

The Report of the State Security Service of Georgia

2021



Foreword

Taking into consideration the security challenges facing Georgia and us, ensuring peaceful, stable and secure environment in the country represents the most complicated task and requires a complex approach underpinned by a long-term strategy.

The goal of the State Security Service is the protection of Georgia's constitutional order, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as its economic and military potential.

The Report presents an overview of security processes taking place in 2021, as well as measures and activities carried out by the State Security Service of Georgia in response to the threats and challenges.

In 2021, the Russian Federation continued to pursue the policy aimed at annexation of Georgia's occupied regions. Illegal military exercises continued to take place in the occupied territories, citizens of Georgia were being illegally detained and so-called borderization process was underway. Furthermore, international organizations were still unable to enter the sites and carry out monitoring.

All of the above-mentioned was aimed at creating unstable environment in Georgia, which in itself deteriorated the country's image and hampered the process of economic development.

Activities of foreign special services, as well as attempted interference in our country's socio-political life still constituted a challenge for Georgia. So-called hybrid warfare tools were still being applied in order to seek levers of influence over Georgia. Conduction of disinformation and propaganda campaigns aimed against Georgia's state interests was still actual.

Throughout 2021, threats stemming from terrorism and violent extremism still constituted a considerable challenge. During the reporting period, attacks did not take place in Georgia, however, single manifestations of extremism were detected.

In the course of ensuring security of the country, the State Security Service continued its close and valuable cooperation with strategic allies and counterpart agencies of friendly countries, as well as with international organizations.

Throughout 2021, coordination with respective state authorities at national level, as well as information sharing was being carried out in due course. Active communication with civil society was also significant.

The Service, in the course of carrying out of its activities, was guided by the principles of the rule of law, political neutrality, proportionality and the protection of human rights and freedoms.

With the aim of proper implementation of its mandate, the Service's efforts were also directed to strengthening its institutional capabilities and sustainable development.

Taking into consideration the threats facing the country, public support is of great importance for the Service. I would like to express my gratitude to each and every employee of the Service for the work done during the reporting year and for the dedication they have shown on a daily basis in the process of maintaining the security of our country.

Grigol Liluashvili

Head of the State Security Service of Georgia

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Occupied Territories

Occupation of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions by the Russian Federation still remains a major threat to Georgia's statehood. In 2021, illegally deployed Russian heavy armament and military contingent still remained in the occupied territories of Georgia, intensive military exercises and the process of militarization took place on the ground.

Throughout the reporting period, Russian occupation forces continued the policy towards annexation of the occupied territories.

During 2021, on the background of the Novel Coronavirus pandemic, the conditions for ethnic Georgian population residing in the occupied territories was still dire, and the restriction of their fundamental rights continued.

Militarization of the Occupied Territories

The intelligence services of the Russian Federation - the Main Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Defense, the Federal Security Service and the Foreign Intelligence Service, along with the Russian military contingent, were active on the occupied territories.

In 2021, occupation forces were conducting the military exercises with high intensity. According to available data, the units of the 7th and 4th military bases of the Southern Military District of the Russian Federation conducted more than 125 exercises of various types and scales. In addition, planned rotations, upgrade of armament and military-technical means were carried out at the abovementioned bases.

On this background, the policy of the Russian occupation forces, which did not allow international organizations to enter and monitor the occupied territories, remained particularly alarming.

The activities of the Russian military contingent and special services illegally represented in the occupied territories of Georgia posed a threat to the security of Georgia and the region.

The Processes Directed to Annexation

During the reporting period, the Russian Federation continued the annexation process, which manifested itself in signing of various so-called agreements with the de facto authorities, in the statements of the representatives of the occupation regimes and of the authorities of the Russian Federation, as well as in so-called appointments made by the de facto regimes.

In 2021, the occupation regime of Abkhazia made several statements in support of the creation of a „common space of defense, security and socio-economic development“ with the Russian Federation and „integration“ in this regard. The issues of simplification of so-called movement regulations at the „Psou checkpoint“, „legalization“ of the purchase of real estate in the occupied region for the citizens

of the Russian Federation and other issues were actively discussed. So-called president of Abkhazia called all this the concession of “a certain part of sovereignty” in favor of the Russian Federation.

In 2021, the Kremlin was actively trying to increase its influence over the energy sector of occupied Abkhazia. The component of the annexation policy was statements made by the de facto authority about the need to attract massive Russian investments in the energy sector of occupied Abkhazia.

The issue of the need for ethnic Russians living in occupied Abkhazia to participate in “political processes”, including through the consolidation of “Russian compatriot organizations” has been raised several times over the past year.

During the reporting period, a dangerous trend was detected that some representatives of the de facto authority of Abkhazia intended to critically restrict the activities of international organizations operating in the occupied region. The aim was to isolate the occupied region and to simplify the conduction of annexation processes on the ground.

In 2021, the issue of “belonging to Russia” of the village Aibga of the occupied Gagra was still under discussion. The de facto authority of Abkhazia tried to deprive the relevance of this issue and made unspecified statements that the Russian Federation has no “territorial claims” on the mentioned section.

The issue of annexation of the occupied Tskhinvali region remained a significant threat, as the de facto regime of the occupied region still openly supported joining the Russian Federation. The occupation force uses the false notion of “United Ossetia” as a basis for the annexation of occupied Tskhinvali region, which implies so-called unification of the population of North Ossetia and those living in the occupied region.

The “Joint Information-Coordination Center” established by Russian Federation and so-called Ministry of Internal Affairs of the occupied Tskhinvali region has to be considered in the context of the annexation. In 2021, the “seconded employees” from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation to occupied Tskhinvali region were granted with the right to conduct questioning, identification of a person and search for information.

During the reporting period, the President of Russia approved a so-called draft agreement on “dual citizenship” with the occupied Tskhinvali region. At the same time, persons with so-called dual citizenship will undergo “mandatory military service” according to their permanent residence and will be exempted from so-called conscription by the “other party”.

The high financial dependence of the occupied regions of Georgia on the Russian federal budget has to be considered through the prism of the annexation policy. According to the available data, about 50% of so-called budget (USD 69 472 492) of the occupied Abkhazia and about 83% of so-called budget (USD 84 898 637) of the occupied Tskhinvali region are funded by the Russian Federation.

Ongoing Processes in the Occupied Territories

In 2021, so-called internal political processes taking place in the occupied territories were developing with the intervention of Moscow. So-called parties or unions operating on the ground maintained explicit pro-Russian attitudes. Russia also exercised full control over so-called key/strategic agencies and sectors in the occupied territories (so-called border protection, so-called customs, “law enforcement agencies”, so-called ministries of defense, etc.).

During the reporting period, the de facto authority of occupied Abkhazia faced several significant challenges. So-called authority has been mainly criticized for its ineffective fight against Novel Coronavirus, challenges in the fields of economy and energy (mainly cryptocurrency mining), corruption, high levels of crime and, in general, incompetent so-called governance.

The protest against so-called foreign policy concept ended in favor of so-called opposition, resulting in removal of the stipulation on the possibility of “multilevel negotiations with the central Government” from so-called concept.

Although the above-mentioned events were accompanied by loud calls for protests and rallies in the streets, so-called opposition did not achieve real results due to the fact that it did not enjoy the support of Moscow and at the same time, there was no proper spark of protest among the population.

So-called political crisis that had started in 2020 in the occupied Tskhinvali region, continued in 2021 as well. It developed in several stages and can be divided into the following three main directions:

1. Protest over the case of **Inal Jabiev**, who died in a so-called temporary detention isolator;
2. Boycott of so-called parliament by “opposition members of the parliament”;
3. Approval of so-called budget and so-called government by the “ruling” party in violation of the “rules of procedure of parliament.”

It shall be underlined that Moscow supported so-called ruling power in these processes. While visiting the occupied Tskhinvali region, the Russian delegation named paralyzing of so-called parliament’s work as a reason for hindering the implementation of so-called joint projects and called on so-called members of parliament to continue their “legislative” activities.

In the second half of the reporting year, the confrontation between so-called authorities of the occupied Tskhinvali region and the “opposition” intensified over so-called delimitation and demarcation of the occupation line. So-called opposition accused **Anatoli Bibilov** of violating so-called territorial integrity of the occupied region and trying to “concede” 200 km² territory to the central Government of Georgia.

Although so-called opposition members of parliament managed to put up some “political resistance”, it became clear that these forces could not make real changes without the support of the Russian Federation.

Illegal Activities of De Facto Regimes and Occupation Forces

During the reporting period, illegal detentions, illegal so-called borderization process, disinformation campaigns and other activities damaging the security environment were actively carried out.

In 2021, the occupation regimes made a number of disinformation statements. A large part of those aimed to present the situation with regard to the Novel Coronavirus on the territory controlled by central Government as critical as possible. In some cases, local population were called upon to refrain from crossing the occupation line for vaccination. The false allegations were made towards the Richard Lugar Public Health Research Center, as if the lab was developing biological weapons.

The target of the disinformation campaign also became the multinational military exercises conducted on the territory controlled by the central Government of Georgia, which were declared as a source of destabilization in the region by the occupation forces.

Harmful disinformation was spread about the central Government's healthcare program intended for the occupied Tskhinvali region. It was noted as if the most of those who went to the Tbilisi-controlled territory for treatment died due to inadequate medical services.

The disinformation statements made by the de facto regimes are part of the Russian so-called information warfare and attempt to mislead the local population and the international community. Their main goal is to discredit the central Government of Georgia.

Occupation forces actively continued illegal detentions and illegal so-called borderization process. Main objectives of those activities were the instigation of perception of vulnerability among population, discreditation of state institutions and spread of nihilism in the society.

During the reporting period, central Government identified 11 cases of illegal detention in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia and 70 cases in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region, conducted by the Russian occupation forces.

