**Protect the rights of children affected by armed conflicts**

**Actions Taken:**

In addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Georgia is a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and all four Geneva Conventions of 1949. Georgia is also a member of all its Additional Protocols of 1977 and 2005.

According to the Law of Georgia "On Military Obligations and Military Service", the decision on conscription of persons for compulsory military service is made only after reaching the age of 18 (Article 21). A person under the age of 18, with the consent of his parents, can become a cadet of a higher military educational institution (Article 10). As for the contract (professional) military service, according to the resolution of the Government of Georgia N238 (18.03.2014), conscripts and women from the age of 18 are given the right to serve a contract (professional) military service.

Violation of norms of international humanitarian law is punishable by the Criminal Code of Georgia (Articles 411-413). It should be emphasized that Article 413 of the Criminal Code (other violations of the norms of international humanitarian law) refers to the treaties of Georgia that expand the scope of responsibility for war crimes. As mentioned above, Georgia is a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977 and 2005, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Accordingly, taking into account Article 413 of the Code, the latter, referring to the provisions of international documents, in fact makes punishable the international crimes provided for by them, including the recruitment or use of children in national armed forces and active participation in hostilities (Article 8 of the Rome Statute article) etc.

In addition, the participation of mercenaries in armed conflicts or military operations is also criminalized by Article 410 of the Criminal Code of Georgia. According to Article 410 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, it is punishable to hire a person to participate in an armed conflict or hostilities. Namely: "Recruitment, training and financing or providing their material needs in another way, as well as involvement in armed conflict or hostilities shall be punished by imprisonment for five to seven years." The second part of the same article defines the aggravating conditions of the crime. In particular, the same act, which is committed using official authority or committed against a minor, is punishable by imprisonment from nine to thirteen years.

The Criminal Code, by the virtue of principles of territorial, extraterritorial and universal jurisdiction, regulates the aspects of the implementation of criminal law jurisdiction over crimes committed on the territory of Georgia, as well as crimes committed outside its borders.

During the period from 2019 to the summer of 2024 on the basis of the pledge “Protect the rights of children affected by armed conflicts” 38 trainings, 4 seminars, 4 courses on the International Humanitarian Law were conducted for the representatives of the defence forces of Georgia and374 military personnel were trained.

Additionally, a high-level course on the law of armed conflicts was held for 25 servicemen of the Georgian defence forces and a seminar on the law of armed conflicts was conducted for 25 military personnel at the Georgian National Guard Reservist Training and Retraining Centre.

**Implementation completion:**

Yes