioned concept.

In 2018 several facts of demolition of ethnic Georgians’ houses have been observed in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region. The plan to build a landfill in the Georgian occupied village Eredvi, with Russia’s financial assistance and in order to erase the Georgian trace and to demolish Georgians’ houses, should be especially noted.

The State Security Service constantly obtains information on illegal processes ongoing in the occupied territories. The individuals and so-called organizations engaged in these processes are identified. Illegal activities carried out by the occupation forces, de facto regimes, so-called organizations and certain individuals supported by occupation regimes and the consequences of these illegal activities are confronted through international mechanisms and using all relevant means.

The State Security Service is actively engaged in the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings where the Service is the leading agency from the central government.

In regard to the murder of Georgian citizens **Archil Tatunashvili** and **Giga Otkhзорia**, and the death of the Georgian citizen **David Basharuli** in uncertain circumstances, the occupation forces and de facto regimes still have not taken any steps in 2018, in order to establish the truth and bring those responsible to justice. The State Security Service applies every existing mechanism in order to bring everyone related to the death of Georgian citizens, to justice.

During the reporting period, dangerous tendency orchestrated by the Russian occupation forces has been outlined, that was manifested in a deliberate disruption of IPRM meetings. Representatives of de facto regimes and the Russian Federation demanded in terms of an ultimatum to remove the cases of **Giga Otkhзорia**, **Archil Tatunashvili** and **David Basharuli** from the meeting agenda. They refused to participate in the IPRM meetings after their demand had been denied. Consequently, the IPRM meetings were not held in October and November in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region, while the IPRM format in the occupied Gali has been halted since 27th June 2018 up to date. Respectively, in the reporting period, six IPRM meetings were held in Gali and seven IPRM meetings took place toward occupied Tskhinvali region (village Ergneti).

The State Security Service of Georgia views the IPRM meetings as the most important instrument for maintaining peace and stability in Georgia and in the region. Any decision made against the mentioned format and its fundamental principles will be perceived by the Service as a deliberate provocation. The State Security Service continues constructive participation in the

IPRM in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region and pursues its efforts towards resuming Gali IPRM meetings.

The “Hot Line” mechanism managed by the central government through the State Security Service is successfully functioning to maintain security in the occupied territories and along the occupation line. Rapid exchange of information through this mechanism contributes to the prevention of tensions and incidents along the occupation line and the adjacent zones, as well as facilitates their clarification and resolution in shortest terms. The “Hot Line” activation rate increases annually. Overall, in 2018 the mentioned mechanism has been activated 2 182 times.

The State Security Service is actively involved in Geneva International Discussions. The mentioned format is an important platform for the state to provide objective information on ongoing situation on the ground to the international partners, co-chairs and all participants of the meetings. In the reporting period, four rounds of Discussions were held (43rd, 44th, 45th and 46th).

In 2018, the State Security Service of Georgia has had an active cooperation with the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, which is the only international monitoring mission operating in Georgia. EUMM is restricted by the Russian occupation forces in the implementation of its mandate to monitor the occupied regions, what severely deteriorates the security situation in the occupied territories. Nevertheless, EUMM (alongside the relevant units of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia and the State Security Service of Georgia) still plays one of the leading roles in maintaining peace and stability.

In the direction of the occupied territories, active cooperation continues with the representatives of the United Nations (UN), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Council of Europe (CoE) in Georgia; and with the International Criminal Court (ICC) - in terms of the investigation process of crimes of the 2008 August war.

The State Security Service is engaged in the so-called tripartite meetings format organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which aims at searching the missing and deceased persons during 90s conflicts and during the 2008 August war. Two meetings were held in 2018.

In order to identify threats originating from the occupied territories, neutralize them to the fullest extent possible and hinder the annexation processes originated from the Russian Federation, the State Security Service of Georgia has been actively cooperating and providing information to the state agencies of Georgia and to international partners. In order to inform the international community, the State Security Service within its mandate has been providing the high officials of the partner countries, representatives of the international organizations and the media with the information regarding the situation in the occupied territories and along the occupation line. In 2018 the Service organized 39 visits of high officials and media representatives at the occupation line.

Fight against Terrorism

Fight against terrorism is one of the basic directions of activities of the State Security Service. Throughout 2018 the Service has been actively detecting new challenges of international terrorism and working in an intense manner in order to improve ways of responding to them.