It has to be noted, that with an effort of central Government of Georgia and international partners, on July 14 **Zaza Gakheladze** was released from so-called detention facility after one year of illegal imprisonment, who was illegally “sentenced” for 12 years and 6 months of imprisonment.

By the end of 2021, in total 7 Georgian citizens were being kept under illegal detention, including **Irakli Bebuga**, who was illegally “deprived” of liberty for 9 years by occupation regime. The central Government of Georgia continues to use all formal and informal mechanisms and legal leverages, particularly through concentration of international society’s efforts, in order to ensure unconditional release of illegally detained persons as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, in some cases illegal detentions have fatal outcomes, which clearly demonstrate inhumane and criminal nature of the processes accompanying occupation. In November 2021, **Genadi**

Bestaev was handed over to the central Government. He was under illegal detention until his health condition severely worsened that led to his death later.

Until now, it is still impossible to bring justice upon the cases of **Irakli Kvaratskhelia** and **Davit Basharuli**, who died during the illegal detention by the occupation regimes, as well as regarding the cases of **Archil Tatunashvili** and **Giga Otkhozoria**, murdered by the occupation forces. That creates the syndrome of impunity in the occupied territories and stimulates criminal activities. All persons involved in the violation of the Georgian citizens' lives will be brought to justice.

Full responsibility for blatant violation of human rights in the occupied territories as well as along the occupation line rests with the Russian Federation.

In this context, the decision of January 21, 2021 of the European Court of Human Rights has to be underlined, which determines the Russian Federation as the force exercising effective control on the occupied territories and finds that Moscow is responsible for systemic violations of human rights in these territories.

In 2021, 9 facts of illegal borderization in the direction of occupied Abkhazia and 130 facts in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region were identified by State Security Service of Georgia. Illegal activities were manifested in installation of new barbwires as well as in restoration of old barbwires and fences, in illegal setting-up of so-called anti-fire ditches and trenches, so-called border signs and checkpoints.

Situation in the vicinities of village Chorchana of Khashuri municipality remained tense. As a result of destructive actions of the occupation forces, the crisis started in August 2019 and due to non-constructive approach of the occupation forces, steps to find solution could not be taken. The representatives of the central Government have repeatedly underlined the readiness to work towards solving village Chorchana crisis during both the Geneva International Discussions (GID), as well as the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings that took place within the reporting period, however, no reciprocal actions were made.

So-called crossing points in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region are closed since September 2019, resulting in total isolation of the region. As regards the direction of occupied Abkhazia, the occupation force also unilaterally closed the occupation line from March 2020 until July 5, 2021. In the aforementioned period, only certain categories of persons (seniors, pensioners, persons with special needs, etc.) holding so-called permits were allowed to cross the occupation line.

Closure of an occupation line in the direction of occupied Abkhazia forced local population to use bypass routs to cross the occupation line secretly through Enguri River, resulting in death of several people.

All aforementioned vividly demonstrates the extremely devastating results of the illegal detentions, so-called illegal borderization and illegal restrictions on the freedom of movement.

The problem of deliberate discrimination of ethnic Georgian population was still observed in the occupied territories, including the restriction on receiving education in native language and the Russification of the regions, as well as the policy directed to changing ethnic identity and assimilation of local population.

The restriction of property rights in the occupied territories of ethnic Georgians living on the territory controlled by the central Government and destruction of their houses in order to exclude their return was still ongoing. Making a landfill on the ruins of the settlement of ethnic Georgian population in the village Eredvi of the occupied Tskhinvali region is a subject of special concern.

International Mechanisms

During the reporting period, threats and challenges related to the occupation were the subject of harsh discussions during the meetings held in the frames of both the Geneva International Discussions (GID) and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings. Due to the destructive approaches of the occupation regime, IPRM meetings in the direction of occupied Gali still could not be restored. No meetings were held in Gali since June 2018.

During the reporting period, active communication was conducted through the “Hotline”, which proved to be an effective tool for working on specific issues.

6 IPRM meetings and 2 technical meetings within the framework of the mechanism were held in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region.

Immediate and unconditional release of Georgian citizens illegally detained by the Russian occupation force was categorically demanded on each IPRM meeting. In addition, the emphasis was made on termination of the process of illegal so-called borderization, restoration of free movement and other important issues.

The “Hotline” operated through direct engagement of the State Security Service of Georgia and the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) was actively applied during the reporting period. It served as an effective tool for defusing incidents and preventing threats. It has to be mentioned that efforts to damage the instrument by the occupation forces were observed. Instead of using it for prevention/solving of the incidents, occupation regimes repeatedly used the mechanism for discussion of political issues and for articulating groundless accusations towards the central Government. The State Security Service of Georgia and the international partners took constructive and complex measures with regard to aforementioned activities.

Within the reporting period, the “Hotline” was activated 2 197 times: 1 747 times in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali region, and 450 times in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia.

During the reporting period, four: 52nd, 53rd, 54th and 55th rounds of the Geneva International Discussions were held, where the representative of the State Security Service of Georgia spoke in detail about the security challenges and threats, blatant violations of human rights occurring as a result of occupation of the regions of Georgia. A special attention was paid to the issues of illegal detentions and the process of illegal so-called borderization.

Cooperation with the International Partners

The State Security Service of Georgia continued efficient and productive cooperation with the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM), the only monitoring mission operating in Georgia, which together with the Government agencies plays important role in the maintenance of peace and stability along the occupation line. It should be mentioned that the mandate of the mission covers the whole territory of Georgia, however, its representatives are still unable to enter the occupied territories. Responsibility for that rests with the Russian Federation, which exercises effective control over these regions.

Active cooperation in direction of occupied territories was underway with the representatives of the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), as well as the Council of Europe (CoE). Cooperation with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in humanitarian issues, including provision of emergency medical care to people living in the occupied Tskhinvali region and their transportation to the territory controlled by the central Government is worth noting. Also, the activities carried out with the involvement of this organization with regard to searching persons missing or deceased during the conflict in the 1990s and the Russian-Georgian war in 2008 should be noted, within the frames of which a “Tripartite Coordination Mechanism Meeting” was held.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service effectively cooperated with and continuously provided information to the state agencies of Georgia and the international partners with the aim of identifying threats from the occupied territories, neutralizing them to the maximum extent, and obstructing the intensified processes of annexation by the Russian Federation. For the purposes of provision of information on the situation in the occupied regions and the territories adjacent to the occupation line, within the framework of the mandate, meetings were held with high officials of the partner countries, representatives of international or local organizations and the media.

State Security and Counterintelligence Activities

In terms of security, 2021 was fraught both with complex processes aimed against stability, as well as dramatically increased threats. In 2021, the Russian Federation significantly intensified its efforts to

pursue its expansionary policy towards neighboring countries. This was manifested, *inter alia*, in the conduction of intensive military exercises along the borders of the countries of the region and/or directly in their territories, as well as in the open statements of the representatives of the Russian authorities and, in some cases, in the ultimatums articulated with regard to various issues.

At the end of 2021, the situation around Ukraine significantly deteriorated security environment in the region. Russia has been actively seeking to maximize its military positions in the Black Sea region and to gain solid, long-term leverage over the region through military, political and economic influence. This has created additional challenges for Georgia's sovereignty and national security.

During the reporting period, periodic armed confrontations between Georgia's two neighboring countries - Armenia and Azerbaijan, remained a challenge for the security environment of Georgia and the region.

On the background of the situation in the region and of the increased threats, the State Security Service has been continuously controlling the operational situation on the territory of the country during the reporting period.

Active cooperation with the strategic partners was underway. Through communication with them, all decisions made on security issues were based on the assessment and analysis of threats and risks related to processes ongoing in the region. Relevant decision-makers of the Georgian government were continuously being provided with the information on the development of possible security processes and their consequences.

In 2021, the activities of the State Security Service, within the functions and powers defined by law, included the detection, prevention and suppression of threats aimed at undermining Georgia's constitutional order, sovereignty and territorial integrity, military potential, socio-economic stability and development of the country. In this process, the main task of the Service was to protect the national interests of the country against harmful acts of foreign special services, organizations or individuals operating under their auspices, and to ensure the coexistence of society in peaceful and secure environment.

The State Security Service actively continued to detect at initial stages the hostile and destructive actions and attempts, provocative activities and plans directed against Georgia by special services of certain countries, to identify possible forces or individuals involved in these processes and to prevent/suppress illegal activities stemming from them.

During the reporting period, as a result of operational and operational-technical measures carried out with the aim of identification/prevention of threats within the framework of counterintelligence activities, the Service identified areas of interest and aspirations of special services of foreign countries. Counterintelligence measures envisaged by the law were actively being carried out in order to reveal the methods and forms of their intelligence activities.

Representatives of special services of foreign countries operating undercover, as well as individuals and groups possibly affiliated to them were being detected/identified, their activities were being examined and constrained.

As a result of these activities, individuals operating in Georgia under diplomatic cover and individuals affiliated with them left the country, while border control mechanisms were applied to some of them in order to restrict their entry into the country.

In 2021, almost all aspects of ongoing political and socio-economic processes in Georgia were of particular interest for the intelligence activities of special services of foreign countries, including details of cooperation with international partners, military matters, activities of political forces and their leaders, economic projects, legislative reforms, sentiments of public and expert circles, migration processes and social topics.

During the reporting period, special services of foreign countries took an active interest in ongoing activities, existing situation and future plans in the field of defense. This also included the processes related to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and approximation of defense systems to NATO standards.

The State Security Service, in accordance with the legislation, continuously ensured counterintelligence support for Georgia's defense forces and other law enforcement authorities in order to prevent possible illegal actions directed against them. Appropriate measures were taken with regard to individuals identified within the process of operational activities in order to establish their possible connections with special services of foreign countries, as well as to prevent anti-state and destructive actions stemming from them.

