



Economic and Social Council

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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Georgia*

1. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Georgia¹ at its 6th and 7th meetings,² held on 11 and 12 February 2026, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 26th meeting, held on 25 February 2026.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission by the State Party of its third periodic report and the supplementary information provided in the replies to the list of issues.³ The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue held with the State Party's delegation.

3. The Committee acknowledges that Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, are not under the effective control of the Government of Georgia and that this fact poses severe challenges for the State Party to fully implement its obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee is concerned that individuals living in the above-mentioned areas do not enjoy the same level of protection with respect to their economic, social and cultural rights and that they face such practices as forced displacement and evictions, the seizure of private land, house demolitions, restrictions on gaining access to healthcare services and education, the destruction of cultural sites and the denial of access to humanitarian aid. While recognizing the difficulties faced by the State Party in exercising its jurisdiction over these regions and their resources, the Committee, however, reminds the State Party that the Covenant is applicable in its entire territory and consequently it should take all possible measures to ensure that individuals in all parts of its territory enjoy the rights guaranteed to them under the Covenant without discrimination.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the legislative, institutional and policy measures taken to increase the protection of economic, social and cultural rights in the State Party, such as the accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2014), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2010), the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2005) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2005). The Committee also welcomes the ratification in 2014 of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-ninth session (9–25 February 2026).

¹ [E/C.12/GEO/3](#).

² See [E/C.12/2026/SR.6](#) and [E/C.12/2026/SR.7](#).

³ [E/C.12/GEO/RQ/3](#).



Violence and the adoption of the Law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination (2014), the improvements made in reducing the poverty rates and the measures mentioned in the present concluding observations.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

Domestic application of the Covenant

5. While welcoming the information provided by the State Party that the Covenant is considered as directly applicable law and that it has been invoked by the Supreme Court of Georgia, the Committee is concerned about reports that the awareness of the Covenant remains somewhat limited, particularly at lower levels of the justice system.

6. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Take measures to ensure the applicability of all the rights enshrined in the Covenant at all levels of the justice system and before all administrative authorities and facilitate access to effective remedies for victims of violations of those rights;**

(b) **Continue providing training for judges, prosecutors and lawyers on the provisions of the Covenant and the justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights;**

(c) **Continue raising awareness of economic, social and cultural rights among all actors responsible for the implementation of the Covenant;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 9 (1998) on the domestic application of the Covenant.**

National human rights institution

7. While noting the information provided by the State Party regarding the A status rating of the Office of the Public Defender by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and welcoming the increases in recent years in the budget of the Office, the Committee is concerned about reports of an increase of political pressure on the Office in recent years (art. 2 (1)).

8. **The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and ensure that the independence of the Office of the Public Defender is respected in practice as well as in law. In this regard, the Committee recalls its general comment No. 10 (1998) on the role of national human rights institutions in the protection of economic, social and cultural rights.**

Independence of the judiciary

9. The Committee is concerned about reports that the procedures for the appointment, promotion, disciplining and dismissal of judges do not fully ensure their institutional and functional independence, which is essential to ensuring the judicial protection of economic, social and cultural rights.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Take all appropriate legislative and institutional measures to safeguard, both in law and in practice, the independence and impartiality of judges and prosecutors and to ensure their protection from undue influence, including pressure or disciplinary measures from any quarter, inconsistent with the principles of judicial independence;**

(b) **Ensure that the procedures for the appointment, election, promotion or removal of judges and prosecutors are transparent and fully aligned with relevant international standards, including the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary and the Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors;**

(c) **Take into account general comment No. 9 (1998) on the domestic application of the Covenant.**

Human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers working on economic, social and cultural rights

11. The Committee is concerned about reports that human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers working on economic, social and cultural rights have been subjected to various forms of pressure and retaliatory measures, including excessive use of force, arbitrary detention, harassment and threats in connection with their professional or advocacy activities. The Committee is also concerned that the Law on Transparency of Foreign Influence (2024) and the Foreign Agents Registration Act (2025) have reportedly been used in ways that unduly restrict the work of civil society actors.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Strengthen the protection of human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers working on economic, social and cultural rights, as well as their family members;**

