

The Report of the State Security Service of Georgia 2022



Foreword

Taking into consideration the most difficult situation created in the region in 2022, as well as new security challenges, the State Security Service had to protect national interests against the background of complex and unpredictable environment.

The war waged by the Russian Federation in Ukraine was creating additional significant challenges to the security and territorial integrity of our country, was increasing pressure on economy and socio-political stability.

The report presents an overview of security processes evolving in Georgia and its neighborhood in 2022, as well as of measures and activities conducted by the Service in response to threats and challenges facing the country.

The Russian occupation and the Russian military contingent illegally deployed in the occupied regions of the country remained an existential threat to Georgia. In 2022, annexation processes ongoing in occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region became more evident.

Intelligence activities of foreign special services represented a substantial challenge. Efforts to interfere in socio-political processes of our country by applying so-called hybrid tools were underway. Furthermore, active disinformation campaigns were specifically directed at degrading the security environment.

Threats stemming from international terrorism and violent extremism were still relevant. Notwithstanding the ongoing complex global situation with regard to terrorism, terrorist activities in the country were reduced to minimum as a result of efforts carried out by the State Security Service.

Against the background of geopolitical crisis and large-scale combat activities, the State Security Service ensured efficient management of security risks stemming from special services of foreign countries and certain destructive forces in many directions.

Secure environment was maintained in the country and unhindered functioning and secure development of state systems was ensured through close coordination among relevant agencies.

In the course of combating security challenges, the Service was oriented towards deepening cooperation with international partners and strengthening country's security and stability.

The Service, in the course of carrying out of its activities, strictly observed core guiding principles defined by law, including the rule of law, the protection of human rights and freedoms, proportionality, inadmissibility of discrimination and political neutrality.

Respective material-technical infrastructure was ensured for full value operation of Service's units and efficient personnel policy was carried out.

I would like to express gratitude to each and every employee of the Service for their contribution in addressing the most complex tasks aimed at protecting security of the country and for the performed work. I would like to highlight that support from the Parliament of Georgia is of crucial importance for our Service.

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Head of the State Security Service of Georgia

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Occupied Territories

Occupation of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region by the Russian Federation remains the main challenge to the national security of Georgia. During 2022, illegal military drills, rotation of personnel and other illegal activities have been continuously conducted on the Russian occupation bases located on the occupied territories.

Involvement of some military personnel and heavy armament in the military action ongoing in Ukraine has been observed. Despite that, more than 50% of resources of occupation forces remained on the site. Aforementioned forces continued illegal military drills and other illegal activities.

Similarly to the previous years, the occupation forces discriminated ethnic Georgians residing on occupied territories on ethnic bases and continued restriction of their fundamental rights.

Along with the Russian military personnel, the Russian special services were actively operating on the occupied territories. Against the background of Russia-Ukraine war, occupation forces located on the 4th and 7th military bases of the the Southern Military District of the Russian Federation conducted dozens of illegal military drills of various types and scales. Besides that, planed rotations, upgrading of armament and military-technical equipment took place on the abovementioned bases.

It has to be mentioned, that so-called volunteers from occupied Tskhinvali region and occupied Abkhazia have been participating in the military actions against territorial integrity of Ukraine. There have been several confirmed cases of their death.

In the conditions of announced mobilization in Russia, military conscription point has been opened on the Roki section of Russia-Georgia state border, which was used to control the matters of conscription regarding the inhabitants of occupied Tskhinvali region.

Against the background of war in Ukraine, misinformation has been actively spread within the occupied territories of Georgia, as if central government of Georgia was preparing to use force against them. In parallel with those statements, occupation regimes also addressed to some “measures”, such as circulation of information on “strengthening” occupation line, rehabilitation of so called bomb shelters, “mobilization of reservists” and other illegal activities.

The representatives of the occupation regimes used the mentioned narrative for intimidating local population and forming their conciliatory attitudes towards Russia's annexation policy. In line with this, the policy of the Russian occupation forces, not to allow international organizations to enter and conduct monitoring in the occupied regions, was even more alarming.

The Processes Directed to Annexation

In parallel with war in Ukraine, annexation policy of Russia has increased in complexity, which was especially exposed in the processes regarding the issue of real estate in the occupied Abkhazia.

On January 19, 2022 an “agreement” was signed that foresees transfer of “Bichvinta state resort complex” and “leasing” of surrounding land plots and sea aquatoria to the Russian Federation for free. According to this so called agreement, even in case of its “denunciation”, real estate remains under the ownership of the Russian Federation. The so-called agreement has not been “ratified” yet, due to the fact that some issues foreseen by the “document” triggered protest in the locals. It is important that in case of failure of the so-called agreement, Russia did not exclude possibility of withdrawal of 7th occupation base and possible application of financial pressure on the occupied Abkhazia.

Besides that, on October 27, 2022, 20 hectares of land plot in the occupied Bichvinta district has been transferred for “permantent use” to the company “Moskva Resort”, owned by the former Governor of Krasnodar Region and former Minister of Agriculture of Russia.

The occupation regime is trying to justify deepening of relations and so-called integration processes with Russia by a possible threat of war posed from Tbilisi.

During the reporting period, there was still the issue of “attribution” of the village Aibgha of the occupied Gagra district to Russia, although the occupation regime tried to diminish its relevance.

The Russian occupation force actively tried to excercise full control over various sectors of the so called economy of the occupied Abkhazia, which was manifested in the development of a plan of replacement of the “budget tranche” with large “investments”.

As more than half of so-called budget of the occupied Abkhazia is filled with direct Russian tranche, there is high probability that occupation regime will have to sell important facilities, including strategic ones.

At the same time, against the background of the severe energy crisis, the statements of the representatives of the occupation regime about attracting so-called Russian investors in this sector and “privatizing” strategic facilities should be considered in the context of the annexation.

During the reporting period, there were attempts from the Russian occupation forces to disguise Russian annexation policy by actualizing the issue of “integration” of occupied Abkhazia into the Russia-Belarus Union State. The visit of the President of Belarus to the occupied Abkhazia, most probably, was related to the aforementioned process.

On September 27, 2022, a so-called agreement “on dual citizenship” was signed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the so-called Ministry of Foreign Affairs of occupied Abkhazia. The “agreement” envisages obtaining of the Russian Federation’s citizenship in a simplified manner. Active work was conducted with Russia regarding harmonization of a so-called legislation,

“simplified crossing” of a so-called “border”, rehabilitation of Sokhumi Airport and other issues. It is noteworthy, that the Russian government named harmonization of a so-called legislation as one of the main conditions for realization of the “Program on socio-economic development of Abkhazia in 2022-2025 years”.