Terrorist organization “Islamic State” (“Daesh”) and groups affiliated with it constituted a major challenge to Georgia as well as to many countries of the world.

During the reporting period, “Daesh” continued to act in accordance with the new strategy elaborated after its weakening and territorial losses. Within the scope of the new strategy, mobilization of its supporters in Syria and Iraq was no longer a priority for “Daesh”. Conducting terrorist acts beyond the conflict zone, has become a major weapon of “Daesh”. “Daesh” has been calling the radicalized individuals residing in various countries of the world for conducting terrorist attacks by any means. The mentioned terrorist organization has continued to actively disseminate its ideology, radicalizing and recruiting individuals, through modern technologies, including the internet and social networks.

In 2018 “Al-Qaida” and “Taliban” still represented important challenges of international terrorism. “Al-Qaida” has been carrying out its activities basically via its groups acting in the Middle East and Africa. “Taliban” has continued to carry out attacks against Afghan government forces, as well as soldiers of international missions present in the country.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service has been actively conducting its activities in the direction of detection of terrorism-related threats in Georgia. Information on the activities containing threat and originating from terrorism-affiliated individuals, has been obtained, processed and relevant activities have been carried out.

As a result of activities carried out by the Service, the number and influence of possible supporters of “Daesh” residing in Georgia have been further reduced. The local supporters of the ideas of the terrorist organization do not have the capability to act in an organized and coordinated manner and they do not have so-called “leader”. The youth that was vulnerable to ideas of “Daesh” in the past, is no longer interested in the ideology of so-called “Islamic State”. Local supporters of “Daesh” ideology are facing significant financial difficulties due to restrictions imposed on free movement of members of terrorist organizations and possibilities to obtain financial funds.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned, similarly to other countries, particular individuals residing in the country who support the ideas of the “Islamic State”, might act by order of the leaders of the terrorist organization. In order to reveal the mentioned individuals and prevent and suppress their criminal activities, relevant criminal intelligence and investigative measures have been carried out in the reporting year.

It is noteworthy that currently groups of individuals who have extremist views, exist in Georgia, whose purpose, at this point, is not to confront the state. It can not be ruled out that they

might apply their ties and financial capabilities to the benefit of various extremist and/or terrorist groups or organizations in the future. In order to avoid this threat, the State Security Service acts in accordance with norms established by the law and conducts preventive measures.

During the reporting period, some individuals have been detected who have been disseminating ideas of terrorist organizations via internet, including the social media. Procedures defined by the law have been conducted in relation to the mentioned individuals.

In 2018 active work has been conducted in order to obtain evidence in relation to criminal activities carried out by the citizens of Georgia fighting in Syria and Iraq. Last year some citizens of Georgia were killed in the course of combat operations taking place in Syria and Iraq, more than 20 individuals fought in the ranks of terrorist organizations. The Service continues to work regarding the threat of the possible return of the mentioned individuals and their family members to the country, and will carry out activities prescribed by the legislation.

It is worth noting, that as a result of effort taken by the State Security Service and other relevant state authorities, not a single fact of travel to Syria and Iraq by the citizens of Georgia has been observed in 2018.

During the reporting period, as a result of relevant measures carried out by the Service, facts of attempted transit movement through the territory of Georgia by terrorism-affiliated individuals have been considerably reduced. Notwithstanding the mentioned, similarly to other countries of the world, certain challenges still remain. Movements at the state customs and border-crossing points are strictly controlled, as well as constant monitoring of crossings at the state border is carried out in order to avoid the threat of entering of terrorism-affiliated individuals into the territory of Georgia. Routes and channels that might be used in order to illegally enter the territory of the country is subject to observation. In this regard, Georgia is not among the countries with high risk, correspondingly, any accusation related to particular activities by foreign terrorist fighters and/or terrorism-affiliated individuals in regard to transit through the territory of Georgia, is viewed by the State Security Service as a deliberate provocation.

The State Security Service pays particular attention to the activities of foreigners residing in Georgia who might support terrorist/extremist ideas. In this regard, some individuals were detected in 2018. Measures envisaged by the legislation have been carried out in relation to these individuals.