(b) **In order to avoid impunity, ensure that all violations are promptly, effectively and impartially investigated, prosecuted, sanctioned and remedied;**

(c) **Ensure that legislation is not used to unduly limit and repress the activities of government critics, human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists, who are indispensable for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's statement on human rights defenders and economic, social and cultural rights.**

Business and human rights

13. While noting that business and human rights issues remain a priority within the national strategy for human rights protection of Georgia for the period 2022–2030, the Committee is concerned about the absence of a dedicated national action plan for business and human rights, as well as about the absence of comprehensive business and human rights due diligence mechanisms and insufficient regulatory frameworks to ensure that enterprises operating in the State Party, including foreign investors, systematically respect human rights in line with international standards.

14. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Adopt a national action plan on business and human rights while ensuring that both the formulation and implementation processes involve all interested parties, including representatives of businesses, trade unions, civil society organizations and the most affected communities;**

(b) **Adopt appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure that business entities operating or domiciled in the State Party, including foreign investors, conduct human rights due diligence so as to prevent or mitigate any negative impacts of their activities on the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights;**

(c) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 24 (2017) on State obligations under the Covenant in the context of business activities, and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.**

Climate change

15. Noting the information provided by the State Party regarding the preliminary results of the climate change strategy 2030, the Committee is concerned that current emission-reducing policies may not be sufficient for the State Party to fulfil its obligations under the Paris Agreement. The Committee is also concerned about the continuing deforestation in recent years, including as a result of cases of large-scale illegal logging operations.

16. **The Committee recommends that the State Party take measures to achieve its nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement by, inter alia:**

(a) **Strengthening its mitigation measures with a view to accelerating the transition to renewable energy sources, such as geothermal, wind and solar energy, enhancing energy efficiency and adopting appropriate fiscal and regulatory measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in a manner consistent with its obligations under the Covenant;**

(b) **Ensuring that the National Forestry Agency is adequately staffed and resourced to carry out its mandate to prevent and combat illegal logging, as well as strengthening monitoring and enforcement mechanisms;**

(c) **Taking into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 27 (2025) on economic, social and cultural rights and the environmental dimension of sustainable development and its statement on climate change and the Covenant.**

Maximum available resources

17. Noting the State Party's progress in diversifying its economy, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) A significant proportion of the State Party's gross domestic product continues to comprise remittances and tourism, making its economy vulnerable to external uncertainties, which may hamper the State Party's ability to mobilize its maximum available resources and conduct long-term planning for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights;

(b) The tax system, characterized by a flat-rate personal income tax and heavy reliance on value added tax, has regressive effects and a limited redistributive impact, disproportionately affecting low-income households and constraining effective domestic resource mobilization for the implementation of the Covenant (arts. 2 (1)).

18. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Continue and strengthen economic diversification strategies in order to enhance resilience to external shocks, with a view to expanding fiscal space for increased public investment in areas related to economic, social and cultural rights;**

(b) **Enhance the progressivity and equity of its tax system, strengthen domestic revenue mobilization and ensure that fiscal policy effectively reduces inequalities, taking into account the Committee's statement on tax policy and the Covenant.**

Corruption

19. While welcoming the progress made in recent years by the State Party in reducing low-level corruption in particular, the Committee is concerned about reports that high-level corruption by public officials persists, and has reportedly slightly increased in recent years, and that corruption and a lack of transparency remain problematic in the judicial system. The Committee is also concerned about reports of public officials receiving commissions, so-called "kickbacks", as well as about reports of insufficient follow-up on high-level corruption cases by the authorities responsible for enforcing anti-corruption laws and measures.

20. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Intensify its efforts to combat corruption and adopt measures to ensure transparency and accountability in public administration, including with a focus on the lease and privatization of public property;**

(b) **Ensure that all cases of corruption, including those involving high-level officials and judges, are thoroughly and independently investigated, prosecuted and punished with penalties commensurate with the gravity of the offence;**

(c) **Continue to strengthen the powers, independence and resources of anti-corruption bodies and oversight institutions, including the Inter-agency Coordination Council for the Fight against Corruption, to ensure that it can effectively and independently carry out its mandate;**

(d) **Take all measures necessary to protect anti-corruption activists, whistle-blowers, witnesses and journalists who report on corruption and ensure safe and accessible channels for reporting corruption;**

(e) **Continue to raise awareness among politicians, parliamentarians, government officials and the public of the economic and social costs of corruption.**

Non-discrimination

21. The Committee is concerned that some provisions of the Law on family values and the protection of minors (2024) and parallel amendments to the Administrative and Criminal Codes are not in full conformity with both the Covenant and the State Party's national legislation on non-discrimination, including the Law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination. The Committee is also concerned that these legislative changes may impede the equal enjoyment of human rights by persons on the grounds of their sexual orientation and gender identity, including economic, social and cultural rights. It is also concerned about the persistent discrimination faced by disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights (arts. 2 (2), 12, 14 and 15).

22. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Review relevant legislative provisions to ensure that they are compatible with the State Party's international human rights obligations, as well as with the Law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and to ensure that there are accessible, independent and effective complaint mechanisms, including with a view to affording effective and equal protection of the rights of same-sex couples and transgender persons;**

(b) **Take all measures necessary, in law and in practice, to prevent and combat discrimination, stigmatization, hate speech, violence and other human rights violations, as well as persecution, including those based on sexual orientation and gender identity;**

(c) **Systematically collect and regularly publish disaggregated data on the availability, accessibility and quality of all rights protected under the Covenant, with emphasis on vulnerable groups, taking all measures necessary to ensure the enjoyment of all rights on an equal basis by these groups;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.**

Internally displaced persons

23. While noting the challenges faced by the State Party owing to the continued occupation of parts of its territory, the Committee is concerned about the limited enjoyment of certain economic, social and cultural rights by internally displaced persons, including insufficient access to employment, adequate housing, healthcare, education and other basic services. In this regard, the Committee is also concerned about the specific obstacles faced by internally displaced persons with disabilities, as well as internally displaced women, children and older persons, and the insufficient measures taken to address their specific needs (arts. 2 (2), 3 and 11–14).

24. **The Committee recommends that the State Party increase its efforts to protect internally displaced persons and guarantee their enjoyment of the Covenant rights, in particular by ensuring access to adequate housing, healthcare, education, employment, social security and other basic services, while paying special attention to the needs of persons with disabilities, women, children and older persons.**

Equal rights of men and women

25. The Committee notes the efforts and progress made by the State Party to promote gender equality, including the amendments to the Law on gender equality, in 2022, the new State concept on gender equality (2022) and the State concept on women's economic empowerment (2023). However, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of gender stereotypes in society and discrimination against women, which results in women

bearing a disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and care work, thereby hindering their full and equal participation in the labour market and limiting their representation in decision-making positions. The Committee is also concerned about the concentration of women in lower remunerated sectors of employment, which contributes to the gender pay gap (arts. 3 and 7).

26. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Continue to promote the increased representation of women at all levels of public administration, in particular in decision-making positions, and their appointment to management roles in the private sector, including through the development of incentives for private companies;**

(b) **Ensure that unpaid care and domestic work, which is disproportionately performed by women, is adequately recognized and redistributed, including through supportive social policies;**

(c) **Redouble its efforts to address gender disparities, improve efforts to increase the participation of women in the labour market, review its social and fiscal policies and address structural barriers that discourage women from pursuing or continuing their careers or taking on full-time employment, including through the adoption of measures that support an appropriate work-life balance;**

(d) **Take effective measures to close the gender pay gap and ensure equal pay for work of equal value, including by addressing vertical and horizontal gender segregation in the labour market;**

(e) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 16 (2005) on the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.**

Right to work

27. While noting the progress made by the State Party in reducing unemployment, the Committee remains concerned about the persistently high rates of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people, including the high proportion of young people not in employment, education or training. The Committee is further concerned about persistent barriers and inequalities in access to decent work faced by persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, internally displaced persons, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons and persons with disabilities (arts. 2 (2) and 6).

28. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Intensify efforts to reduce unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people, including by targeted job creation measures, effective vocational and technical training aligned with labour market needs;**

(b) **Strengthen measures to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation, including by addressing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, internally displaced persons and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons, enhancing access to education and language training, where appropriate, and ensuring reasonable accommodation in recruitment and the workplace;**

(c) **Improve its system for the collection of disaggregated data on employment, underemployment and unemployment and provide updated disaggregated data in its next periodic report;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work.**

Informal economy

29. While welcoming the reduction in the size of the informal economy in recent years, the Committee remains concerned about the continued large share of the population engaged in the informal economy, including platform workers and workers in the construction and

agricultural sectors, who often earn low wages and work without formal labour contracts, thereby lacking access in practice to labour rights protections and social security. The Committee is also concerned about limited employment opportunities in rural areas beyond subsistence and semi-subsistence agriculture (arts. 6, 7 and 9).

30. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Strengthen legal protections for workers in the informal economy and intensify enforcement measures to progressively ensure the exercise of their labour rights and access to social security;**

(b) **Take the effective measures necessary to gradually formalize the situation of workers in the informal economy, taking into consideration the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), of the International Labour Organization (ILO);**

(c) **Adopt measures to diversify employment opportunities in rural areas and promote the transition from subsistence agriculture to decent and formal employment.**

Right to just and favourable conditions of work

31. While noting the information provided by the State Party concerning labour reforms in 2020 and 2021 and the increase in the number of labour inspections, the Committee is concerned about the following:

(a) Insufficiency of the minimum wage to ensure an adequate standard of living for workers and their families and the absence of a regular mechanism to adjust it in line with changes in the cost of living;

(b) Continuing high rate of occupational injuries and fatalities, as well as reported violations relating to working hours and the absence of an explicit upper limit for overtime work;

(c) Relatively limited human and financial resources of the Office of the Labour Inspector and reported weaknesses in enforcement mechanisms, including insufficient oversight in high-risk sectors, such as mining, forestry and construction;

(d) Reports that amendments to the Law on public service (2024) may have weakened protections for public employees (art. 7).

32. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Ensure that the minimum wage is sufficient to provide workers and their families with an adequate standard of living and establish a regular and transparent mechanism for its review and adjustment in line with the cost of living;**

(b) **Take effective measures to reduce occupational injuries and fatalities, particularly in high-risk sectors, such as mining, forestry and construction, and ensure compliance with regulations on working hours and rest periods, including by establishing clear limits on overtime work;**

(c) **Strengthen the human and financial resources of the Office of the Labour Inspector and enhance enforcement mechanisms to ensure the effective and systematic monitoring of working conditions, including in high-risk sectors and the informal economy, and ensure that violations are subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties;**

(d) **Consider reviewing the amendments to the Law on public service (2024) to ensure their full compliance with the Covenant, including with regard to job security and protection against unfair dismissal;**

(e) **Consider ratifying the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81);**

(f) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable working conditions.**

Trade union rights

33. The Committee is concerned about the low prevalence of collective bargaining agreements and reports of the ineffective functioning of collective bargaining mechanisms. It is also concerned about reports of discrimination against trade union members based on trade union activities or political opinion and about the potential impact of the Law on transparency of foreign influence (2024) on the functioning and independence of trade unions (arts. 2 (2) and 8).

34. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Strengthen measures to promote collective bargaining and effective social dialogue;**

(b) **Ensure that trade union members are effectively protected against discrimination or undue interference on the grounds of trade union activities or political opinion, including in the public sector;**

(c) **Review its domestic legal and administrative frameworks regulating trade union rights, including the Law on transparency of foreign influence (2024), with a view to ensuring its full conformity with the Covenant, as well as with relevant ILO standards;**

(d) **Consider ratifying the ILO Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154), and Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 134);**

(e) **Take into consideration the Committee's joint statement with the Human Rights Committee on freedom of association, including the right to form and join trade unions.**

Right to social security

35. The Committee welcomes the increase in the proportion of the national budget dedicated to social security, the expansion of the coverage of various social security programmes, such as the Targeted Social Assistance Programme, and the introduction of indexation mechanisms for pensions and certain social assistance packages. However, the Committee remains concerned about the following:

(a) Absence of a comprehensive social security strategy and fragmentation of social services between national and municipal levels;

(b) Reports that the level of social benefits, including under the Targeted Social Assistance Programme, for persons with disabilities, older persons and internally displaced persons remains inadequate to ensure an adequate standard of living;

(c) The reported shortcomings of the proxy means testing methodology and the procedural delays and barriers in the granting and appeal processes, which may result in the exclusion of eligible individuals and hinder access to other essential services (arts. 2 (2), 9 and 11).

36. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Develop and adopt a comprehensive social security strategy, including through the adoption of a unified social code, with a view to improving coordination between the national and municipal levels and ensuring equitable and effective social protection;**

(b) **Ensure that social benefits are regularly indexed to the real cost of living, in order to provide beneficiaries with an adequate standard of living;**

(c) **Review and improve existing procedures and indicators for granting benefits and streamline administrative and appeals procedures to prevent the exclusion of eligible individuals and reduce delays in the granting of benefits;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security.**

Protection of the family and children

37. The Committee welcomes the various legislative enactments and revisions to existing legislation, as well as institutional reforms, such as the establishment of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, to enhance the protection of the family and children. However, the Committee is concerned that domestic violence, including against women and girls, persists at high levels and that there is reportedly a widespread perception in the general population that domestic violence is a private matter rather than a criminal offence (art. 10).

38. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Continue targeted public awareness-raising campaigns to inform citizens on these matters, especially those in rural areas;**

(b) **Strengthen support for victims by providing long-term assistance, empowerment programmes and access to economic opportunities;**

(c) **Develop mandatory behavioural correction programmes specifically designed for perpetrators of domestic violence, including those who have had restraining or protective orders issued against them;**

(d) **Continue to consult and cooperate with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women with a view to most effectively implementing measures against domestic violence.**

Poverty

39. While welcoming the decrease in the percentage of the population living below the national poverty line and in absolute poverty in recent years, the Committee is concerned that the poverty rates among women, older persons, children, persons with disabilities and internally displaced persons remain relatively high. The Committee is also concerned about the persistence of relatively large disparities in living standards between urban and rural areas (art. 11).

40. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Increase targeted social transfers to women, older persons, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons and people in rural areas;**

(b) **Pay particular attention to the differences in living standards that exist between urban and rural areas, with a view to increasing standards of living in less affluent areas;**

(c) **Take into consideration the Committee's statement on poverty and the Covenant.**

Right to food

41. The Committee notes the State Party's agricultural support programmes aimed at smallholder farmers and local food production, including subsidized loans and microcredit schemes. However, it remains concerned about reports of food insecurity and inadequate nutrition among certain groups, including children, internally displaced persons and low-income households, particularly in rural areas (art. 11).

42. **The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen measures to ensure access to adequate and nutritious food for all, in particular children, breastfeeding women, internally displaced persons and other persons in vulnerable situations. It also recommends expanding early childhood nutrition interventions and school feeding programmes, as appropriate. The Committee further recommends continuing and strengthening support for smallholder agricultural production, with a view to strengthening rural livelihoods and ensuring the availability and accessibility of adequate food in rural areas.**

Right to housing

43. The Committee is concerned about the absence of a national housing strategy or action plan on housing and that the level of public spending on housing since 2014 has been less than 1 per cent of the annual budget, contributing to the deficit of affordable homes. The Committee is also concerned that a significant percentage of the population lives in substandard housing units and/or overcrowded conditions and that internally displaced persons and low-income households in particular are vulnerable to exploitative practices by landlords and moneylenders, including predatory lending and high interest rates, in a context of inadequate regulatory safeguards, which may result in household overindebtedness, loss of housing and forced eviction (art. 11).

44. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Adopt a national housing strategy and action plan;**
- (b) **Increase its budget for housing and strengthen its efforts to increase the housing supply and improve housing conditions, paying particular attention to the needs of internally displaced persons and low-income households;**
- (c) **Take appropriate legislative and administrative measures to provide legal safeguards against forced evictions and exploitative practices by landlords and moneylenders and ensure that evictions are carried out only as a last resort and in full compliance with the Covenant;**
- (d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comments No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing and No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.**

Climate change adaptation

45. While welcoming the information provided by the State Party regarding various climate adaptation measures, action plans and strategies, such as the national disaster risk reduction strategy, the Committee is concerned that the State Party's measures may be insufficient to counter effectively its vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events, such as floods, droughts and forest fires (art. 11).

46. **The Committee recommends that the State Party continue to strengthen its national climate change adaptation efforts, to address the adverse impacts of climate change on economic, social and cultural rights, with enhanced disaster management measures and adequate human, technical and financial resources. In this regard, the Committee recalls its general comment No. 27 (2025) and its statement on climate change and the Covenant.**

Right to health

47. While welcoming the 2024 amendments to the Law on health protection and the Law on higher education, including measures aimed at strengthening the nursing profession and standards, the Committee is concerned about the following (art. 12):

- (a) Overall shortage of nurses in the State Party;
- (b) Uneven distribution of medical personnel, with rural areas experiencing acute shortages of doctors and nurses, while there is a concentration of healthcare personnel and modern healthcare facilities in the capital;
- (c) Significant number of rural residents who are not registered with primary healthcare providers, which limits their access to primary healthcare services.

48. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Continue and increase its efforts to train and retain more nurses, including by considering improving their remuneration and offering appropriate incentives for them to remain in their posts;**
- (b) **Implement measures to reduce inequalities and regional disparities in access to healthcare, paying particular attention to ensuring the equitable distribution of medical personnel;**

(c) **Ensure that people living in rural and remote areas are registered for primary healthcare services;**

(d) **Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 14 (2000) on the right to the highest attainable standard of health.**

49. While welcoming the State Party's recent pharmaceutical reforms, including the introduction of external reference pricing and managed-entry agreements for pharmaceuticals, the Committee is concerned about reports of a high degree of market concentration and vertical integration in the pharmaceutical sector. Such concentration may create perverse incentive structures for billing and contribute to high pharmaceutical prices, thereby affecting the affordability and accessibility of medicines in the State Party (arts. 2 (1), 11 and 12).

50. **The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its legal and regulatory frameworks to prevent and address the negative human rights impact of excessive market concentration in the pharmaceutical sector, including by ensuring effective competition oversight, robust enforcement mechanisms and measurable improvements in the affordability and accessibility of medicines. In this regard, the Committee recalls its general comment No. 24 (2017).**

51. The Committee is concerned that the legal, administrative and operational rules related to the practice of surrogacy, which is legally allowed in the State Party, are not complemented by adequate medical, scientific and legal guarantees to ensure the respect and protection of the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health, of the surrogate mother (art. 12).

52. **The Committee recommends that the State Party evaluate its legal, administrative, operational and other relevant rules related to the practice of surrogacy with a view to ensuring that both in law and in practice these rules provide adequate medical, scientific and legal guarantees for the protection of the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health, of the surrogate mother.**

Right to education

53. While welcoming the progress made by the State Party since the previous review, in 2002, regarding access to education, the Committee shares the concern of the Committee on the Rights of the Child about the following (arts. 2 (2), 13 and 14):⁴

(a) Limited access to general education in a minority language, at all levels, in part due to the insufficient number of teachers in minority language schools;

(b) Low quality of education;

(c) Low salaries, low prestige and limited opportunities for professional development for teachers;

(d) Poor infrastructure of schools and preschool establishments in remote areas, with many lacking access to water and sanitation.