An important task of the State Security Service was the protection of secret and security regime within state authorities and on facilities of strategic importance. During the reporting year, on the basis of the Law of Georgia on State Security Service of Georgia and the Law of Georgia on State Secrets, as well as other legal acts and requirements defined by international agreements, the Service carried out organizational measures of protection of state secrets and ensured respective coordination.

In order to ensure security at the regime facilities, the Service provided counterintelligence searches, detection, prevention and suppression of possible infiltration, technical penetration and other negative actions against facility by special services of foreign countries. For entities at high risk of state security, the Service obtained information in advance and issued appropriate preventive recommendations. At the same time, the implementation of these recommendations was systematically monitored.

In 2021, special measures to determine trustworthiness and reliability for granting Personnel Security Clearances and Facility Security Clearances were carried out in due course. During the reporting period, 133 organizations/institutions were granted access to state secrets, while 14

organizations/institutions were refused to obtain mentioned permission due to revealed factual circumstances and low level of trustworthiness and reliability.

At the same time, commission examination of the regime of secrets' protection and secret document processing were conducted in 58 organizations/institutions within the year. Security background investigations were carried out in relation to 5 274 individuals for granting Personnel Security Clearances.

Destructive actions of special services of foreign countries were also directed to interfering in economic processes and hindering economic development of Georgia. Certain states continued the process of gaining/enhancing economic leverage in the region through various infrastructure and economic projects. During the reporting period, efforts of the Service were directed to preventing such processes and ensuring economic security of the country.

In 2021, the Service actively continued the analysis of trade and economic agreements in the prism of security, the identification of possible threats associated with them and the elaboration of relevant recommendations.

In order to ensure country's economic security, activities of the companies possibly connected with the external forces, seeking to gain economic leverage on Georgia, were taken under control. Attempts of certain organizations to monopolize local market for the conduction of business activities were revealed.

Similarly to the previous years, the Service paid special attention to security of the state border and to implementation of relevant activities in this regard. Active work was conducted for further development of border technologies, including electronic systems of surveillance.

In 2021, with the support of international partners, the Multisensory Systems Maintenance Depot was created at the base of LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of the State Security Service. The objectives of the Depot are the provision of technical service to multisensory systems and their software maintenance. Furthermore, certain sectors of the state border were provided with high-speed communication network.

In addition, special software was created for the Joint Maritime Operation Center (JMOC), which will be used by state agencies involved in the activities of the Center.

In 2021, transition from test mode to operational mode of the system of provision of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) by air carriers was especially important in the direction of border and illegal migration control. This system was elaborated in compliance with the requirements of respective EU directives and its operation will considerably facilitate fight against terrorism, as well as against other serious crimes.

Monitoring of migration channels represented one of the important directions of the activity of the Service in the course of ensuring state security. In compliance with the rule provided by legislation,

the Service conducted relevant vetting of foreigners wishing to enter Georgia or to obtain citizenship or various types of residence permits. Expediency of issuing of the above-mentioned permits was also considered.

In 2021, the Service reviewed approximately 30 000 cases of foreigners with regard to expediency of issuing permits for the residence in Georgia on the basis of various status. From the abovementioned cases, about 20 000 cases were related to acquiring of various types of resident permits, while about 10 000 cases were reviewed in relation to obtaining citizenship (including its retention and restoration).

At the same time, on the basis of information obtained through operational activities, the State Security Service revealed foreign citizens, who attempted to obtain permits for the residence in Georgia through using various illegal deals and fraudulent documents with the assistance of certain organizations or individuals operating in Georgia. For the purpose of applying subsequent response measures with regard to mentioned facts, the Service was in active coordination with relevant agencies.

In the course of operational activities, the Service revealed organizations founded in Georgia by citizens of foreign countries, which, under the cover of various services were attempting to establish illegal migration channels to Georgia. Activities of the mentioned organizations were restricted, while their members were placed under border control.

During the reporting period, State Security Service continued to effectively combat illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive substances and materials. The related operational control was ongoing and relevant operational-searching and investigative activities were carried out. In order to ensure radiation and nuclear safety at the state border, the Service was in constant coordination with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other respective agencies.

In 2021, respective units of the Service suppressed the facts of illicit handling of radioactive substances. Investigations were launched on 2 criminal cases and 2 individuals were prosecuted.

Attempts of Damaging Security Environment and Destabilization

Damaging security environment and destructive activities

External actors seeking to obtain/enhance leverages over Georgia, for the purposes of pursuing their ideological, religious and economic policies, along with other resources, used the capabilities of the citizens of Georgia loyal towards them due to material and/or other interests, as well as foreign nationals staying in Georgia under various status.

Throughout the reporting year, in compliance with the requirements envisaged by the legislation, operational and operational-technical measures were actively carried out within the scope of the cases investigated by the State Security Service. In 2021, based on obtained information and factual materials, Counterintelligence Department of the Service launched investigation on 10 criminal cases. Investigation on 2 criminal cases was launched by State Security Department of the Service. Furthermore, operational information obtained by relevant structural units of the State Security Service was forwarded to other investigative authorities in accordance to investigative jurisdiction, where investigation was launched on several criminal cases.

The forces seeking to damage Georgia's security environment, aimed at harming Georgia's relations with strategic partners, tarnishing Georgia's image of being a democratic and stable country, stirring unrest in public order, interfering in the internal political processes and promoting constant tensions while carrying out their activities. Their actions and attempts of destabilization were also directed to undermining the forms of state governance and hindering the functioning of state institutions.

Forces interested in the abovementioned, tried to spread worldview among the population tailored to their interests through various methods, including disinformation and propaganda, as well as by means of so-called soft-power and covert operations.

In 2021, the tendency of activation in various forms of political forces having possible connection with destructive external actors has emerged. These subjects were actively striving to spread ideology tailored against pro-western course through various platforms (including, social networks, websites, internet televisions, TV broadcasting). They abused the right to freedom of speech and expression and were deliberately spreading the ideology prejudicial to democracy.

Throughout the reporting period, the attempts of obtaining information on important and resonant events in Georgia and involvement efforts in mentioned processes by the forces possibly affiliated to special services of foreign countries were also identified. These activities were aimed at directing public sentiments in accordance with their interests, as well as provoking various destructive processes in the country.

In frequent cases, information spread about certain processes and events in sharply exaggerated form served the purpose of frightening population, deliberately misleading the society, artificially stirring protests with regard to some matters in accordance with their own interests, deepening polarization and therefore, supporting processes damaging country's security by application of all the abovementioned.

Attempts of destabilization

Deliberate politicization of certain issues (including security and law enforcement ones) was underway in an effort of escalating the situation to the maximum extent and organizing various

provocative actions. This was aimed at facilitating and, as appropriate, worsening constant internal political tensions in the country and escalate them as the need arises.

In this regard, in 2021, certain political groups and their leaders operating in Georgia became especially active. Security environment has being substantially damaged by destructive and violent calls and attempts aimed at polarizing society, hampering work of state authorities, creating destabilization and overthrowing government.

During the reporting period, the Service launched a criminal investigation on the fact of conspiracy to overthrow the state authority.

According to the evidence obtained during the investigation, it was revealed that in order to overthrow the government in an unconstitutional, violent way, it was planned to mobilize destructive forces, block the roads by various means, block and storm state agencies. The involvement of former law enforcement officers in these processes was actively considered.

In close coordination with other state agencies, on this case the Service carried out respective preventive measures, as a result of which, development of more severe and irreversible processes which could possibly be used by special services of foreign countries hostile to Georgia were avoided.

Moreover, for the preventive purposes, the Service was proactively informing public on real plans and goals of the certain group.

Disinformation and Other Threats of “Hybrid Warfare”

Throughout the reporting period, “hybrid threats” directed against Georgia by certain countries and their special services posed a significant challenge to state security. In order to achieve their own geopolitical or economic goals, these actors continued the coordinated and, in many cases, unified application of so-called softpower, covert operations and so-called information warfare instruments.

Disinformation and propaganda

In 2021, so-called information warfare waged by certain countries took on an even larger scale. In a number of occasions, issues related to disinformation and propaganda defined an agenda for interstate relations worldwide.

Individual actors have further refined the technologies of information operations and psychological influence. In terms of spreading of disinformation, along with traditional media, social networks and mobile applications were increasingly used by special services of foreign countries.

In 2021, the main targets of these disinformation campaigns again were the foreign policy course of the country and the issue of integration into the Euro-Atlantic space. Attempts were made to discredit

the country's strategic partners and allies among the Georgia's population by spreading fake news and fabricated stories.

In 2021, in the context of the novel coronavirus pandemic, manipulation with the health of the population was still relevant, which was actively carried out by certain countries and persons under their influence.

During the reporting year, the State Security Service was continuously monitoring the ongoing so-called information warfare processes, identifying individuals and organizations involved in these campaigns, as well as their funding sources, determining interconnections among various actors and methods used, assessing potential risks and taking measures provided by the legislation.

On the territory of Georgia, the Service conducted operational control over the entities promoting such disinformation and propaganda activities.

Due to the specifics of the difficult-to-predict and multifaceted threat of the issue, active inter-agency coordination at national level, as well as sharing of information on the various manifestations of these threats were carried out.

In addition, in 2021, disinformation campaigns launched in previous years against the State Security Service itself and the security sector in general intensified.

Politically motivated and agitated individuals made absurd and detrimental accusations against the Service, including on alleged collaboration on political grounds with special services of foreign countries and alleged participation of Service's leadership in illegal commercial activities.

Despite the fact that the Service repeatedly disseminated information based on legal and factual grounds, the facts were intentionally distorted with prior knowledge and false information built on lies and subjective opinions was spread with the aim of deliberately misleading the public.