During the reporting period, the issue of “simplified crossing regime” of the Psou section of the Russian-Georgian state border was raised, including from high-ranking Russian politicians. In the framework of the discussion, idea of abolishment of a so-called checkpoint was expressed.

“Appointment” of a representative of the Military Academy of the General Staff of the armed forces of the Russian Federation as the so-called First Deputy Minister of Defence of Abkhazia was the demonstration of the Russian influence over the occupied region.

Since the *de facto* regime of the occupied region still openly supported joining the Russian Federation, the issue of annexation of the occupied Tskhinvali region was remaining as a significant threat. For this purpose, the former so-called president even scheduled a “referendum” on entry of the occupied region into the Russian Federation. Although, after the change of a so-called president, the mentioned issue was suspended after “consultations” with Russia.

So-called agreement “on dual citizenship” which envisages the possession of a so-called citizenship of occupied Tskhinvali region and the Russian Federation at the same time should be reviewed in terms of annexation.

At the same time, occupation regime of occupied Tskhinvali supported a so-called draft law “On Accession to the Customs Code of the Eurasian Economic Union”.

In terms of annexation, the financial dependence of the occupied regions on the Russian Federation remained an especially important factor. In 2022, a so-called budget of occupied Abkhazia amounted to 186.3 million rubles, 42% (approximately 77.5 million us dollars) of which represented the Russian tranche. As for the occupied Tskhinvali region, a so-called budget amounted to approximately 120 million US dollars, 81% (approximately 96.7 million US dollars) of which was financed by the Russian Federation.

Ongoing Processes in the Occupied Territories

During the reporting period, the so-called internal political processes were active in the both occupied regions. So-called parliamentary election was held in occupied Abkhazia and so-called presidential election was held in occupied Tskhinvali region.

De facto government did not possess an absolute majority in the so-called legislative body of occupied Abkhazia and it was trying to form it through using “independent candidates”. Against the

background of the current geopolitical situation, Russia's interest was to maintain internal political *status quo* in the occupied territories. That is why it did not make any statements supporting the "opposition". Without the direct support of the occupation force, activities of any so-called political subjects are futile.

During the reporting period, initiative of making amendments to "Constitution" was proposed in the occupied Abkhazia, which envisaged equipping the "president" with the right to dissolve a so-called parliament.

During 2022, the dangerous trend continued, within the framework of which the occupation regime of Abkhazia was blaming international organizations and so-called non-governmental sector for working in favor of Tbilisi interests.

International organizations working in the occupied Abkhazia were forbidden to conduct "public opinion surveys". Dialogue between peoples and other types of humanitarian projects, which, according to the occupation regime were aimed at misleading the population of occupied region, were deemed inadmissible.

Furthermore, a so-called government of the occupied Abkhazia terminated one of the projects of UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and its employee was illegally banned to enter the occupied Abkhazia.

The above-mentioned processes caused the limitation of the activities of international organizations and so-called non-governmental sector working on site. The goal of such an illegal policy is to isolate the occupied region from the rest of the globe.

Occupation regime of Abkhazia continued its activities on a so-called foreign arena, especially towards Belarusian, Syrian and Near East directions. Processes towards Near East were mainly implemented through Damascus.

In the beginning of 2022 the confrontation between so-called government representatives and "opposition" regarding the issues of so-called delimitation and demarcation of occupation line continued in occupied Tskhinvali region, which caused the initiation of the issue of "impeachment" of so-called then president by the "opposition" MPs.

Later, so-called presidential election was held in two rounds in the occupied Tskhinvali region, where former "president" actively tried to use so-called administrative and financial resources at his disposal to win election. Russia tried to avoid so-called internal political tension and therefore, did not directly influence the processes.

Since the Russian Federation represents the actual implementer of the policy in the occupied region, the "policy" of occupation regime towards central government of Georgia did not change after **Alan Gagloev** became a "president".

Illegal Activities of the Occupation Force

In order to put pressure on the central government of Georgia, the Russian Federation continued to apply various components of the “Hybrid war”, as well as conducted illegal detentions, illegal so-called borderization and other activities damaging the security environment on the ground.

Disinformation campaign conducted within the framework of the “hybrid war” was mainly focused on the growth of “revanchist sentiments” on the territory controlled by the central government of Georgia. Within the framework of the campaign, attention was paid to international military exercises conducted on the territory controlled by the central government and with regard to other steps taken for enhancing defense capabilities. Intimidation of population living in the occupied regions with fabricated, false accusations related to the activities of the Richard Lugar Public Health Research Center was carried out.

During the reporting period, 44 persons were illegally arrested in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region, and 13 persons - in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia. Among them, the fact of the illegal arrest of a citizen of Georgia with charges of so-called espionage is noteworthy. There were cases of summoning for “interrogation”, intimidating and harassing the ethnic Georgians.

Moreover, a person living in occupied Abkhazia was illegally arrested, against whom a so-called criminal case was initiated for illegal acquisition and possession of a particularly large amount of narcotic drugs. Special attention was paid to the discovery of the Georgian passport and the Georgian symbol (flag) found in the mentioned person’s home.

As of the end of 2022, a total of 9 citizens of Georgia remained under illegal detention. Citizens of Georgia, who were illegally deprived of their freedom for several years, including Irakli Bebuia, also remained in illegal detention. With long-term illegal detentions, the occupation force artificially creates a humanitarian crisis and tries to put pressure on the central government of Georgia through the mentioned instrument.

The central government of Georgia continues to use all formal and informal mechanisms at its disposal, especially the concentration of efforts of the international community, in order to achieve the unconditional release of illegally detained persons in the shortest period.

It is still not possible to enforce the law with regard to the cases of **Irakli Kvaratskhelia** and **Davit Basharuli**, who died during illegal detention by the occupation regimes, as well as cases of **Archil Tatunashvili** and **Giga Otkhзорia**, who were killed by the occupation forces. This creates a syndrome of impunity in the occupied regions and encourages criminal actions. The central government of Georgia will continue to work for bringing all persons involved in encroaching the lives of its citizens to justice.

The decision of the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court is to be mentioned in terms of enforcing the law, according to which an arrest warrant was issued on three former so-called high-ranking officials of the occupied Tskhinvali region for illegal deprivation of liberty, torture, cruel treatment, hostage taking and subsequent illegal transfer of ethnic Georgian civilians.

The Russian occupation forces actively continued the process of illegal so-called borderization. In 2022, 69 cases of illegal so-called borderization cases were identified in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region and 9 cases - in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia. Illegal activities were manifested both, in the laying of new barbed wires, as well as in the renewal of old barbed wires and fences, in the arrangement of the so-called anti-fire dividing lines and trenches, and in the illegal erection of so-called border marking billboards and posts. The facts of installing video cameras along the occupation line were also identified.