In the context of terrorist threats, territories occupied by the Russian Federation and uncontrolled situation on the ground still remain to be a considerable challenge for Georgia. Russian occupation forces and special services still maintain a capability to initiate/stage various terrorist activities in compliance to their aims and objectives.

In response to the challenges, terrorist threat-response capabilities have been improved in an intense manner, active cooperation has been carried out with international partners in order to exchange information. Work has been underway in the direction of assessing security measures of public gathering places, conducting the process of passportization of state strategic objects and

carrying out risk analysis. The employees of special divisions combatting terrorism have undergone active training/retraining.

During the reporting period, investigations have been launched into 10 cases for the crimes envisaged by the terrorism chapter of the Criminal Code of Georgia. Also, investigative activities continued into the criminal cases launched in 2017.

In 2018, by the initiative and leadership of the State Security Service, as well as with the engagement of other authorities, National Strategy of Georgia of 2019-2021 on Fight against Terrorism and its three-year Action Plan have been elaborated.

The Strategy clearly sets forth the threats and challenges facing the country in terms of terrorism and extremism, as well as the unified vision of the state to tackle them, the state's goals and objectives. In the course of elaboration of the document, best international practice and experience have been shared. The Service has been actively cooperating with strategic partners and representatives of civil society.

As a result of effective conduct carried out by the State Security Service in 2018, threats stemming from terrorism have been considerably reduced in the country. This is positively reflected in the reports of the UN, the EU and the US State Department.

Counterintelligence Activities

In 2018 counterintelligence activities of the State Security Service were directed towards the detection of intelligence activities, fields of interest, and methods and means exploited by the special services of foreign countries, as well as the implementation of relevant counterintelligence measures thereto. Furthermore, active work has been carried out in terms of detection of activities directed against the interests of Georgia and carried out by organizations, certain individuals and groups of individuals affiliated with the special services of foreign countries, as well as in terms of identification, prevention and suppression of threats stemming from them.

During the reporting period, hybrid threats coming from various actors have represented an important challenge to the State Security Service. Analysis of information, obtained as a result of counterintelligence activities, has outlined main challenges posing threat to the security of the country, including violation of territorial integrity of the country, attempts of destabilization, creating certain hotbeds of disorder and conducting polarization of the society, threat of economic expansion, attempts of changing foreign policy of the country and undermining sovereignty.

In 2018 countries interested in enhancing their influence in Georgia have been actively exploiting "hybrid warfare" methods in order to reach their goals. Foreign special services, in the course of implementation of their activities, aimed at confronting various ethnic and religious groups residing in Georgia against each other; encouraging anti-Western sentiments among the population; deteriorating bilateral relations of Georgia with the countries of the region and strategic partners; damaging the image of Georgia as being a democratic and stable country;

obtaining leverage for economic influence; supporting constant internal political tensions; stimulating uncertainty and nihilism in the society.

In the course of the “hybrid warfare”, destructive political forces and social groups, as well as the media and social networks have been actively exploited by the interested parties.

During the reporting period, disinformation campaign has been an important tool of the “hybrid warfare”. Polarization of the population, disseminating false opinions and fear, as well as influencing important processes by manipulating social opinion have been deliberately conducted through fake news, distorting facts and falsification of history.

As a result of counterintelligence activities carried out by the State Security Service, it has been established that foreign countries and their special services have been using cyber capabilities more and more actively, in their own interests. Conducting cyber attacks and cyber intelligence operations against government and critical infrastructure objects by special services of foreign countries and hacker groups controlled by them also represent a major risk to the security of the country.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned, the State Security Service has been monitoring developments and implementing relevant measures in the direction of handling and suppressing of hybrid threats, as well as reducing and neutralizing negative outcomes stemming from them. As a result of conducted counterintelligence activities, several operations planned in the scope of “hybrid warfare” have been suppressed.

In 2018 Russian occupation forces continued to violate territorial integrity of the country. Counterintelligence Department of the Service has established permanent monitoring over identification of individuals violating the rules of entering the occupied territories, as well as obtaining evidences of conducting economic activities prohibited by the Law of Georgia “On Occupied Territories”. Investigation has been launched into 9 criminal cases in this direction.