Information spread in 2021 in relation with so-called files allegedly created as a result of so-called covert surveillance, where only text-type documents were presented, was particularly damaging. Prior to completion of the investigation, the allegations voiced in the form of assertion, based on completely unappealable, inaccurate and unverified information, as well as extreme politicization of the issue and its deliberate removal from legal context, served to the subjective political agenda of certain political forces.

Within the framework of investigation ongoing on the fact of violation of the secrecy of private communication, the State Security Service closely cooperates with the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia. It is in the objective interest of the Service, that a comprehensive and thorough investigation be conducted and the verified information be provided to the public.

Performances, discrediting statements and appeals made by certain subjects or politically motivated forces, as well as the dissemination of unverified information in the form of assertion about the

activities of the Service, create a dangerous tendency of manipulation with the national security issues, which might be used by a number of special services of foreign countries in accordance with their own interests.

Such destructive campaigns damage the country's security system and the subjects represented in it, contribute to the reduction of public interest towards issues of state importance, and ultimately, hinder joint efforts of the state and the general public to maintain peace and a security environment in the country.

So-called soft power and covert operations

During the reporting period, so-called soft power policy of certain countries and attempts of its realization had significant negative affects on the security environment of Georgia. The special services of foreign countries were trying to actively use capabilities of political and academic circles, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and foundations operating in their own countries for carrying out various types of intelligence activities.

Through these organizations, the states interested in gaining influence over Georgia sought to establish close relations with citizens loyal to them in Georgia, representatives of the cultural sphere, student circles and civic activists, as well as with individual experts, politologists and representatives of the business sector. Various seminars, conferences, educational and cultural events held in their own or third countries were actively used for these connections.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service took under control such activities, as well as attempts to hold various events on the territory of Georgia. A number of preventive measures were taken to deter activities planned by foreign countries through using elements of “hybrid warfare” against Georgia.

“Humanitarian” projects initiated by certain actors were suppressed through involvement of the Service. It was revealed that through these projects special services of foreign countries were trying to propagandize the political course of their governments, to collect information on current developments in Georgia and to increase relevant resources with the aim of exerting influence over the processes.

As a result of operational measures taken by the Service, the specific areas of interest of special services of foreign countries were identified in this regard. So-called donor organizations operating abroad that allegedly supported establishment of organizations in Georgia and facilitated the conduction of anti-western propaganda were identified.

In 2021, through conduction of counterintelligence activities, the Service identified a number of groups staffed by foreign nationals. Destructive goals and interests of the members of these groups

were revealed. In order to restrict their activities, complex measures were taken in accordance with the legislation.

During the reporting period, various sociological surveys were revealed, which might have been conducted in line with the interests of special services of foreign countries. These surveys aimed at identifying the target groups for “impact operations”, as well as at studying public opinion with regard to various matters.

Certain actors continued efforts to seek the leverages of the ideological influence over various ethnic, religious, or social groups in the country. In this process, their goal was to stir up anti-state sentiments within certain groups of citizens of Georgia.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service took under operational control the organizations involved in similar activities abroad and subjects in Georgia having possible connections with them, who might facilitate the incitement of hatred and separatist sentiments.

In order to prevent and detect violations of the law, the processes taking place in this regard were controlled and analyzed. Measures envisaged by the legislation, including border control mechanisms, were applied to certain individuals.

In 2021, the Service, on the basis of preliminary obtained information and conducted operational measures, suppressed attempts of realization of activities detrimental to the country, while respective countermeasures were taken in relation to certain subjects.

During the reporting period, certain groups were particularly interested in matters sensitive to the population of Georgia. Public opinion surveys were conducted and information was collected on significant developments, followed by promotion of pseudo-patriotic, destructive processes through managing the certain processes or partially intervening in them.

In 2021, one of such issues revealed was the construction of hydropower plants in Georgia, with regard to which active attempts aimed at polarizing the population by external actors took place several times in different years. Interested forces actively applied disinformation-propaganda, covert operations and so-called soft power tools to aggravate the issue to a critical point. These processes obviously went beyond self-organized civil protest and posed threat to the energy security of the country.

Cybersecurity

Cyber attacks and cyber intelligence operations directed against Georgia represent considerable part of covert activities conducted by special services of foreign countries and actors affiliated with them. In 2021, critical information infrastructure, in particular, information systems and technologies used in the process of conduction of functions having critical importance for the state and public and provision of services were the targets of these actors in Georgia.

The main goal of special services of foreign countries and groups affiliated with them was to identify vulnerable parts of these systems and to exploit them for the conduction of various cyberoperations, including those aimed at hampering the functioning of critically important sectors or organizations.

Such cyberattacks pose significant challenge to national security of the country, including the financial and economic fields. Besides, such operations aim at causing unrest in public, as well as instigating the feeling of insecurity.

Throughout the reporting period, the Law of Georgia on Information Security was amended, clearly defining the role and powers of the State Security Service in the field of ensuring security of cyber space. In this direction, consideration was given to increasing the capabilities of the Service in countering cyber attacks and to improving respective legal basis.

Within the framework of reforming cybersecurity sector, subordinate normative basis essential for the execution of the above-mentioned functions was created, relevant institutional and organizational measures were implemented. Furthermore, under ISO 27000 family of standards, the minimal standards of information security, rules of classification of computer incidents, rules of conduct of Computer Emergency Response Team and other subordinate normative acts were elaborated.

In 2021, the State Information and Cybersecurity Center was established within the LEPL-Operational-Technical Agency of the Service, which ensures the creation and operation of a unified network system for monitoring cyber incidents. The Center will respond to identified cyber incidents and assist relevant critical information system entities, repel cyber attacks and take necessary measures for minimizing harmful consequences.

Fight against Terrorism

Throughout 2021, challenges of international terrorism continued to occupy prominent place in global security environment. During the reporting period, major threats stemmed from the terrorist organizations: “Daesh”, “Taliban”, “Al-Qaeda”.

In 2021, despite pandemic and related restrictions, manifestations of terrorism and violent extremism occurred at various locations.

Existing Situation with regard to International Terrorism and Violent Extremism

“Daesh”

The territories of Syria and Iraq remained a main area of operation for “Daesh”. Besides, its regional units continued to be active on the African continent – particularly in its western part, where local

military personnel and troops deployed within the international missions, as well as civilians were targets for terrorists.

In 2021, activities of the wing of “Daesh” operating in Afghanistan – “Islamic State - Khorasan Province” (ISIS-K) forged ahead and, through a number of large-scale terrorist acts, it demonstrated its capabilities and conducted regular attacks against members of “Taliban”.

Terrorist fighters of “Daesh” and their family members placed in prisons/camps in Syria still constituted a problem. They carried out attacks, as well as attempted to flee; there was a danger of their arrival in various countries. At the same time, there was a high risk of radicalization of children on the ground. It should be mentioned, that their repatriation still remained a problematic issue.

“Daesh” demonstrated its fighting capability in 2021 too. Notwithstanding counterterrorism operations carried out by the International Coalition, this terrorist organization still represents one of the key terrorist threats to the world. It still has the capability to mobilize financial resources in various countries, radicalize, recruit and engage citizens in terrorist activities.

“Taliban”

In 2021, since “Taliban” took over the power in Afghanistan, terrorism related situation has significantly changed in the region. Within the given reality, threat of creating favorable environment for terrorism, as well as using the territory of Afghanistan as a kind of a safe haven by other terrorist organizations has emerged. Due to this reason, strengthening of “Taliban” constitutes a significant challenge to both the region, as well as other states of the world. It is worth mentioning that at this point, it is not in the interests of the organization to carry out terrorist activities beyond Afghanistan, however, the possibility that other terrorist organizations might use the country’s territory with the aim of organizing terrorist acts across the globe cannot be excluded.

It is significant that throughout the reporting period, as a result of “Taliban”’s activities, certain challenges have already emerged in the context of global security. This was related to the situation when hundreds of thousands of citizens sought shelter, including in European countries, due to the grave condition existing in Afghanistan. Past experience in terms of travel of radicalized and terrorism-related individuals among refugees fleeing from Syria and Iraq should be taken into consideration in this regard.

Supporters of terrorist ideology assess “Taliban”’s seizure of power in Afghanistan as a significant “success”. This might become a kind of a motivating, facilitating factor of terrorist propaganda for terrorist organizations and certain radicalized individuals.

“Al-Qaeda”

Throughout 2021, no tendencies in terms of significant strengthening or weakening of “Al-Qaeda” were observed. Information related to death/serious illness of the leader of the terrorist organization was disseminated in multiple occasions, but was not confirmed.

During the reporting period, terrorist organization’s territorial units continued their active conduct in Syria and Yemen. “Al-Qaeda”-affiliated African group stood out for its intensive activities. Fight against the Western countries remained the key purpose of the terrorist organization. Besides, local security/government forces also were the targets of its terrorist units. Furthermore, representatives of the terrorist organization attacked civilians too.

“Al-Qaeda” has been maintaining close contact with “Taliban” before and after the seizure of power in Afghanistan by the latter. There is a possibility that “Taliban’s” so-called governance play a significant role in terms of strengthening and attracting resources for “Al’Qaeda”.

Violent Extremism

Throughout 2021, manifestations of violent extremism still remained one of the challenges. Certain groups were able to unite citizens behind extremist ideas and use them for their own purposes. In this context, critical growth of society’s dependence on internet against the background of restrictions imposed due to global pandemic represented a significant triggering factor. Basic motive conducive to violent extremism was intolerance on racial, ethnic and religious grounds.

Taking into consideration the global situation related to international terrorism and violent extremism, the State Security Service of Georgia conducted monitoring of security situation in this regard, collection and analysis of relevant information, identification and assessment of threats, as a result of which respective preventive measures were planned and implemented.