The security environment remained tense along the occupation line near the village Chorchana of Khashuri municipality, where a crisis situation was created as a result of the destructive actions of the occupation forces from August 2019. Due to the non-constructive approach of the occupation force, the mentioned situation could not be ultimately alleviated even during 2022. The representatives of the central government of Georgia repeatedly stressed the readiness for the settlement of the Chorchana crisis in all possible formats, however, the occupation forces did not make corresponding steps.

During the reporting period, the problem of free movement remained serious. From August 2022, two so-called crossing points were partially opened for the local population in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region. It should be noted, that only part of the population was allowed to move through them from the 20th to the 30th days of each month. The active use of this opportunity by the locals clearly demonstrates the need for free movement and the great interest of the population in this issue.

It is worth noting, that from September 2019, the occupation force completely closed the so-called crossing points in the direction of occupied Tskhinvali, which was directly related to the developments that took place in the vicinities of the village Chorchana of Khashuri municipality.

In 2022, the occupation forces did not impose long-term restrictions on movement along the occupation line in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia, although, the situation in terms of freedom of movement did not improve significantly.

The representatives of the central government of Georgia constantly and clearly raise the issue of ensuring free movement and emphasize the destructive consequences caused by the restriction of this fundamental right in all formats of negotiations, as well as in communication with international partners.

Ethnic Georgians living in the occupied territories still experienced targeted discrimination, including restrictions on the right to receive education in their native language. Actions aimed at Russification of the occupied regions and changing the ethnic identity of the population, as well as their assimilation remained relevant.

During the reporting period, the restriction of the property rights in the occupied regions of the ethnic Georgian population living on the central government-controlled territory and the destruction of their houses in order to exclude their return, continued.

International Mechanisms

During the reporting period, occupation-related threats and challenges were subject of intense discussions at the meetings held within the framework of the Geneva International Discussions (GID) and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM).

The IPRM meetings still could not be restored in the direction of the occupied Gali due to the destructive approaches of the occupation regime. It is noteworthy, that no IPRM meetings were held in the occupied Gali since June 2018.

Communication was actively carried out through the “hot line”, which is an effective tool for working on specific issues arising in the vicinities of the occupation line and in the occupied territories.

During 2022, within the framework of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meetings, representatives of the central government of Georgia raised all important issues and minor incidents that took place near the occupation line and/or deep in the occupied territories. There was a tendency of sharp decrease of the intensity of meetings. Due to the occupation force’s decision, only 6 IPRM meetings were held in 2022.

At the above-mentioned meetings, the representatives of the central government strictly requested the unconditional and immediate release of the illegally detained persons. The main topics of discussion were the restriction of free movement and illegal so-called borderization issues.

In order to prevent incidents, defuse them and exchange various important information, the “hot line” operating with the direct involvement of the State Security Service and the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) was actively used. During the reporting period, the “hot line” was activated 339 times in the direction of the occupied Abkhazia, and 2 183 times in the direction of the occupied Tskhinvali region.

Attempts to damage the “Hot Line” by the occupation force, including through making political statements and groundless accusations, were still observed. Provocative actions carried out by the occupation forces were confronted by the central government, together with international partners,

through applying constructive and complex approaches, which ultimately ensured the proper functioning of the “Hot Line”.

A single, the 55th meeting of the Geneva International Discussions was held on October 5, 2022. Within the mandate, the representative of the State Security Service spoke in detail about the security challenges and humanitarian problems, including gross violations of human rights, illegal detentions and destructive practice of the illegal so-called borderization arising as a result of the occupation of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region.

Cooperation with the International Partners

The State Security Service continued close and effective cooperation with the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM). It should be mentioned, that the EUMM stands as the only monitoring mission operating in Georgia, mandate of which extends to the whole territory of Georgia. However, due to the decision of the Russian occupation force, the representatives of the organization were still unable to enter the occupied territories. Full implementation of the EUMM's mandate is of a critical importance. Nevertheless, the EUMM, together with state agencies, plays an important role in ensuring peace and stability along the occupation line.

Cooperation with the representatives of the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the Council of Europe (CoE) was active in the direction of the occupied regions of Georgia. From a humanitarian point of view, cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) should be emphasized, including in the direction of urgent medical assistance for people living in the occupied Tskhinvali region and their transfer to the territory controlled by the central government. Work implemented towards searching for missing persons during the 1990s conflict and the 2008 Russia-Georgia war with the involvement of the ICRC should also be emphasized, within the framework of which one meeting of the “Tripartite Coordination Mechanism” was held during the reporting period in September 2022.

During the reporting period, with the aim of identifying the threats stemming from the occupied territories, neutralizing them to the maximum extent and obstructing the activated processes of annexation by the Russian Federation, the State Security Service of Georgia closely cooperated and constantly provided information to the state agencies of Georgia and international partners. In addition, with the aim of providing information about the current situation in the occupied regions and the territories adjacent to the occupation line, within the mandate, the Service held meetings with the high officials of the partner countries, representatives of international and local organizations and the media.

State Security and Counterintelligence Activities

Military aggression carried out by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2022 created the gravest situation, geopolitical crisis and made multiple countries of the region, including Georgia, to face the most complex challenges. The large-scale war inflicted fundamental damage to security environment of the region in the long-term perspective and directly influenced Europe's security. Furthermore, growing nuclear war rhetoric substantially changed a global security agenda.

Open expansionist policy declared by Russia and attempts to reach these goals through large-scale military activities placed the stability of Georgia, which is under occupation, in front of the extraordinary challenges, while developed situation made existentialist threats facing the country more evident.

In parallel with conventional warfare methods, efforts to influence economies, energy security and socio-political stability of the region's countries, as well as cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and other tools applied within the framework of a "hybrid war" highly deteriorated security environment.

Periodical armed confrontations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as a risk of their possible aggravation remained also a significant challenge to the security of Georgia and the South Caucasus region in 2022.

Complex and unpredictable processes developing around Georgia were accompanied by internal political tensions and attempts to aggravate them in the country inspired by destructive forces. Internal and external actors, appealing on patriotic sentiments, were disseminating statements directed against Georgia's national security interests and were calling on population to carry out destructive activities detrimental to the country's security.

Security environment in the country was deteriorating by activities of malign subjects directed at further polarization of society, attempts to hamper functioning of critically significant state institutions, appeals towards overthrowing of government through violent means and facilitation of social destabilization.

Destructive forces, including subjects having possible links to special services of foreign countries tried to deteriorate Georgia's relations with particular states, Western partners and strategic allies. Taking into consideration the military activities ongoing in the region, such activities constituted threat to national security of Georgia.