54. **The Committee recalls the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and recommends that the State Party:**⁵

(a) **Ensure that all children, including children affiliating with a national minority, receive complete free, quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;**

(b) **Take the measures necessary to improve the quality of training for teachers and provide them with attractive career opportunities;**

(c) **Improve school infrastructure and ensure that all schools have adequate water and sanitation facilities, paying particular attention to schools and preschools in rural areas;**

⁴ CRC/C/GEO/CO/5-6, para. 36 (a)-(c).

⁵ Ibid., para. 37 (a)-(c).

(d) Take into consideration the Committee's general comment No. 13 (1999) on the right to education.

55. While welcoming the progress made in disability assessment and support services, the Committee is concerned about reports indicating gaps in inclusive education practices, particularly in rural areas (arts. 2 (2), 13 and 14).

56. The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen inclusive education policies and provide adequate resources, enhance teacher training and ensure reasonable accommodation measures to ensure equal access and the full participation of students with disabilities at all levels of education.

Internet access

57. While welcoming the increase in access to the Internet in the State Party, the Committee is concerned that rural and mountainous areas can experience spotty, low-speed, or inconsistent service, which limits the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights (art. 15).

58. The Committee recommends that the State Party continue and intensify its efforts to provide high-speed, high-quality Internet connectivity to all areas of the State Party.

Cultural rights

59. The Committee is concerned about the low level of knowledge among the majority population about the national minorities, as integral parts of Georgian society, as well as about the existence of prejudices, stereotypes and perceptions associated with some of these minorities, including seeing some of them as being security threats (arts. 2 (2) and 15).

60. The Committee recommends that the State Party take measures, including through awareness-raising activities, with a view to respecting, protecting and promoting cultural diversity, both in law and in practice, thereby ensuring that national minorities are valued as an integral part of Georgian society.

D. Other recommendations

61. The Committee encourages the State Party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Covenant.

62. The Committee recommends that the State Party consider ratifying the core human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party, namely the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

63. The Committee recommends that the State Party take fully into account its obligations under the Covenant and ensure the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined therein in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would be significantly facilitated by the State Party establishing independent mechanisms to monitor progress and treating beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State Party support the global commitment of the decade of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Implementing the Goals on the basis of the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind. In this regard, the Committee draws the State Party's attention to its statement on the pledge to leave no one behind.

64. The Committee recommends that the State Party take steps to progressively develop and apply appropriate indicators on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights in order to facilitate the assessment of progress achieved by the State Party in complying with its obligations under the Covenant for various segments of the

population. In that context, the Committee refers the State Party to, inter alia, the conceptual and methodological framework on human rights indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.⁶

65. The Committee requests that the State Party disseminate the present concluding observations widely at all levels of society, in particular among parliamentarians, public officials and judicial authorities, and that it informs the Committee in its next periodic report about the steps taken to implement them. The Committee emphasizes the crucial role that Parliament plays in implementing the present concluding observations and encourages the State Party to ensure its involvement in future reporting and follow-up procedures. The Committee encourages the State Party to engage with the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia, non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society in the follow-up to the present concluding observations and in the process of consultation at the national level prior to the submission of its next periodic report.

66. In accordance with the procedure on follow-up to concluding observations adopted by the Committee, the State Party is requested to provide, within 24 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations (28 February 2028), information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 14 (a) (action plan on business and human rights), 34 (d) (ratify ILO conventions) and 50 (excessive market concentration in the healthcare sector) above.

67. The Committee requests the State Party to submit its fourth periodic report in accordance with article 16 of the Covenant by 28 February 2031, unless otherwise notified as a result of a change in the review cycle. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/268, the word limit for the report is 21,200 words.

⁶ [HRI/MC/2008/3](#).