Georgia’s Counterterrorism Effort

In 2021, the State Security Service actively continued its counterterrorism activities. This included the identification of terrorism-related challenges, enhancement of international cooperation with regard to obtaining and sharing information, conduction of preventive measures with the aim of reducing threats, improvement of existing counterterrorism mechanisms and enhancement of capabilities of response to threats. Among them, the Service assessed and recorded high-risk targets of potential terrorist attack. Respective measures were taken with the aim of enhancing security. Employees of the units directly involved in counterterrorism activities participated in various trainings on a regular basis for improving their professional skills.

Counterterrorism activities carried out by Georgia were positively assessed in the Annual Country Report on Terrorism published by the U.S. Department of State¹.

¹ The report was released on December 16, 2021.

According to the document, there were no terrorist incidents in Georgia and Georgia has effective tools for countering terrorism and violent extremism.

The report highlights that the State Security Service, which is the lead agency handling terrorism-related incidents and investigations, works in close cooperation with other relevant agencies engaged in the fight against terrorism.

The document notes, that the State Security Service is well equipped and well trained; Trainings on issues related to terrorism, violent extremism, and radicalization are held at the Training Center of the Service.

Georgia, alongside several tens of countries, was defined as a safe country while being evaluated through criteria of impact of terrorism in the annual report on “Global Terrorism Index” released by “Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). This implies that terrorist incidents were not detected in Georgia and that the situation in the country with regard to terrorism improved in comparison to the previous year.

Terrorist Threats and Challenges Facing Georgia

Possible threats and challenges facing Georgia emerging from international terrorist organizations are:

- Attempts by supporters of international terrorist organizations to carry out possible attack on the territory of Georgia;
- Possible entry into the country of the citizens of Georgia fighting in Syria and Iraq in the ranks of “Daesh” and “Al-Qaeda”;
- Attempts by foreign terrorist fighters and terrorism-related individuals to enter Georgia, including attempted use of country’s territory as a transit route;
- Possible financing of the activities of terrorist organizations or providing other support;
- Possible recruitment for terrorism of citizens staying on the territory of Georgia by terrorist organizations/their affiliates.

Attempts by supporters of international terrorist organizations to carry out possible attack on the territory of Georgia

It was unfavorable for supporters of terrorist organizations to conduct activities on the territory of Georgia. The State Security Service of Georgia alongside other relevant authorities continued to carry out coordinated activities in the country with the aim of deterring the conduction of terrorism-related activities. As a result of implementation of these measures, terrorism-related individuals found it difficult both to acquire potential supporters in Georgia, as well as to finance terrorist activities. However, it is impossible to entirely exclude the possibility of carrying out of terrorist attack.

As a result of efforts made by the State Security Service, no radical/extremist hotbeds were detected in the country. The number of possible supporters of terrorism in Georgia has significantly reduced. During the reporting period, they were not still able to organize and carry out terrorist activities.

In 2021, there were no terrorist attack carried out in Georgia.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service launched an investigation on two facts of threat of committing terrorist act, as well as on the fact of threat of assaulting the representative of a foreign country enjoying international protection. Investigative activities are still ongoing.

Possible entry into the country of the citizens of Georgia fighting in Syria and Iraq in the ranks of “Daesh” and “Al-Qaeda”

Return of members or possible supporters of terrorist organizations and their family members staying on the territories of Syria and Iraq to the countries of their origin still constitutes a major problem for many states. Georgia is no exception in this regard. At this stage, there are possibly 15 citizens of Georgia and their family members staying in the Syrian Arab Republic, who fought in the ranks of terrorist organizations at different times.

During the reporting period, respective investigative and operational activities continued to be conducted with regard to the citizens of Georgia and their family members staying in Syria and Iraq who were engaged in the activities of terrorist organizations and who supposedly participated in combat activities at different times. In case of their return to Georgia, the State Security Service will apply respective measures envisaged by law.

It should be mentioned that the State will be guided by the best international practice with regard to family members of terrorist fighters whose activities do not contain the signs of crime.

Attempts by foreign terrorist fighters and terrorism-related individuals to enter Georgia, including attempted use of country’s territory as a transit route

Possible attempted crossing of the state border, as well as possible use of Georgia’s territory as part of a transit route with the aim of entry into a particular country by foreign terrorist fighters staying in the Middle East region or by individuals having any form of connection with terrorism still remain a challenge for Georgia.

Throughout the reporting period, counterterrorism screening of the borders of Georgia continued, routes and so-called corridors used for illegal entry into the country were taken under strict control.

In this respect, Georgia continued the fulfillment of international obligations undertaken within the frames of the fight against terrorism.

Possible financing of the activities of terrorist organizations or providing other support

The State Security Service carried out respective operational and investigative activities in order to deter the financing of international terrorist organizations or provision of support to them through any other forms. Permanent monitoring was carried out with regard to various operations and transactions potentially related to terrorism.

As a result of efforts made by the State Security Service and relevant authorities, as well as due to coordination with international partners, no facts of terrorism financing or provision of other support were detected on the territory of Georgia.

Possible recruitment for terrorism of citizens staying on the territory of Georgia by terrorist organizations/their affiliates

The State Security Service continued working on the detection/suppression of dissemination of terrorist ideology in Georgia. Permanent monitoring was carried out in cyber space with regard to propaganda of terrorist ideology, which resulted in the conduction of measures prescribed by law. As a result of response measures carried out in this respect, tens of foreign citizens had to leave the territory of Georgia.

In 2021, the State Security Service launched an investigation on the fact of membership in a terrorist organization. 5 citizens arrested as a result of conducted measures were sentenced to imprisonment. These individuals planned to travel to Middle East and fight in the ranks of terrorist organization. Due to timely response measures carried out by the Service, the fulfillment of such criminal intention was prevented.

During the reporting period, against the background of uncontrolled situation for the central Government in the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region, favorable conditions for various terrorist activities persisted on the ground.

Criminal Cases

During 2021, the State Security Service launched investigation on four criminal cases under the Terrorism Chapter of the Criminal Code. Furthermore, investigative activities continued with regard to crimes detected in previous years.

National Counterterrorism Strategy of Georgia

In 2021, the Permanent Interagency Commission established under the Decree of the Government of Georgia elaborated 2022-2026 National Counterterrorism Strategy and its Action Plan.

The comprehensive political document of the State on counterterrorism and counter-extremism efforts to be implemented by Georgia is based on seven main directions: collection and analysis of terrorism-related information, prevention, protection, preparedness, prosecution, development of

legislative regulatory framework and international cooperation. Each of these defines measures to be implemented by the State under particular direction.

The National Counterterrorism Strategy provides vision, within the scope of which successful fight against terrorism and extremism-related threats can be achieved through consolidated efforts by the State and private sector, civil society and through cooperation with international partners.

The main goal of implementation of Georgia's National Counterterrorism Strategy and its Action Plan is to protect the State and society against threats stemming from terrorism and extremism.

Amendments were adopted with regard to the Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration and Monitoring of Implementation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy and its Action Plan, which further broadened its composition and further enhanced its capacities.

Special Operations Forces

In 2021, the State Security Service was attaching particular attention to improving terrorism threats response, as well as preparedness capabilities for the conduction of other special measures. During the reporting period, the Service's tactical training base for combat groups hosted dozens of various scheduled exercises.

With the aim of maintaining the preparedness capabilities of the Special Operations Forces, they were trained/retrained on a systematic basis in terms of conduction of counterterrorism measures, anti-sabotage operations, as well as mine clearance activities, detection of means of mass destruction, explosive devices and explosive ordnance disposal. The exercises also included trainings and other special programs of snipers, armored personnel carrier crew, paramedics and instructors.

With the aim of improving combat capabilities and introducing modern methods, the Service actively cooperated with strategic partners and allies. Both theoretical, as well as practical exercises conducted in 2021 are worth to mention in this regard.

During the reporting period, tactical trainings on neutralizing of terrorists, releasing of hostages, neutralizing of explosives and hazardous substances were conducted with the support of the United States of America.

Furthermore, in 2021, Special Operations unit of the Service participated in Command and Staff Exercise "Didgori 2021" organized by Georgia's Defense Forces.

Fight against Corruption

Throughout the reporting period, the Anti-corruption Agency of the State Security Service continued the effective conduction of complex anti-corruption measures. As a result of operational-searching and investigative activities, a number of officials and public servants were arrested and prosecuted.

In 2021, the Anti-corruption Agency launched investigations on 53 criminal cases, in particular, on the facts of bribe-taking and bribe-giving in large quantities, abuse of official powers, legalization of illitic income (money laundering), fraud, etc. Criminal proceedings were brought against 162 individuals.

During the reporting period, 153 movable and 7 immovable properties were frozen within the criminal cases run by the Anti-corruption Agency of the State Security Service. The estimated value of the assessed property is approximately GEL 3,200,000. Furthermore, in 2021, as a result of investigative activities, different sums of about 1.850.000 GEL equivalent were seized.

Notwithstanding the effective measures implemented during 2021, circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic still affected anti-corruption activities to some extent.

It is noteworthy, that in 2021, within the investigation carried out on the fact of unauthorized archeological works, officers of the Anti-corruption Agency of the Service seized artifact - unique coin dating back to the period of king of Georgia, David IV the Builder, which is of significant historical value. The coin was handed over to the National Museum of Georgia.

During the reporting period, the Anti-corruption Agency of the State Security Service continued its efforts aimed at prevention, early detection and suppression of corruption offenses. Operational-searching and investigative activities were carried out in an active manner, a number of analytical and preventive measures were implemented.

Prevention of possible engagement of public servants in corruption-related crimes and malfeasance, while reducing the risks of their vulnerability to foreign special services or various criminal groups/certain individuals, remained a priority direction.

In 2021, professional and institutional capabilities of Corruption Prevention Unit of the Agency were further enhanced. As a result of exploring and analyzing the best international experience, the unit developed multiple proposals and initiatives. This included awareness-raising campaigns on corruption-related crimes for public servants, as well as promotion of higher participation of the society in the fight against corruption.