During the reporting period there have been attempts to use the territories of the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region to conduct covert operations, besides other illicit activities carried out by the Russian military forces illegally based in the occupied territories. The threat of inspiration of provocative and destructive activities and creating hotbeds of destabilization was stemming from the mentioned regions.

Last year certain activities of special services of foreign countries in the direction of changing the foreign policy of Georgia were outlined. The process of promoting the reduction of trust and mutual cooperation between civil society, the authorities and political spectrum has been carried out by means of political and social groups oriented on foreign countries. Against the background of attempted provocations aimed at constant confrontation, negative sentiments towards a sound geopolitical view have been created through influencing the public opinion.

During the reporting period, threat of exploitation of existing economic leverage by foreign countries for their own geopolitical purposes has been outlined. Foreign commercial organizations have been trying to apply economic capabilities at their disposal in order to manipulate socio-economic environment of the country.

In 2018 the State Security Service has been conducting an active work in relation to ensuring counterintelligence of the divisions of the Georgian armed forces. In the process of approximation of the defense system of Georgia with the NATO standards, foreign special services have demonstrated active interest in relation to existing developments, current processes and future plans in the defence sphere. The Service has been implementing relevant counterintelligence measures in the mentioned direction.

Throughout the reporting period, within the scope of counterintelligence activities, the State Security Service paid special attention to the protection of state secrets and security regime in state authorities.

In accordance with the requirements determined by the Law of Georgia on State Secrets, its subordinate normative acts and international agreements, counterintelligence activities have been actively conducted in security facilities, security measures have been provided on permanent basis, and personnel awareness-raising has been conducted, in order to ensure protection and control of state secrets, to detect, prevent and suppress penetration of agents within facilities by foreign special services, as well as technical intrusion and other negative activities.

In this regard, in 2018, 77 organizations/institutions have been granted facility security clearance, while 4 have been denied due to factual circumstances detected, low level of reliability and trustworthiness.

The vetting procedures towards approximately 3200 individuals desiring personal security clearance have been carried out. The expediency of access to NATO classified information was defined regarding up to 600 individuals. Up to 300 individuals from various organizations and institutions have been provided with methodological-organizational assistance in the fields of state secret document management and secret regime protection.

In order to handle the above-mentioned challenges, operational situation has been a subject to a constant monitoring by the Service, as well as obtaining preliminary information has been carried out. Particular focus has been on timely detection of threats, and in order to neutralize the threats relevant complex measures envisaged by the law have been carried out. Information has been provided to relevant agencies and decision-makers on permanent basis.

Throughout the reporting period, as a result of monitoring migration channels it has been established, that a number of foreigners willing to stay in Georgia under various statuses is still high. Often foreigners, either with help of compatriots or citizens of Georgia, manage to prepare the relevant documents and request granting permits enabling them to stay in Georgia under various legal forms.

The Service has revealed up to 1200 individuals, who tried to obtain right to legal stay in Georgia on the basis of false documents. The Service has been acting in a coordinated way alongside Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs, in order to expel these individuals, also to bring them before administrative or criminal justice.

The Service has been monitoring movement of foreign citizens via border-crossing points of international airports of Georgia in 24-hours regime. 139 citizens of foreign countries have not been allowed to enter the country on the basis of operational information.

Through 2018 the Counterintelligence Department of the State Security Service has launched investigation into 21 criminal cases. 48 individuals have been convicted.

Fight against Corruption

In 2018, as in previous years, the State Security Service attached great importance to the prevention, detection and suppression of malfeasance and corruption.

Corruption, in many directions, fundamentally damages the country's development process and heavily undermines the credibility of the state, weakens democracy, hinders the economic development of the country and represents an important challenge for the country's national security. Public officials engaged in corruption are vulnerable to special services of foreign countries.

In 2018 the State Security Service actively worked on the issues of prevention and fight against corruption in the direction of enhancing international cooperation and sharing experience of partner countries. With the participation of representatives of the Service, a number of conferences, seminars and working meetings have been held both in Georgia and abroad.

During the reporting period, the Service prepared reports of the first and second half of 2018 on fulfilling the Action Plan for 2017-2018 of the National Anticorruption Strategy.

In 2018, as a result of criminal intelligence and investigative activities undertaken by the State Security Service, a number of public officials were arrested, including Tbilisi City Assembly majoritarian delegate of Krtsanisi region, Mtskheta Municipality City Hall representative in Tskhvarichamia administrative unit, First Deputy Mayor of Samtredia Municipality and Sagarejo Municipality Assembly delegate of village Ujarma - were arrested on the fact of bribe taking.