In view of changed geopolitical reality and its accompanying threats and challenges, in 2022, counterintelligence activities of the State Security Service were directed towards reducing negative influence on Georgia's security environment, as well as neutralizing its consequences. The mentioned activities included early detection, prevention and suppression of possible illegal actions

and other types of activities directed against Georgia by the special services of foreign states, individual organizations or persons operating under their auspices.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service within the process of ensuring security of the country, implemented protection of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as constitutional order and national security against malign activities of special services of foreign countries.

Against the background of highly intensive combat activities taking place in the region, the State Security Service took every direction of security under maximum control within the framework of counterintelligence functions and powers envisaged by law. During the reporting period, security environment in the country was fully controlled.

Operational, operative-technical and analytical activities have been continuously carried out with the aim of timely forecasting and neutralizing the threats and certain activities directed against country's security and stability.

During the reporting period, the Service effectively applied expulsion from the country, denial of entry into the country, relevant prosecutions, as well as other restrictive mechanisms provided by law in relation to the subjects acting or allegedly acting to the detriment of national interests.

Intensive cooperation was underway with the counterpart services of the partner countries. Furthermore, in light of threats and risks associated with the developments taking place in the region, coordinated work with Georgia's state authorities was particularly active. Relevant government decision-makers were provided with the information in a round-the-clock mode on developments and anticipated processes taking place in security direction, as well as on restrictive measures and outcomes thereto.

In 2022, as a result of coordinated and complex activities carried out by the State Security Service together with other authorities involved in the security system, detrimental activities of special services of foreign countries, as well as internal unrests inspired by destructive forces were averted on the territory of Georgia. Therefore, the country was protected from intervention in military conflicts and development of irreversible processes detrimental to the national interests.

Sound policy-based, timely and informed decisions were taken with regard to every security issue, and secure and peaceful environment was maintained against the background of crisis developed in the region.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service within its counterintelligence activities actively continued to detect intentions, fields and objects of interest, modalities of action and intelligence methods pursued by special services of foreign countries against Georgia. Operational work was underway to reveal individuals, groups of individuals and organizations acting under the cover of special services of foreign countries, activities of operationally significant subjects were

examined and monitored. In order to plan efficient countermeasures and implement preventive activities, collected information was subjected to systematization and respective analysis.

In 2022, as a result of activities implemented by the Service in accordance with the rule established by legislation, it was outlined that intelligence activities of foreign countries were directed towards obtaining information on political and economic processes ongoing in Georgia, ongoing or planned international and regional projects, including energy and infrastructure initiatives involving Georgia. Special services of certain foreign countries were particularly interested in the activities of law-enforcement agencies, as well as situation existing in the field of defence and around the state border. Certain special services were interested in social issues and public sentiments, including in regions compactly populated by minorities.

External powers interested in gaining ideological, political and economic influence over Georgia were exploiting the capabilities of the citizens of Georgia loyal towards them due to their financial and other interests, as well as foreign citizens staying in Georgia on the basis of various statuses. In 2022, anti-Western political subjects and particular groups having possible links to destructive external actors continued to be active. They aimed at deteriorating Georgia's international image and polarizing the society through various methods.

Furthermore, during the reporting period attempts to plan and carry out extremely negative, provocative activities with regard to the country's security took place both in Georgia, as well as beyond its borders. In certain cases, the activities possibly orchestrated by special services of foreign countries were aimed at undermining Georgia's bilateral relations with particular states, as well as shifting their own destructive agenda to the territory of Georgia.

In response to the mentioned threats and illegal activities, during the reporting period, the State Security Service carried out efficient and complex operational-searching and investigative activities and prevented and suppressed anti-state activities.

On the basis of obtained information and evidences, in 2022, the Counterintelligence Department of the Service launched investigation into 17 criminal cases.

Furthermore, during the reporting period, the same Department revealed and suppressed attempted assassination of an Israeli citizen planned in Georgia by a criminal group. Within the case, foreign citizens and persons with dual citizenship were arrested. Organizers of the criminal activity staying in a foreign country, including a person possibly ordering an assassination and other participating individuals were identified, in relation to whom complex operational-searching activities are pending.

In 2022, the State Security Department of the Service launched investigation into 3 criminal cases, including on the fact of preparation of an assault on a state-political official of Georgia. In relation

to the mentioned case, relevant preventive measures were carried out in order to suppress the realization of the mentioned intention.

Intelligence obtained by relevant structural units of the Service in 2022 was forwarded to other investigative authorities in accordance with investigative jurisdiction, where investigation was launched into several criminal cases.

During the reporting period, special services of foreign countries were particularly interested in Georgia's military capabilities, situation existing in the field of defence, ongoing activities and future plans. The mentioned, *inter alia*, was related to the processes of Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and approximation of defence systems with NATO standards, as well as ongoing combat activities in the region.

In 2022, the State Security Service in compliance with the legislation continued active work in the direction of provision of counterintelligence support to Georgia's Defence Forces and ensured protection of security regimes in the defence authority against intelligence activities and other threats coming from special services of interested foreign countries. With the aim of identifying the subjects possibly involved in the process, relevant counterintelligence measures were carried out.

On the basis of the Law of Georgia on the State Security Service of Georgia and the Law of Georgia on State Secrets, as well as other relevant normative acts and norms determined by international treaties, during the reporting period, the Service was continuously carrying out organizational measures and respective coordination of the protection of secrecy and security regime in state agencies and subjects of strategic importance. With the aim of preventing possible criminal activities (including possible infiltration and technical penetration at the facility by special services of foreign countries) towards high-risk subjects or activities detrimental to their normal functioning, as well as ensuring appropriate response thereto, the Service was obtaining information in advance and issuing respective recommendations of preventive nature.

In 2022, the Service continued to carry out special measures to determine trustworthiness and reliability for granting Personnel Security Clearances and Facility Security Clearances.

During the reporting period, 153 organizations/institutions were granted Facility Security Clearances, while 11 organizations/institutions were denied of the mentioned permission due to revealed factual circumstances and low level of trustworthiness and reliability.

Furthermore, commission examinations of the regime of secrets' protection and document security were conducted in 113 organizations/institutions. Security background investigations were carried out in relation to 5 556 individuals for granting Personnel Security Clearances.

In 2022, with the aim of monitoring the migration flow increased due to combat activities ongoing between Russia and Ukraine, in accordance with the ongoing risks and challenges, the State Security

Service actively conducted the relevant counterintelligence measures. The mentioned process was carried out in full compliance with the sovereign right of admission to the territory of the country and the legislation in relation to citizens of foreign countries seeking entry into and acquisition of residence permit in Georgia on various grounds.

During the reporting period, the Service reviewed more than 63 000 cases of citizens of foreign countries with regard to expediency of issuing permits for the residence in Georgia on the basis of various statuses. Approximately 22 000 cases were reviewed in relation to granting citizenship (including its retention / restoration) on the basis of various rules.