During the reporting period, as a result of various activities carried out in the direction of effective communication with the society and in the field of prevention, citizens' participation in the detection of facts of corruption significantly increased.

This is also evidenced by notifications on corruption offences submitted to the Agency in 2021 by citizens. In particular, 83 notifications were submitted throughout the year, out of which, as a result of active communication with the citizens, criminal investigations were launched on the basis of 23 notifications, 29 notifications were forwarded to other authorities in accordance with the scope of competence, 7 notifications are being examined, 23 notifications did not contain signs of crime, while 1 notification was attached to ongoing criminal case.

In 2021, the project of so-called awareness-raising meetings on matters of combating corruption intended for state and local self-governing bodies was implemented. This project was prepared with cooperation between the State Security Service and the Council of Europe (CoE) within the framework of EU-funded program. Moreover, a special, intra-agency working group composed of specialists of various fields (lawyers, analysts, investigators and specialists of international relations) were actively engaged in terms of defining both the project thematics, as well as the target groups.

Furthermore, with the aim of effective conduction of the above-mentioned meetings, the group of experts was selected during the reporting period, which, within the framework of this program, completed a special training – “Training of Trainers”. As a result of this, dozens of representatives of public and local self-governing authorities were retrained in 2021 by organization of the State Security Service and with the support of the Council of Europe. Awareness-raising activities are permanent and the Service plans to organize them in the future as well.

Elaboration of so-called “Technical Document” within the framework of cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE) was also significant. The document is based on international standards and best practices; Georgia’s experience with regard to fight against corruption in public institutions was also studied and analyzed. The document includes recommendations and specific proposals, which serve the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the activities of the Anti-Corruption Agency.

During the reporting period, considerable steps were taken with regard to deepening of international cooperation in the field of fight against corruption. In 2021, operational, as well as investigative and analytical units of the Anti-Corruption Agency took part in dozens of meetings and activities, which also served the purpose of building qualification and sharing the experience of partner countries.

Active cooperation was underway within the programs supported by the European Union, Council of Europe, NATO, UN and the Embassy of the United States. During the reporting period, high-level bilateral working visits were conducted both in Georgia and the Czech Republic, during which the best anti-corruption practices of the two countries were discussed.

Apart from statistic data on criminal investigations, the efficiency of fight against corruption is evidenced by international ratings and evaluations. According to the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) prepared by “Transparency International”, in 2021, Georgia ranked 45th place among 180 countries and is slightly behind Poland and Italy. Furthermore, according to the mentioned score,

Georgia is ahead of the Czech Republic, Malta, Slovakia, Greece and a number of the Eastern European countries.

In 2021, the Service was constantly providing the information on anti-corruption activities to the public.

Development of Legal Framework and Relationship with Courts

During the reporting year, in order to ensure efficient implementation of the activities envisaged by the legislation, the process of development of relevant normative acts and improvement of the legal basis continued.

In 2021, the State Security Service elaborated and issued up to 180 new legal acts. In addition, the Service provided its position within its competence with regard to more than 250 draft legal acts elaborated by various state agencies.

During the reporting period, a number of internal regulations were elaborated and/or improved, among them additional requirements for employment in the Service were defined, which will facilitate the process of formation of even more highly qualified staff. Based on the relevant legal acts, the internal control mechanisms regarding the issues of incompatibility of interests in the Service became stricter.

The basic principles, legal regulation basis and mechanisms of the issues of whistleblowing in the system of the State Security Service of Georgia were regulated. In addition, the basic principles of protection of whistleblowers were defined. These amendements serve to prevent, detect, suppress the violation of the norms containing general rules provided by the legislation of Georgia, labor discipline or the Code of Ethics, and protect the public interest.

In 2021, the amendments to the Law of Georgia on Information Security represented a significant novelty, according to which the subjects of critical infrastructure were categorized and the standards and means of their protection were improved. In addition, on the basis of the adopted law, the Order of the Head of the Service “On Defining the Rule of Vetting of Organization and/or relevant Employee Applying for Authorization to Conduct Information Security Audit and/or Information System Penetration Testing” was issued.

During the reporting period, the Decree of the Government of Georgia “On Approval of the Rule for Delivery by the Air Carrier, Processing, Storage and Destruction of the Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record” was approved, as a result of which the matters of coordination of the agencies responsible in this field and classification of information were improved.

Based on the recommendations of the Interagency Commission for Free and Fair Elections, additional amendements were made to the Code of Ethics of the employees of the Service. Within the scope of

the Commission, information/notifications related to the Service were actively reviewed and duly addressed.

Within the framework of the controlling tasks assigned by the Administration of the Government of Georgia, in 2021, the Service uninterruptedly provided information on the conduction of measures subject to implementation in accordance with the transitional regulations of the legal acts of the Government.

At the same time, the activities of the State Security Service in terms of relations with the common courts of Georgia during the reporting period, are noteworthy.

Based on the relevant rulings, the Service uninterruptedly provided the common courts with classified and non-classified information/evidences (in total, 1075 pieces of information/evidences) required for the consideration of cases. At the same time, more than 500 documents submitted by the courts were processed within the reporting period.

In 2021, more than 30 civil or administrative litigation cases were run by the State Security Service, out of which 7 cases were completed in various instances. In each case, the court considered the position of the Service as substantiated, which was reflected in relevant decisions.

Protection of Personal Data, Oversight, Accessibility to Public Information

Protection of personal data

During the reporting period, for the purposes of national security, the LEPL - Operative-Technical Agency of Georgia under the Service carried out covert investigative activities and other relevant measures compliant with the requirements of the legislation on the territory of the country. In the course of exercising these powers, the Service paid special attention to the protection of human rights and freedoms, including protection of personal data and inviolability of private life.

During 2021, in total 2082 court rulings on the implementation of covert investigative activities and 190 reasoned motions of prosecutor on the implementation of covert investigative activities as a matter of urgency were submitted by authorized investigative bodies to the LEPL – Operative-Technical Agency.

During the reporting period, in accordance with the requirements envisaged by the legislation, the activities of the LEPL - Operative-Technical Agency were subjected to the Parliament of Georgia, the Prime-Minister, Judiciary, the Prosecutor's Office, State Audit Service and the State Inspector.

During 2021, the parliamentary control mechanisms over the activities of the Operative-Technical Agency were actively applied, in particular, during the reporting period the Trust Group of the

Parliament of Georgia paid two visits to the Agency. Within the frames of visits, the members of the Trust Group got familiar with the main directions of the activities of the Agency, technical, organizational and procedural aspects of the implementation of covert surveillance activities, normative acts regulating the activities of the Agency and legal documentation of the implementation of covert surveillance activities. They also checked the functioning of electronic and special electronic control systems in test mode.

In addition, during the reporting year, the Trust Group submitted information requests in written form in 8 cases on the implemented measures and certain activities of the Agency, which were duly responded. In 2021, in accordance with the legislation, the LEPL - Operative-Technical Agency submitted a statistical and generalized report on the activities of the Agency to the Trust Group of the Parliament of Georgia, the Prime-Minister and the Head of the State Security Service.

In 2021, the State Inspector, in accordance with the requirements envisaged by the legislation, continued the conduction of real-time control measures over covert investigative activities. In this process, the Agency uninterruptedly provided the State Inspector with relevant information, as well as ensured all the necessary conditions for the effective exercise of the State Inspector's powers.

The State Inspector monitored the activities of the Agency through electronic control systems, which at the same time allow the State Inspector to suspend the implementation of a covert investigative activity, if the legal ground for the conduction of covert investigative activity is not provided to the State Inspector in accordance with the procedure and within the period established by the legislation.

At the same time, within the scope of the scheduled and unscheduled inspection powers, during the reporting period, the State Inspector carried out the inspection of covert investigative activities of covert eavesdropping and recording of telephone communication, which took place from 25 February 2021 to 3 August 2021. The inspection did not reveal any violation of the requirements of the legislation by the Agency. In addition, the LEPL - Operative-Technical Agency was given mandatory assignments to be implemented with the aim of improving the certain aspects of personal data processing.

Oversight

The Service, as a body accountable to the Parliament of Georgia, actively cooperated with the legislative body during the reporting period and provided various reports and information reports on the actions conducted or planned in the field of security. The leadership of the Service took part in a number of meetings of the relevant parliamentary committees and meetings held within the scope of the Trust Group.

In 2021, 7 meetings were held with the Trust Group, during which the leadership of the Service, in accordance with the rule established by the legislation, provided information (including information classified as a state secret) on various matters within the competence of the Service. In total, in 2021,

the Service duly responded to 32 questions of the Members of Parliament (out of which 9 questions were submitted within the Trust Group).

At the same time, the Service actively continued the cooperation with the Public Defender and the uninterrupted provision of information (including the information containing state secrets) requested in accordance with the legislation. During the reporting period, 22 letters received from the Public Defender were duly responded.

In the process of carrying out investigations on crimes falling under the investigative jurisdiction of the Service, the Service actively cooperated with the Office of the General Prosecutor of Georgia, which is the authority responsible for conducting oversight over investigations.

During the reporting period, internal control and oversight mechanisms were also effectively applied by the Service, taking into consideration the specifics of the activities of the various units. In this regard, the monitoring over the protection of the rights of individuals placed in temporary detention isolator shall be underlined, which was continuously exercised by the relevant unit. In 2021, individuals placed in isolator were provided with high quality medical care as needed, and safety measures related to the Novel Coronavirus pandemic were observed.

No violations committed by the employees of isolator were revealed by internal monitoring. No facts of torture, inhuman, cruel or degrading treatment were revealed, as well as no complaints were submitted by detainees against employees of an isolator or against employees who arrested them. During the reporting period, the employees received instructions on a systematic basis on the rights of persons temporarily placed in isolator.