Former Mayor and Former Vice-Mayor of Zugdidi Municipality were arrested on the fact of bribe taking. Head of Economic Policy and Service Management Service under Zugdidi Municipality City Hall, and Former Governor of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti were convicted in the same criminal case.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service detained the Head of LEPL State Regulation Agency for Medical Activities under the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs for abusing his official powers, and detained the Deputy Director of the Ltd. "Regional Healthcare Center" on the fact of assistance in receiving bribe in large quantities. In total, 5 owners and 14 directors of pharmacies were detained under the same criminal case. A total of 21 persons were brought to justice, and the income of their illegal entrepreneurial activities and realization of psychotropic substances without prescription - amounted to 4 094 709 GEL.

In 2018, as a result of criminal intelligence and investigative activities undertaken by the State Security Service, 7 citizens of the Islamic Republic of Iran were brought to criminal justice for illegal entrepreneurship activity. Income received in one year as a result of their illegal entrepreneurship activities, in total amounted to 2 097 000 GEL.

From January 1st to December 31th, 2018 the Anticorruption Agency of the State Security Service of Georgia launched investigation into 71 criminal cases, including bribe taking – 21, bribe giving – 3, fraud – 12, abuse of official powers – 4, misappropriation or embezzlement – 4, neglect of an official duty – 13, forgery by an official – 8, and other certain crimes. During the reporting period, 133 persons have been brought to criminal justice as the accused.

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

One of the most important priorities for the State Security Service is the fight against the proliferation of materials and weapons of mass destruction.

With the recent developments in the world, the provision of CBRN security and arms control is among most difficult challenges for the international community. Nuclear threats in the Black Sea region, including actions by the Russian Federation in the occupied territories, loss of control over its nuclear power plants by Ukraine have negative effect on the regional nuclear security order and require specific international efforts. In addition, some countries of the region have outdated nuclear facilities that also pose threat.

Considering the above-mentioned challenges, the State Security Service pays special attention to the strong regional and international cooperation.

The United States, Great Britain, EU and NATO member states are the key allies of the State Security Service in the field of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Security. The Service successfully continues a close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and other international organizations.

The State Security Service is the main partner of the “EU CBRN Risk Mitigation Centers of Excellence Initiative” in Georgia. Through this Initiative and active coordination by the Service, in 2018 Georgia got involved in a number of important regional projects and table-top/field exercises aiming at capacity building of the Georgian state agencies and increasing efficiency of joint operations and incident command.

The Service as a chair agency of the Interagency Coordinating Council of Georgia for Combating CBRN Threats actively continued to facilitate implementation of the 2015-2019 CBRN

National Action Plan (NAP) and ensured relevant coordination among various national stakeholders. The Annual Meeting of the Coordination Council was held on July 13, 2018.

The State Security Service continues to successfully fight illegal trafficking of nuclear and radioactive substances and materials. In the reporting period investigation was launched into two criminal cases on illegal handling of radioactive substances.

In addition, the Service continues to ensure smooth functioning of the software and technical features of radioactive control systems at the state border. In order to develop these systems, with the United States' support, in 2018 a new version of the "Personal Alarm System" was launched, also new functions for the "National Communication System" were developed. These new features enabled to register and process additional data, reduced incident response time as well as ensured effective operational-technical monitoring.

In 2018 the Service hosted a large-scale exercise "Lionshield" on suppression of nuclear smuggling that involved representatives of eight countries from South Caucasus and Eastern Europe. The aim of the event was to share the State Security Service's expertise and experience. The European Commission named Georgia as the best partner, for organizing the event on a high level.

The Service is actively engaged with the non-governmental and academic sectors in the field of CBRN safety and security. In 2018 the Service supported and co-organized the 3rd "Tbilisi International Forum for Regional Stability".

In terms of regional cooperation, the technical visit of the Ukrainian delegation of security and law enforcement agencies to Georgia was yet another important event in November 2018. The purpose of the technical visit was to share Georgia's experience in nuclear and radiological security and control. The event was conducted under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency and with the initiative of the State Security Service of Georgia.