During the reporting period, on the basis of monitoring carried out with regard to citizens of foreign countries seeking residence permit in Georgia, the Service detected citizens who had been placed on border watchlists or had been wanted by international and local law enforcement agencies. Data on the mentioned individuals were provided to relevant agencies for further response.

Furthermore, in 2022 the Service carried out detection/examination of citizens of foreign countries illegally staying in Georgia. During the reporting period, the Service identified individuals involved in criminal activities who were in contact with citizens of foreign countries illegally staying in Georgia. Procedures defined by law were carried out jointly with the relevant authorities of Georgia in relation to them.

At the same time, on the basis of information received as a result of operational activities, during the reporting period, the State Security Service revealed citizens of foreign countries who attempted to obtain permits for the residence in Georgia through using various illegal ways and fraudulent documents. Moreover, the activities for identifying the contacts between the above-mentioned individuals and citizens of Georgia, as well as organizations registered in Georgia facilitating the mentioned illegal activities were carried out. The Service informed relevant agencies on the mentioned facts for further response.

In 2022, with the aim of identifying possible employees of special services of foreign countries with destructive attitude and subjects having links with them, the State Security Service carried out multiple preventive and suppressive measures in the direction of operational control of migration channels.

On the basis of information available to the Service and information shared within the framework of international cooperation by partner countries and organizations, as well as due to violation of the Law of Georgia on Occupation, hundreds of citizens of certain countries were denied of entry into the country during the reporting year.

Those citizens of foreign countries were also identified within the flow of visitors, who, according to the intelligence data, had been planning provocative activities on the territory of Georgia and

had been openly articulating sentiments detrimental to Georgia's interests. Measures provided by the law were carried out with regard to them and border control mechanisms were applied.

With the aim of detection of possible facts of circumventing sanctions, facts of establishing legal entities by operationally significant citizens of foreign countries temporarily staying in Georgia were placed under control. Furthermore, respective measures were carried out to prevent possible use of Georgian companies for circumventing sanctions. During the reporting year, organizations involved in such activities were not identified.

In 2022, also, several citizens of a foreign country were identified who had been trying to obtain specific categories of information on the citizens of foreign countries staying in the country, as well as the citizens of Georgia, and had been suspiciously taking photos/videos of various facilities, including strategic and regime facilities. Due to the relevant activities conducted by the Service for ensuring security, their activities were restricted.

With the aim of ensuring security of the state border, in 2022, the Service took significant steps in close coordination with relevant agencies. These steps, *inter alia*, included development of border technologies, elaboration/introduction of modern softwares and systems.

During the reporting period, with the support of international partners, the Technical Service Center was established at the base of the LEPL–Operative-Technical Agency functioning under the Service. Agencies responsible for border security will make use of the above-mentioned Center.

Furthermore, electronic surveillance systems were installed at some sectors of land border, while server infrastructure of radiation systems were renovated at almost all border crossing points of Georgia.

During the reporting year, the State Security Service suppressed illicit trafficking and attempted sale to various countries of nuclear materials and radioactive substances at border-crossing points of Georgia and/or in circumvention of the latter. With the aim of ensuring radiation and nuclear safety, the Service was in constant coordination with relevant authorities and provided operational control in this direction.

As a result of conducted operational-searching and investigative activities, in 2022, the relevant units of the Service brought criminal charges against 3 individuals on the fact of illegal purchase/storage and attempted sale of radioactive substances.

Disinformation and Other Threats of “Hybrid Warfare”

In 2022, “hybrid threats” directed against Georgia had significant negative influence on Georgia's security environment. In the course of protecting national interests, processes managed by special

services of foreign countries and particular destructive forces were a significant challenge to the State Security Service, where the tools of so-called “soft power”, covert operations (including cyberoperations) and “information warfare” were applied actively and in many cases, in a coordinated manner.

Disinformation and propaganda

In 2022, disinformation and propaganda campaigns conducted to the detriment of Georgia’s interests by external or internal actors were closely following the ongoing trending topics and regional developments.

Again, the main purpose of the disinformation campaigns was to influence country’s foreign policy course and Euro-Atlantic aspirations, and as a counterweight, to spread in the public the agenda and worldview tailored to their interests. During the reporting period, disinformation processes aimed at deterioration of security environment to the highest extent possible became particularly active. Targeted information attacks against state institutions involved in Georgia’s national security system were underway.

Dissemination of fake and groundless information was aimed at undermining Georgia’s relations with strategic partners and allies, as well as with specific countries. Furthermore, active attempts to exploit combat activities taking place in Ukraine for own political purposes were detected.

With the aim of gaining more effect out of information and phsycological influence operations, application and further improvement of respective technologies was still active. Furthermore, certain states and their special services involved in these processes actively exploited organizations, particular individuals and socio-political groups dependent on them either financially or due to other interests.

In 2022, against the background of large-scale military activities ongoing in the reigon, the State Security Service became a target of multiple disinformation statements and propaganda campaigns.

Absolutely groundless accusations devoid of legal and factual circumstances articulated with regard to the Service were particularly acute, including the accusation on cooperation with the special service of the hostile foreign country in organizing the transfer of smuggled consignments. Notwithstanding proactive communication conducted and detailed information, including evidences, requested by the State Security Service, internal and external parties involved in the process and making such accusations did not present any evidences. This campaign unequivocally represented an intentional provocation directed against Georgia.

Society was intentionally being misled on particular processes accompanying the war, as well as information campaigns aimed at artificial fueling of protest in general public were underway. Disinformation campaign on “mass” and “uncontrolled” influx of citizens of foreign countries shall

be highlighted in this context. Society was being intimidated by spreading information that so-called saboteurs, terrorism-related groups, as well as individuals posing threat, were allegedly among the persons entering Georgia.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the fact that the Service repeatedly spread substantiated information, politically biased individuals continued intentional discreditation of the Service's leadership.

Disinformation campaigns waged against the leadership and the activities of the Service were actually directed against the country's security system and served the purpose of reducing population's interest towards matters of state significance and eventually undermining peace and secure environment in the country.

During the reporting period, the Service was constantly conducting the monitoring of the processes taking place within the frames of the so-called information warfare, detecting individuals and organizations involved in the campaigns, as well as their sources of financing, identifying interconnections and analyzing the risks. Relevant measures envisaged by law were carried out.

So-called soft power and covert operations

Within the reporting period, special services of foreign countries continued to actively apply so-called soft power tools in an effort of conducting various intelligence activities.