Furthermore, no remarks or recommendations regarding human rights were made during the visit conducted by the staff of the Public Defender's Office to the temporary detention isolator of the Service.

As in previous years, in 2021, the Service paid special attention to the proper fulfillment of the requirements of the legislation by employees, observance of professional standards, principles and disciplinary norms established by the Code of Ethics. The General Inspection of the Service, in accordance with the rule established by the legislation of Georgia, systematically monitored the activities of the employees and duly responded to the facts of committing illegal acts. Furthermore, the General Inspection of the Service, within the competence established by the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia, carried out relevant investigative and procedural actions on cases submitted for investigation by the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia or a person authorized by him.

Based on internal inspections conducted and conclusions prepared during the reporting period, 15 disciplinary sanctions, in particular, 1 dismissal, 1 strict reprimand, 7 reprimands and 6 warnings, were imposed to employees of the State Security Service for various disciplinary misconducts. In addition, instructions of a recommendatory nature were given to 8 employees.

In 2021, the General Inspection of the Service launched investigation on 6 criminal cases.

Accessibility to public information

It is especially important for the Service to properly inform the public and provide with correct, truthful facts. Against the background of the complex security challenges facing the country, raising civic awareness and communicating with the population in accordance with national interests are, in many cases, crucial for certain processes.

For this purpose, during the reporting period, through the official website of the Service (ssg.gov.ge) and other channels of communication, the population was constantly informed about the measures taken by the Service and their results. The relevant unit proactively provided objective and verified information to the media and other informational outlets on the matters within the competence of the Service.

During the reporting year, the requested public information was uninterruptedly released by the Service. On December 10, 2021, in accordance with the requirements of the legislation, the relevant report on release of public information by the Service was submitted to the President of Georgia, the Prime-Minister and the Parliament. The report was also sent to the LEPL - Legislative Herald of Georgia.

From January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, the Service received 72 requests (including from citizens and civil society representatives) for public information, out of which 60 requests were satisfied, 3 requests were satisfied partially, 1 request according to the scope of competence was forwarded to other public agency for further response, while 8 requests were not satisfied.

During the reporting period, the hotline ("123") of the Service was actively used to provide or request information by citizens (more than 1000 submissions were received), and these submissions were duly responded by the Service.

The information received through the electronic means of the Service (info.ssg.gov.ge) was processed on a systematic basis. In total, 672 electronic requests were duly responded. The Service responded to more than 3,600 correspondences received from citizens, various agencies and organizations, including the Public Defender.

International Cooperation and Interagency Coordination

International cooperation

In light of considerable increase of threats in the region and generally, given the new challenges emerged in the world in 2021 in terms of security, close and enduring cooperation with strategic

partners and friendly states, as well as with leading regional and international organizations is gaining more significance. During the reporting period, a number of efficient steps were taken by the Service both in bilateral and multilateral formats to further strengthen and solidify partner relations.

Within the framework of cooperation with strategic allies, the leadership of the Service has been systematically providing the partners with information on the security environment, including the ongoing processes in the occupied territories, expected threats, various developments taking place in the region and related threats and challenges. Taking into consideration the specific nature of the Service's activities, cooperation and tight coordination was maintained in various formats with strategic allies on specific directions, including counterintelligence, terrorism, cybersecurity and hybrid threats.

In 2021, numerous high-level meetings were held with the leadership and representatives of diplomatic missions, respective agencies of partner countries and international organizations.

At the same time, in terms of sharing information and experience on security issues, during the reporting period expert meetings were held and cooperation within the frames of bilateral working groups was conducted at the leadership level of the Service, as well as through involvement of professional employees. In certain cases, within the frames of existing partnership, the basis was laid down for new projects and initiatives in the field of security cooperation.

For the purposes of timely and secure exchange of information with international partners, the Service has been actively and efficiently applying respective international tools of communication and mechanisms provided by national legislation, including Interpol and Europol channels, network of liaison officers and police attachés accredited in Georgia, etc.

In 2021, State Security Service continued the gradual development of international legal framework in the fields of law enforcement and security. These measures included the initiation of conclusion of international agreements on exchange and mutual protection of classified information, as well as the international treaties and memoranda on law enforcement cooperation with NATO and EU member states and other partner states.

Georgia concluded treaties on cooperation in the fight against crime with 29 partner states (most of them are NATO and EU Member States) and an agreement on operational and strategic cooperation with Europol.

At the same time, within the reporting period the agreements on exchange and mutual protection of classified information were initiated with partner states, on which the active consultations with respective agencies of the mentioned countries are underway. Overall, upon the initiative of State

Security Service, such agreements are concluded with 24 states (most of them are NATO and EU member states) and with the EU.

In 2021, the Service within its competence actively participated in the process of preparation of international instruments. From the legal and security perspective, the Service processed and analyzed more than 50 draft international agreements regulating various fields, including migration and visa-free movement, air traffic, defense, border, maritime, customs, economy, fight against crime and other areas. With regard to the mentioned documents, security issues of state significance were reflected/considered from the standpoint of the Service.

In terms of international cooperation, the State Security Service attaches significant priority to the partner relations with the respective agencies of EU and NATO member states in the field of security. The close relations established with the relevant agencies and Embassy of the USA, the main strategic partner of Georgia, shall be underlined. It included a wide range of cooperation in the directions of operational and analytical activities.

Moreover, in 2021 the Service was actively engaged in joint efforts on combating international terrorism and WMD threats, as well as in the areas of border security, cyberoperations and response to other emergencies. The support of the US partners in the mentioned fields was very important for building the capacities of the Service, both in terms of professional development and technical equipment of certain units. Within the reporting period, more than 100 representatives of the Service participated in dozens of various study courses, training programs, field and command and staff exercises delivered with the assistance of the US side. With the US support, the employees of the Service continued their participation in the master's long-term programs of the US Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), training courses and workshops organized by the George Marshall European Center for Security Studies (GCMC), the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) and National Academy of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

In 2021, the Service actively continued cooperation with NATO and was involved in the implementation process of Substantial NATO-Georgia Package. Within the reporting period, the representatives of the Service participated in events on various security matters organized by NATO Partnership Cooperation Menu (PCM), NATO-Georgia Professional Development Programme (PDP) and NATO Liaison Office.

The representatives of the Service were actively engaged in the NATO courses on mobile application and defence against terrorism, in the meetings held on hybrid threats and sustainability of Georgia, as well as in open source intelligence training. Several informational meetings were held with regard to NATO Building Integrity Programme. Furthermore, the Service submitted information on

activities implemented within the scope of obligations taken within the frames of Annual National Program (ANP) with regard to implementation of the matters of state security and terrorism.

With regard to international cooperation in the fields of law enforcement and security, enhancement of partner relations with the EU and its agencies is of particular significance and priority. In 2021, the Service was engaged in a number of activities of EU project on Technical Assistance to Support the Fight against Organized Crime. With the financial support of this project, a significant initiative – Winter School of Security – was implemented by the Service in 2021.

The Service also actively participated in EU-CoE joint projects. In this respect, significant activities in the field of fight against corruption within the scope of “Partnership for Good Governance” (PGG II) project shall be especially underlined.

Relevant units of the Service, in accordance with their competences, actively participated in the implementation of both Association Agreement and the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Association Agenda, as well as in the negotiations on the Georgia-EU Association Agenda 2021-2027. The Service participated in a meeting of the Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security held within the frames of the Association Agreement. The involvement of the Service in the implementation of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan between Georgia and the EU was also important.

The Service effectively continued its engagement within bilateral and multilateral formats with international partners in the field of counterterrorism. Georgia is an active member of the Global Coalition against “Daesh” since its inception and actively participates in various activities of the Coalition. In 2021, representatives of the Service participated in the meetings of working groups and sub-groups of the Coalition.

In addition, during the reporting period, the Service participated in plenary sessions and working group meetings of the Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT), as well as various international and regional seminars and events organized under the auspices of the United Nations, OSCE, Interpol, Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM). In this regard, notable events were the Second United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, the OSCE Conference on Terrorism, Violent Extremism and Radicalization, as well as events organized by Interpol on sharing of information on foreign terrorist fighters.

EU and NATO member states represent the key partners of the State Security Service in the field of the fight against proliferation of weapons and materials of mass destruction. In this regard, in 2021, the Service was actively involved in activities within the framework of various international instruments and initiatives. During the reporting period, the relevant units of the Service participated in plenary sessions and working group meetings of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism

(GICNT), the G7 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (G7GP) and other international platforms.

As in previous years, the Service successfully continued the cooperation with the European Union (EU) Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative.

In 2021, the Service, as the host of the Initiative's South East and East Europe Regional Secretariat, effectively facilitated the functioning of the Secretariat and coordinated the activities supported within the EU Initiative among 10 countries of the region.

As a result, dozens of regional seminars, thematic meetings, field and theoretical trainings were held during the reporting period. Expert experience was shared among the countries.

In 2021, through active participation of relevant representatives of the Service, with the support of the EU Initiative, implementation of the regional project on significant matters of CBRN security was started, as well as 2 large-scale projects were additionally initiated, which will be implemented in the future.

During the reporting period, continuing the close cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute was also significant. Within the frames of ongoing project on combating trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials in the Black Sea region supported by the Governments of the United States of America, United Kingdom and Norway, the Service hosted a large-scale regional exercise with the participation of Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova.

Within the framework of the obligations taken by Georgia under various international agreements and multilateral conventions, during the reporting year, the State Security Service prepared a number of reports in the areas and on matters falling under its competence. Among them, this included the information on the implementation of the obligations and recommendations envisaged by international legal instruments of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, the documents adopted within the OSCE.