Georgia has developed as one of the leading countries in Eastern Europe in terms of CBRN security. The European partners and the US appraise Georgia for the successful cooperation and effective interagency coordination at the national level.

Analytical Activities

Due to the protection of domestic and external threats faced by the country and to ensure coexistence of citizens in a safe environment, analytical directions and the development of relevant capacities occupy important part of the day-to-day activities of the State Security Service.

The processing and analysis of information obtained from open and closed sources has been carried out on permanent basis during the reporting period, what has created the basis for identifying current and potential threats, determination of scenarios and trends of the possible development of events. Based on the assessment of political, economic, military or other facts, recommendations have been elaborated for effectively responding to threats and to neutralizing

negative consequences stemming from above-mentioned threats. In order to facilitate the planning and decision making process of relevant counter-measures, the timely and precise prediction of hindering or contributing factors have been done.

In terms of analytical activities, last year the State Security Service paid special attention to the threats coming from the occupied territories and the existing situation in these regions, international and internal challenges related to terrorism, activities of the foreign special services, their goals and objectives. In terms of hybrid threats, activities to identify, analyze and evaluate the specific methods, means and tools used against the country have been carried out.

During the reporting period, the analytical team of the State Security Service has actively cooperated with experts and scientific circles. The methods of obtaining and processing information have been improved, through sharing the best international experience. Special attention has been devoted to the re-training of the analysts, who have undergone various special training courses in Georgia, as well as in foreign countries, including with the support of partner countries.

Protection of Personal Data, Improving Legislative Basis, Access to Public Information

While implementing its powers envisaged by the legislation, the State Security Service pays a special attention to the personal data protection component, improvement of legal basis and access to public information.

During the reporting period, the Service actively cooperated with the Personal Data Protection Inspector and provided the necessary conditions for the effective control implemented by the Inspector. The Service has unimpededly provided the Inspector with the information requested in accordance with the legislation.

In 2018 the Personal Data Protection Inspector inspected the State Security Service, resulting in no violation of the requirements of the Law of Georgia on Personal Data Protection by the Service.

During the reporting period, the Personal Data Protection Inspector inspected the LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of Georgia under the State Security Service of Georgia, twice. Through the inspection, the authorized representatives had the opportunity to monitor the activities of the Agency in real time. It should be noted that, as a result of inspection, no violations were identified. The Agency was given recommendations and directions on separate organizational and technical issues.

In accordance with the requirements of the Georgian legislation, the Agency's activities are supervised, besides the Personal Data Protection Inspector, by several state institutions, including the Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Court oversight mechanisms are applied.

In 2018, within the parliamentary oversight, the Chairman of the Trust Group of the Parliament of Georgia conducted the inspection of the Agency. The Chairman got acquainted with

the materials and documents of the Agency's activities, as well as the functioning of electronic control systems.

In December 2018, according to the rules established by the legislation, the Agency presented the annual report to the Prime Minister of Georgia and the Trust Group of the Parliament for the period of 1st December 2017 to 1st December 2018.

During the reporting year, the process of elaboration and improvement of legal acts has been conducted on active basis. In 2018 the State Security Service of Georgia elaborated and adopted 157 new legal acts. The Service also expressed its position on 385 draft legal acts elaborated by various other state agencies.

Interagency legal regulations have been improved in different directions, including in the direction of protecting the rights of persons placed in the temporary detention isolator of the State Security Service. The amendments have also been made into the regulation on provision of contracted military service at the State Security Service, and into the Code of Ethics for the Employees of the Service, the rules to exchange classified information with another state or international organization have been improved.

A reference should be made to the State Security Service's cooperation with the common courts of Georgia. In the reporting period, on the basis of appropriate ruling, the Service unimpededly delivered classified or open information/evidence necessary for case adjudication, to the common courts. In 2018, 894 information/ evidence was sent to the common courts. The Service participated in 48 court cases.

According to the legislation of Georgia, the State Security Service within its competence, has ensured the issuance of public information. From January 1st to December 31st 2018, the Service has received 57 applications on requesting public information, among them 35 applications have been satisfied, 5 - have been sent for further response and 17 applications have not been satisfied.