Throughout this process, with the aim of achieving their objectives they involved political powers, scientific and expert circles, representatives of cultural sector, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, business organizations and various foundations acting in their own countries. Furthermore, they were actively striving to establish close relations with certain groups operating in Georgia in relevant directions, as well as to use capabilities of citizens of foreign countries staying in Georgia on the basis of various statuses.

With the aim of establishing these connections, special services of foreign countries organized various cultural, educational and scientific seminars, conferences and expert meetings in their own countries or in third countries. In an attempt of disseminating their own political, military and national ideology, these actors actively resorted to humanitarian, infrastructure or business projects, particularly, in the regions of Georgia populated by minorities.

During the reporting period, facts of conducting various sociological surveys were outlined again, which aimed at examining sentiments in relation to certain matters among target groups of "influence operations" and possibly applying those under the interests of special services of foreign countries.

Foreign states considered implementation of educational and cultural projects as an effective method for conducting “soft power” policy and attracting young people through these activities, gaining their positive attitudes and spreading views on specific issues tailored to their own interests.

During the reporting period, the Service conducted respective operational measures in the direction of prevention and suppression of the mentioned threats. The above-mentioned processes were being controlled and analysed on permanent basis alongside other relevant agencies. With the aim of detection and prevention of possible illegal activities, individuals and organizations involved in and/or contributing to these activities were placed under operational control.

Cybersecurity

In 2022, cyber attacks and cyberintelligence operations directed against critical information infrastructure of the country remained a significant challenge to the security of Georgia.

During the reporting period, the State Information and Cybersecurity Center operating under the LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of the State Security Service responded to 33 particularly complex cyberincidents carried out against I tier subjects (state agencies) of critical information systems.

In 2022, the State Security Service was actively working in the direction of development of the secure communication network in the country. Moreover, relevant electronic platforms for sharing information with I tier (state agencies) and II tier (telecommunication companies) subjects of critical information system were elaborated, which will considerably increase the efficiency of response to cyberincidents.

During the reporting period, the Service, in cooperation with the British Embassy, launched a significant project, which will substantially facilitate the improvement of relevant state agencies’ capabilities in terms of detection, timely handling and suppression of incidents taking place in information and communication infrastructure.

Furthermore, implementation of a training program on cybersecurity issues in energy sector under the auspices of LEPL Operative-Technical Agency of the State Security Service and with the support of international partners, shall be highlighted. Within the mentioned event, operators and regulatory authorities of the energy sector were provided with the information on specifics of detection, suppression and handling of cyberincidents.

Fight against Terrorism

During 2022, the existing situation in the direction of international terrorism still represented a significant threat to the world.

International terrorist organizations were actively continuing their terrorist activities. During the reporting period, Daesh and Al-Qaeda suffered significant losses. Challenges stemming from Taliban created certain difficulties in Afghanistan and the whole region.

Existing Situation with regard to International Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Daesh

During 2022, Daesh's basic operation area was the territory of Syria and Iraq, as well as Afghanistan and certain regions of Africa. The number of Daesh's terrorist fighters operating in Syria and Iraq considerably reduced, however, during the reporting period the units maintained certain combat capabilities.

In January 2022, through a large-scale attack carried out against a prison located in Syria (in the Northeast), Daesh demonstrated its resources, during which several hundreds of convicted terrorists were able to escape. Camps situated in Syria represented a challenge, where family members of Daesh's terrorist fighters are placed. They are trying to deteriorate local security situation through various means. It is noteworthy that due to the existing situation in camps, the issue of radicalization of juveniles staying there constituted a significant threat. Repatriation of the mentioned citizens still remained a problem for many states.

Daesh's unit operating in Afghanistan was regularly carrying out terrorist acts against Taliban and local residents. Furthermore, it also conducted certain activities beyond the borders of Afghanistan. In comparison to the last year, Daesh's units operating in Africa, particularly in the western part of the continent, further intensified their terrorist activities.

During the reporting period, Daesh lost two leaders. In February 2022, in the course of the counterterrorism operation conducted by the United States of America in the Syrian province of Idlib, Daesh leader blew himself up, while the latter's successor was killed as a result of an attack carried out by the local forces in the Syrian province of Daraa in October 2022.

The new leader named by the terrorist organization will most likely be less involved in the management of Daesh. Therefore, significant changes in the structure and terrorist activity of Daesh are less probable.

Al-Qaeda

In 2022, Al-Qaeda lost its leader. After two decades of search, he was eliminated as a result of drone strike conducted by the United States of America in Kabul, capital of Afghanistan. However, the terrorist organization has not admitted his death until now. Notwithstanding this fact, Al-Qaeda did not considerably weaken during the reporting period.

In 2022, the terrorist organization's most combat-capable units were its regional networks operating in the African continent (especially in Somalia). During the same period, the terrorist organization's unit operating in Yemen maintained limited activity.

In the conditions of structural decentralization characteristic for Al-Qaeda, the activities of its regional units are characterized with considerable autonomy. Therefore, the elimination of the terrorist organization's leader will not lead to fundamental changes in its future activities.

Taliban

During 2022, under conditions of the rule of Taliban, terrorism situation in Afghanistan significantly deteriorated. Taking into consideration the elimination of Al-Qaeda's leader in Kabul, the facts of using Afghanistan's territory as a safe haven by Al-Qaeda and cooperation with Taliban were once again confirmed.

Situation in Afghanistan in 2022, namely, a humanitarian crisis and facts of severe violation of human rights by Taliban created complications with regard to global security. Citizens facing the threat of humanitarian catastrophe were seeking asylum, including in the European countries. According to the UNHCR's information, during 2022, Afghans made up one of the largest refugee populations worldwide.

Based on the past experience related to the threat created by radicalized individuals and/or supporters of terrorist organizations among the refugees from the territories of Syria and Iraq, it can be assumed, that existing grave situation in Afghanistan requires proper attention/response. Furthermore, it shall be mentioned, that grave social and economic situation in Afghanistan represents an additional factor facilitating the radicalization of individuals, who are vulnerable to extremist ideas.

The existing situation in Afghanistan creates a threat of strengthening the terrorist organizations operating in the country. It is known, that Al-Qaeda's several hundreds of fighters and a number of leaders are located on the ground at the given moment. Furthermore, Taliban is not able to neutralize terrorist threats stemming from Daesh's unit operating in Afghanistan, potential strengthening of which constitutes a significant challenge to the region and the world.

Ultra-right extremism

During the reporting period, violent manifestations of ultra-right extremism represented one of the most significant challenges to global security. Incidents took place mainly based on racist, ethnic,

Islamophobic and other grounds of discrimination. In 2022, in some European countries, the problem of supporting extremist ideas manifested itself in the activities directed against a state order/democracy, however, these actions were successfully suppressed.