Interagency cooperation and coordination

With regard to interagency cooperation, during the reporting period, the State Security Service carried out a number of significant activities and measures directed at raising awareness on certain threats in state agencies, sharing information, effective planning of relevant countermeasures and other purposes of ensuring security. In the process of prevention of, timely response to, as well as suppression/neutralization of the current or expected threats and challenges, mutually agreed activities and coordinated decisions with respective state agencies often bear crucial importance.

During the reporting period, coordination between relevant state agencies with regard to various directions of national security was further enhanced. A number of interagency meetings and joint events were held throughout the year.

A close cooperation of the Service with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Finance, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, Financial Monitoring Service and the Special State Protection Service shall be noted. Furthermore, cooperation mechanisms in operational and analytical directions existing between the State Security Service of Georgia and the Intelligence Service of Georgia with regard to detecting/neutralizing the external threats shall be underlined.

High officials of the Government were debriefed on risks and challenges identified in the context of state security. The Service proactively ensured the issuance of recommendations related to the mentioned threats and sharing of opinion on the activities subject to implementation, including within the frames of National Security Council of Georgia.

During the reporting period, the Service actively participated in the work of various interagency commissions and councils, including the Anti-Corruption Council, the Interagency Coordinating Council against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the State Commission on Migration Issues, the Interagency Coordinating Council for Combating Organized Crime, the Joint Maritime Operations Center, the Interagency Government Commission Created for the Implementation of the Engagement Strategy Action Plan, the Interagency Council on Elaboration of Foreign Policy Strategy and Action Plan, commissions on Georgia's integration into NATO and EU, and other interagency mechanisms.

At the same time, during the reporting period, the Service continued to actively participate in the activities of the State Commission on Migration Issues and was involved in the elaboration of the 2022 Action Plan of Georgia's 2022-2030 Migration Strategy and 2021 Migration Profile, as well as in the local and international events dedicated to the improvement of migration management system and related security issues.

In 2021, the fifth session of the Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration and Monitoring of Implementation of the National Strategy on Fight against Terrorism and its Relevant Action Plan was held under the leadership of the Head of State Security Service. The report on annual implementation of the 2019-2021 Action Plan of the National Strategy on Fight against Terrorism was presented to the members of the Commission. At the same time, the decision on submission of a new National Counterterrorism Strategy of Georgia (2022-2026) and its Action Plan to the Government of Georgia for approval was taken during the session.

The Commission also discussed the issue on further strengthening of interagency coordination with the aim of facilitating a proper implementation of a new Strategy and its Action Plan, including, through intensification of the activities of four thematic working groups. Within the process of

elaboration of the National Counterterrorism Strategy and its Action Plan, the Service maintained a close coordination with all member agencies of the Commission. At the same time, the Service conducted active communication with international partners, relevant committees of the Parliament of Georgia, as well as representatives of the civil sector.

During the reporting period, the Government of Georgia approved 2021-2030 National Strategy on the Reduction of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats elaborated through active coordination and participation of the State Security Service. At the same time, under the leadership of the Service, the Interagency Coordination Council on Combating CBRN threats developed and adopted 3-year Action Plan (2021-2023) of the mentioned Strategy. The Service actively facilitated the implementation of the tasks defined by the Action Plan and the proper coordination among the member agencies of the Council. At the same time, during the reporting year, several interagency meetings and activities, including various thematic trainings and exercises were held upon the initiative of the Service.

The steps taken towards raising of awareness in state agencies with regard to some threats were significant. In this regard, awareness-raising meetings with the representatives of state agencies and local self-governing bodies within the Council of Europe “Partnership for Good Governance” (PGG II) project shall be underlined, which aimed at providing public servants with information on the matters of fight against corruption, role of prevention of corruption and importance of their participation in this process.

In 2021, the Service actively participated in interagency command-staff exercise “Didgori 2021” organized by the Defense Forces of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. This exercise aimed at enhancing the coordination and improving the interaction between state agencies during the state of war and crisis situation.

During the reporting period, the communication, sharing of recommendations and opinions with independent experts, analysts and representatives of civil sector working in the security field, as well as enhancement and development of partner relations initiated by the Service were also important.

In 2021, a number of meetings were held with the representatives of non-governmental organizations, scientific-academic and expert circles. Among them, it shall be underlined that the Platform for Public-Private Dialogue (Council) on Terrorism and Violent Extremism was established upon the initiative of the State Security Service within the scope of cooperation with the Georgian Center for Strategy and Development (GCSD). Nine nongovernmental organizations working on relevant matters participate in this Platform alongside state agencies. During the reporting period, two meetings were held within the scope of the Platform, where the Service presented the draft of a new National Counterterrorism Strategy and consequently, its final version to the civil sector.

In 2021, within the scope of cooperation with the representatives of civil sector, certain joint activities were planned on specific issues of CBRN security. Furthermore, during the reporting period, a working meeting on the cybersecurity issues was organized by the LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of the Service with the field experts and the representatives of civil sector.

Sustainability and Institutional Development

Existence of a highly qualified human resources, appropriate infrastructure and modern material-technical base is of utmost importance for the comprehensive operation of the Service, as well as for ensuring its further development and institutional sustainability. During the reporting period, the Service carried out respective measures and took effective steps in this direction.

Human resources and professional development

Effective management of human resources and maintaining highly-qualified, professional staff to the maximum extent possible, as well as attracting and motivating the best personnel, and facilitating their career growth in this process are of a critical importance for the Service in the course of implementation of its powers prescribed by law.

In 2021, the Service continued to provide its incumbent personnel and prospective candidates with equal opportunities. The employees enjoyed high standard working conditions and proper social package.

Similarly to the previous years, in accordance with the rule established by legislation, the Service continued to encourage and motivate its employees, create opportunities for their career growth, as well as facilitate them in such manner, which ensures realization of skills and potential of professional staff to the maximum extent. In 2021, the Service awarded incentives of various forms to more than 570 employees, also considering the fact that often the activities of the employees were related to certain threats and risks.

A modern system of selection, evaluation and training-retraining of the staff is introduced in the State Security Service. The system is in compliance with the best practices of EU and NATO member countries. This system enables an effective determination of candidate's qualification compliance with the requirements envisaged by particular position (staffing position). In 2021, the criterion of compulsory knowledge of English or another foreign language based on the specifics of the position was added to the selection system. In addition, English language proficiency testing was introduced in accordance with NATO STANAG 6001 standard.

Within the process of human resources management, the State Security Service attaches a great importance to continuous professional development of the personnel, constant

enhancement/improvement of their practical and professional skills, as well as proper training and retraining of the prospective candidates.

In 2021, several hundreds of the employees completed tactical and special training programs, orientation courses, as well as other compulsory theoretical and practical exercises introduced at the Training Center of the Service. The Service also ensured the improvement of foreign language proficiency level for the employees.

Particular attention was paid to training and retraining of personnel in special disciplines, including theoretical and practical trainings on the use of firearms and special equipment.

Furthermore, alongside special disciplines, it is significant for the Service to enhance analytical capabilities of the relevant units. In 2021, analytical team of the Service participated in various special training courses, meetings and conferences, including the trainings and events organized by strategic partners.

Support provided by the United States, European countries, EU and NATO in the process of professional development and upgrading of qualification of Service's employees shall be underlined. The representatives of various units of the Service actively participated in a number of significant training and retraining courses with the assistance of the mentioned partners. The trainings and tactical exercises aimed at improving preparedness and response capabilities with regard to terrorist incidents, WMD threats and other crisis situations were particularly important in this respect.

Training center of the State Security Service

Within the reporting period, the educational process continued uninterruptedly at the Training Center of the State Security Service. For this purpose and taking into consideration the situation conditioned due to pandemic of Novel Coronavirus, remote and hybrid education methods were introduced. Furthermore, with the aim of ensuring quality of the educational programs, monitoring of training programs was introduced and uninterruptedly exercised in the Training Center throughout 2021.

The Center, as a relatively newly established structural unit of the Service, continued the realization of infrastructural projects essential for its functioning, as well as development of material-technical resources. Furthermore, highly qualified trainers and instructors were attracted from local and international expert circles, as well as through using professional resources of current and former employees of the Service.

At the same time, in 2021, establishing partner relations and signing of memoranda of mutual cooperation between the Training Center of the Service and other agencies were significant. During the reporting period, such memoranda were drafted and signed with the Ministry of Education and

Science of Georgia, Ilia Chavchavadze National Parliamentary Library of Georgia and Public Audit Institute.

Memorandum of mutual cooperation was also signed between the Training Center of the Service and the Defence Institution Building School, which envisages cooperation in certain projects and activities, including a jointly developed leadership and management program for security sector.

In light of challenges and threats facing the country, the Service attaches a great importance to proper training of prospective employees and attracting motivated youths with high moral characteristics and practical skills for this purpose. In 2021, the Service carried out a number of significant activities and innovative projects.

During the reporting period, a significant and innovative project – “Winter School of Security” was implemented in cooperation with the European Union, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Justice and other partner agencies. 24 students with high academic performance who were selected from various institutions of higher education participated in the project.

Within the frames of the program, the students were given the unique opportunity to familiarize with global, regional and national security challenges. The Georgian and foreign experts shared with the students information and experience on the ways how relevant agencies of Georgia and various countries cope with the existing threats. The program was interactive and theoretical courses were supported with practical, simulation and team exercises.

Material-technical and financial resources

During the reporting period, with the aim of institutional sustainability and full functioning of the Service, relevant structural units continued to provide various divisions with proper infrastructure and material-technical resources, periodically updating and improving technical and various means in accordance to the modern standards.

Within the budgetary funds of 2021, the Economic Department of the Service concluded 362 contracts with total value of GEL 19 904 819. Within the budgetary funds of this year, 183 tenders were announced and 154 contracts were concluded with the respective companies within the conducted tenders. As a result of the contracts signed through electronic tenders, the savings amounted to GEL 388 773.