On 10 December 2018 the Service submitted a relevant report on issuance of public information to the President of Georgia, the Prime Minister and the Parliament, in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

In the reporting period, 298 applications from citizens and different agencies/organizations, including the Public Defender, have been responded to. The Service processed and reacted to the information obtained via its hotline, and to the 313 electronic applications (info@ssg.gov.ge).

The Service was constantly issuing information about the performed activities on its official website (ssg.gov.ge).

Interagency Cooperation

The State Security Service attaches great importance to the interagency cooperation and coordination at the national level.

In the reporting period, the Service had a close cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Georgian Intelligence

Service, Special State Protection Service and other state agencies. The Service was actively involved in the work of different governmental commissions and councils, including NATO-Georgia Commission and EU Integration Commission, Government Commission for Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions, Anti-Corruption Council, State Commission on Migration Issues, Joint Maritime Operations Center and other interagency mechanisms. The Service actively participated in the process of development and implementation of national strategic documents.

In 2018, the Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration and Monitoring of Implementation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy and Relevant Action Plan was established on the initiative and under the chairmanship of the State Security Service. The Service also leads the Interagency Coordinating Council of Georgia for Combating CBRN Threats.

Furthermore, during the reporting period, with the coordination of the LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of Georgia, the Interagency Coordinating Council was established in order to create a unified system of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR), and to ensure maximum involvement of appropriate state agencies in the given process.

In 2018 the Agency unimpededly provided the informational and technological assistance to other state agencies and institutions, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, as well as ensured the elaboration/development of security software systems.

The Agency was actively involved in the development and implementation of various projects for state agencies, including the simplification of service delivery to citizens. In the reporting period, the products and services created by the Agency on the territory of Georgia were transferred or provided to 4 state bodies and 14 private law entities.

In 2018 the representatives of the State Security Service were actively involved in a number of joint and interagency activities in the field of security and defense.

The relevant state agencies and representatives had been continuously informed about security issues. At the annual meeting "Ambassadors Conference 2018" - "Ambassadorial" the Head of the Service provided the Ambassadors of Georgia in various countries and international organizations with the information on the ongoing security challenges and the steps taken by the State Security Service in this regard.

International Cooperation

Close cooperation with partner countries and international organizations largely define successful conduct of the State Security Service.

Particular attention has been paid to further enhancing cooperation with strategic partners, friendly countries and international organizations within the scope of bilateral as well as multilateral formats.

By the initiative of the State Security Service of Georgia in 2018 intergovernmental agreements on exchange and mutual protection of classified information were signed with 3 countries (Albania, Italy, Moldova). Similar bilateral agreements are signed with 23 states and the

EU. In this regard, several draft agreements have been initiated and active consultations are underway.

The Service has continued active cooperation with attaches and the representatives of diplomatic missions of various countries accredited to Georgia. Through effective application of the mentioned format, information has been exchanged and experience has been shared on systematic basis throughout the reporting period.

In the course of ensuring state security, the Service has attached particular attention to close cooperation with its strategic partner – the United State of America. Throughout the reporting period, due to specifics of the activities of the Service, active work and coordination with relevant agencies of the USA in various formats have been carried out. In 2018 the Agreement signed with the Government of the United States of America on the exchange of Terrorist Screening Information entered into force, which has promoted further enhancement of bilateral cooperation in this direction.

The representatives of the Service have actively participated in the annual meeting of the US-Georgia Strategic Partnership Commission's Working Group on Defense and Security. The US Department of State Country Reports on Terrorism assesses Georgia as solid partner to the United States of America in the field of security.

Activities conducted in 2018 aimed at strengthening security policy in the course of cooperation with the EU have been significant. The Service has been involved in the activities planned within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) program, as well as in implementation and elaboration of various projects.

Relevant units of the State Security Service have been participating in the implementation of the National Action Plan of EU Association Agreement and Association Agenda and elaboration process of the relevant documents. The Service has been also involved in the activities conducted within the frames of the EU-Georgia Visa liberalization action plan. At the same time, the State Security Service has participated in second European Union –Georgia Strategic Security Dialogue.

In 2018 important steps have been taken aimed at further enhancing cooperation between Georgia and EUROPOL in the field of security and law-enforcement. During the reporting period, Memorandum of Understanding on the secure communication line between Georgia and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, and Liaison Agreement between Georgia and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation were signed. Experts of the Service have been engaged in the elaboration process of these documents.