Given the increasing tendency of supporting violent extremism, this problem was evaluated as one of the key challenges in certain western states. In this context, with the aim of improving the global security environment, the strengthening of community's resilience and other preventive capacities, as well as combating any manifestation of violent extremism are of particular importance.

Georgia's Counterterrorism Efforts

During 2022, the State Security Service actively continued the fight against terrorism. This included the identification and detection of terrorism threats, strengthening of cooperation with international partners with regard to obtaining and sharing information related to terrorism and violent extremism, conduction of respective preventive measures in the direction of handling of terrorism challenges, improvement of mechanisms of the realization of counterterrorism activities and enhancement of response capabilities to challenges/incidents. One of the main priorities of the Service was constant training and professional development of personnel of the units directly involved in the fight against terrorism.

Counterterrorism efforts of Georgia were positively assessed in the Annual Report on Terrorism of the U.S. Department of State. According to the report, there were no terrorist incidents in Georgia, there was a stable quiet environment with regard to terrorism and the country is capable of properly responding to, deterring and detecting terrorism incidents.

The document reads that the State Security Service as the lead agency in responding to and investigating terrorism incidents works closely with other state agencies involved in counterterrorism activities.

The report underlines, that the State Security Service is well equipped and well trained and that the strengthening of counterterrorism unit's capabilities are underway on a regular basis.

Georgia occupied the last position (alongside several tens of countries) 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), which implies that terrorism incidents did not take place in 2022.

Terrorism threats and challenges facing Georgia

Terrorism threats and challenges facing Georgia are the following:

- Conduction of possible attacks in Georgia by supporters of international terrorist organizations
- Possible entry into the country of the citizens of Georgia, who are members of Daesh and Al-Qaeda staying in Syria and Iraq;
- Possible entry into Georgia of supporters of terrorist organizations / foreign terrorist fighters, including the use of country's territory as a transit route
- Attempts of financing the activities of terrorist organizations or providing other support from Georgia
- Possible recruitment for terrorism of citizens staying in Georgia by members / supporters of terrorist organizations

Conduction of possible attacks in Georgia by supporters of international terrorist organizations

As a result of counterterrorism efforts pursued by the State Security Service and a joint work carried out alongside other relevant agencies in this direction, Georgia did not represent a favourable area of operation for terrorist organizations and their supporters.

International experience showed that notwithstanding a country's sound institutional mechanisms in the direction of combating terrorism, terrorist organizations and their supporters still managed to carry out terrorist acts. Therefore, it is impossible to entirely exclude the possibility of conduction of a terrorist attack in Georgia.

As a result of activities carried out by the State Security Service in the direction of fight against terrorism, no terrorist activities were carried out in Georgia during the reporting period, no structured terrorist group was functioning, while the risks of financing terrorist activities were reduced to minimum. In 2022, no radical/extremist hotbeds were detected in the country, while the number of possible supporters of terrorist ideology remained low.

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

Repatriation to respective states of individuals staying in Syria and Iraq who fought in the past in the ranks of terrorist organizations and their family members remains a significant challenge. Georgia also faces this problem. At the given moment, citizens of Georgia who fought in the ranks of terrorist organizations at various times and their family members probably stay in Syria.

As a result of investigation carried out by the State Security Service, one of the leaders of Daesh, a citizen of Georgia, **Tsiskara Tokhosashvili** was arrested in Tbilisi International Airport in December 2022 on the fact of joining a terrorist organization and supporting it. This person left for Syria in 2015 and was a commander of one of the units of the terrorist organization. **T. Tokhosashvili** carried out terrorist activities and took part in combat activities taking place in Syria and Iraq.

It shall also be mentioned, that during 2022, the State Security Service conducted respective investigative and operational measures with regard to citizens of Georgia supporting terrorist organizations and their family members staying in Syria and Iraq. The State will act in accordance with best international practice in relation to the family members of terrorist fighters whose activities do not show signs of crime.

Possible entry into Georgia of supporters of terrorist organizations / foreign terrorist fighters, including the use of country's territory as a transit route

Possible entry into the country of supporters of terrorist organizations and individuals fighting in their ranks at various times, including an attempted crossing of the state border for transit purposes, represented a challenge to Georgia.

In 2022, counterterrorism screening of borders of Georgia by the State Security Service in coordination with the relevant agencies was underway. Control of possible illegal routes and so-called corridors used for entry into the country continued.

Attempts of financing the activities of terrorist organizations or providing other support from Georgia

During the reporting period, the State Security Service carried out respective operational and investigative activities with the aim of preventing and deterring the terrorism financing or provision of support in any form to international terrorist organizations. Constant monitoring was carried out with regard to operations and transactions potentially related to terrorism.

As a result of the activities carried out by the State Security Service, coordinated joint efforts with other relevant agencies and cooperation with international partners, in 2022 there were no facts of terrorism financing or provision of other support to terrorist organizations from Georgia.

In 2022, the State Security Service actively participated in the process of elaboration of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Risk Assessment (NRA) document, 2023-2026 National Strategy on Facilitation of Prevention, Detection and Suppression of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing and Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and its Implementation Action Plan (2023-2026).

The above-mentioned documents envisage implementation of recommendations of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) and aim at strengthening Georgia's capabilities, *inter alia*, in the direction of combating terrorism financing.

In this regard, the State continued to fulfill its respective international obligations taken within the framework of the fight against terrorism. Among them, active work was underway in the direction

of developing national lists of individuals related to terrorism and imposing appropriate sanctions to the listed individuals. In 2022, with the aim of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1373, two individuals were included in the national sanctions list.

Possible recruitment for terrorism of citizens residing in Georgia by members / supporters of terrorist organizations

The State Security Service continued to actively work in the direction of detection and suppression of dissemination of terrorist ideology in the country. Within this scope, constant monitoring on facts of possible dissemination of terrorist ideology in the cyberspace was underway. The detected threats were subject to instant response.

In 2022, measures provided by law were conducted in this direction due to which tens of foreign citizens with radical sentiments staying in Georgia left the country.

Situation in the occupied territories still created terrorist risks.

Criminal cases

During 2022, the Counterterrorism Center of the State Security Service launched investigation into five criminal cases under the Terrorism Chapter of the Criminal Code. Furthermore, investigative activities continued with regard to crimes detected in previous years.

Special operations forces

With the aim of constant preparedness for counterterrorism and other operations of particular complexity, in 2022 the State Security Service actively continued strengthening of capabilities of the special operations forces. For this purpose, trainings and various types of scheduled exercises for combat units of the Service were systematically held at the tactical training base of the Service. This included physical training of special operations forces, as well as theoretical and practical exercises for the use of firearms and special means.