The Service has been actively involved in the activities implemented by the Council of Europe in security field, including the meetings of Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT), as well as in the scope of EU/CoE joint project “Strengthening anti-money laundering institutions in Georgia”. The Service is represented in 24/7 cooperation network of national contact points established on the basis of additional protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism.

The State Security Service is engaged in multilateral cooperation formats in the direction of fight against international terrorism. During the reporting period, representatives of the Service have participated in the activities conducted within the scope of Global Coalition against Daesh and Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). Capabilities under cooperation with INTERPOL have been efficiently applied.

As regards cooperation with the UN, during the reporting year representatives of the Service have been actively involved in meetings conducted within the Counterterrorism Committee of the UN Security Council and other formats, and have been providing information to the international community on Georgia's experience. In July of 2018, a visit of the Delegation of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to Georgia was organized by the Service. The visit of the Delegation aimed at monitoring of the implementation of the relevant UN resolutions by Georgia. The Delegation positively assessed Georgia's efforts carried out in the field of fight against terrorism, and the progress achieved by the country in this direction has been reflected in the Committee's report.

The Service pays considerable attention to deepening cooperation with NATO. During 2018, likewise previous years, the State Security Service has been actively participating in Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP) implementation process, and in the activities carried out under the Annual National Program (ANP).

Human, Material-Technical and Financial Resources

Effective management of human resources and ensuring relevant material-technical base within this process is one of the priorities of the State Security Service.

Attracting best personnel, motivating them and facilitating their career growth, as well as retention of professional personnel to the fullest extent possible - represent a strategic approach of the Service. The Service provides job applicants with equal employment opportunities, despite of their national, ethnic, religious or gender affiliation. The employees are guaranteed with the high standard work conditions and proper social packages.

As of 31st December 2018, the Service has had 3224 employees, including 415 women (12,9%), conscripts – 359, contracted employees (supernumerary) – 218.

The State Security Service attaches huge importance to the professional development of the personnel, their retraining in accordance with modern standards and enhancing their qualification on its own, as well as through support of partner countries.

Throughout 2018, employees of the Security Service have been participating in various specialized programs and trainings, including special training for operative personnel, fire-arms and special means application programs, training for Anticorruption Agency staff, special training programs for admission to the SSSG as well as for admitted recruits, also special training programs for granting junior lieutenant special rank, sniper training and retraining courses, as well as

trainings conducted for officers of counterterrorism special units in tactic activities, demining and other capacity-building trainings.

The State Security Service employees have been actively involved in the training courses conducted with the support of international partners. Trainings conducted in cooperation with the United States and EU countries are particularly worth noting.

During the reporting year, employees of the Service have participated in training programs and retraining courses conducted within the scope of NATO-Georgia Professional Development Program (PDP), as well as within the scope of NATO Liaison Office in Georgia and NATO Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM).

In order to retain highly-qualified and experienced personnel, the State Security Service constantly strives to encourage and motivate its staff. During 2018, 1392 employees have been rewarded in various forms, including with the medal, certificate and badge of the Service, in accordance to the rules defined by the legislation.

During the reporting period, the General Inspection of the Service has been regularly inspecting the internal conduct of various structural units. In 2018 violation of ethics and disciplinary norms, inadequate fulfilment of duties, facts of certain illegal activities have been detected within the system, and appropriate response measures have been carried out. On the basis of 212 inspections carried out and prepared conclusions thereto, 134 disciplinary sanctions (including: firing – 8, demotion -1, strict reprimand – 19, reprimand – 12, warning – 4, etc.) have been imposed on the Service employees for various disciplinary misconduct. Moreover, in 2018 the General Inspection of the State Security Service has launched investigation into 6 criminal cases.

To properly address the objectives facing the State Security Service, particular attention is devoted to suitable material-technical base and its renewal.

Within the budgetary funds of 2018, the Economic Department of the Service has concluded 387 contracts, with total value of 22 156 177 GEL. In the reporting period, 13 contracts with total value of 1 383 877 GEL have been signed with constructing companies for different construction-repair activities.

Within the budgetary funds of 2018, 219 tenders have been announced. From the conducted tenders, 194 contracts have been concluded. According to the contracts signed as a result of electronic tenders the savings amounted to 1 013 430 GEL.