With the aim of sustaining the preparedness capabilities, the respective units of special operations were trained/retrained in terms of conduction of antisabotage and counterterrorism measures, as well as mine clearance activities, detection of means of mass destruction, explosive ordnance disposal and enhancement of other capabilities. The exercises also included trainings of snipers, armored personnel carrier crew, paramedics and instructors, aviation security and other special programs.

Table-top exercises, field trainings and simulations held within the reporting period in interagency format shall be highlighted. The purpose of the aforementioned was the improvement of capabilities of mutually coordinated actions and joint response in crisis situations between law enforcement and defence forces. Support provided by strategic partners in this direction, as well as sharing their experience during tactical exercises was also of particular importance.

In 2022, the Special Operations Department of the State Security Service responded up to 120 notifications, as a result of which various types of ammunition and explosive materials were seized in certain cases. At the same time, during the reporting period, passportization (update) of separate and strategic facilities, monitoring of evacuation routes and mobilization sites were conducted, topographic maps were updated.

Fight against Corruption

During the reporting period, fight against corruption and detection of public servants engaged in malfeasance and corruption-related crimes represented one of the important directions of the activity of the State Security Service. Furthermore, with the aim of avoiding such crimes, the conduction of active preventive measures, while reducing the risks of vulnerability of public servants and certain individuals to special services of foreign countries or various criminal subjects remained a priority.

In 2022, the Anti-Corruption Agency of the State Security Service carried out a number of complex measures in the form of operational-searching and investigative activities, as well as in the direction of analytical and preventive measures. As a result, during the reporting period, a number of officials and public servants were arrested and criminal charges were brought against them.

In 2022, the Anti-Corruption Agency launched investigations into 61 criminal cases and criminal charges were brought against 170 individuals for committing such crimes, as bribe-taking (including in large quantities, as well as by a group of individuals with preliminary agreement), bribe-giving, abuse of official powers, neglect of official duty, fraud in large quantities and assistance in fraud, legalization of illicit income (money laundering), illegal seizure of immovable property, etc. Among the mentioned cases, the facts of illegal seizure of state property detected by the Service shall be underlined.

During the reporting year, 188 immovable and 20 movable properties were frozen within the criminal cases run by the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Service. The estimated value of the assessed property is approximately 4,008,820 GEL.

Furthermore, as a result of investigative activities, in 2022, 28 659 square meters of land plots misappropriated by illegal means were returned to the state by the decision of a judge on 7 criminal cases, total value of which, based on the expert conclusion, estimated 360,579 GEL.

It is noteworthy, that during the reporting period, none of the cases submitted to court by the State Security Service resulted in a judgement of acquittal, which indicates to the high standards of investigation in the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Service.

In parallel with the detection / suppression of corruption-related crimes and malfeasance, the efforts of the State Security Service in the direction of introducing and strengthening measures for the facilitation of prevention of corruption were also significant.

In 2022, Corruption Prevention Unit under the Anti-Corruption Agency continued its efforts aimed at raising awareness on corruption-related crimes for the public and public servants in an active manner. Within the framework of EU-funded project, so-called information meetings were held by the group of experts retrained as a result of cooperation between the Service and the Council of Europe (CoE) for representatives of state and local self-governing bodies in Kakheti, Imereti, Guria, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli regions. As a result, throughout the year, up to 200 public servants were retrained on corruption and malfeasance matters with the involvement of the State Security Service and foreign experts.

As a result of effective measures implemented by the State Security Service in the directions of corruption prevention and public awareness raising, citizens' participation in the fight against corruption significantly increased in the country. This is indicated, *inter alia*, by notifications on corruption offenses submitted by citizens during the reporting period.

In 2022, out of 61 criminal cases the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Service launched investigations on 21 notifications submitted by whistleblowers, which is undoubtedly a high indicator of citizens' activity.

During the reporting period, deepening of international cooperation in the field of fight against corruption remained a priority direction. Representatives of structural units of the Anti-Corruption Agency, within the framework of cooperation with partner organizations, took part in a number of important international events organized on the issues of fight against corruption, with the aim of building qualification and getting familiar with the best international practice, as well as sharing with partners the progress achieved by Georgia.

During 2022, the State Security Service was actively engaged in the programs supported by the European Union, Council of Europe, NATO, UN and the U.S. Embassy, within the frames of which a number of significant initiatives and activities were implemented. Moreover, during the reporting period, high-level visits of the leadership of the Service were paid to Austria, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Serbia and other countries of Europe.

Leading international ratings and assessments also highlight results of timely, efficient and prevention-based activities of the State Security Service aimed at eradicating corruption.

According to the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) prepared by "Transparency International", in 2022, Georgia moved up from 45th place to 41st place among 180 countries and ranked in line with countries, such as Italy, Czechia and Slovenia. According to this score, Georgia is ahead of such EU member states as Poland, Slovakia, Greece, Croatia, Romania, etc.

At the same time, it shall be underlined that according to the mentioned index, Georgia takes the first position in the Eastern European region and is ahead of the EU membership candidate countries, including Moldova, Ukraine, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania.

During the reporting period, the State Security Service continuously ensured the inspection of draft legal acts in the prism of anti-corruption, the monitoring of targeted use of budget funds and public procurement, the assessment of lawfulness of sale of state property. Identification of groups and areas vulnerable to corruption, analyzing of possible corruption risks in public sector and implementation of relevant measures envisaged by legislation for the reduction / elimination of the mentioned risks were underway.

Development of Legal Framework and Relationship with Courts

With the aim of ensuring proper operation of the Service and implementation of the powers prescribed by the legislation, during the reporting period, significant consideration was given to improving of the legal basis and developing relevant normative acts.

In 2022, the State Security Service elaborated and issued up to 180 new legal acts and provided its position, in accordance with the scope of competence, with regard to up to 350 draft legal acts elaborated by various state agencies.

In the direction of elaborating secret normative acts, the Service, in accordance with Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, proactively provided to the Trust Group the relevant secret normative acts issued by the Head of the Service for its information.

During the reporting year, the process of elaborating and improving internal regulations continued. In 2022, obligations to provide information to the Special Investigation Service and the Personal Data Protection Service were separated from each other. In terms of alleged commission of torture or other act of violence by a representative of a law-enforcement agency against a person to be placed/placed in isolator, the obligation of immediate notification of the Special Investigation Service was determined for the relevant units of the Service.

In addition, relevant amendments were made in the specific regulations of the Service, including the Code of Ethics, based on which, in case of revealing the signs of crime in the activity of an employee, obtained materials are sent to the Special Investigation Service in accordance with investigative jurisdiction.

With the aim of introducing an accounting policy within the system of the Service tailored to the specifics of the agency, the recommendations of the State Audit Office were taken into consideration and relevant legal acts were elaborated.

During the reporting period, in the direction of information security management system, certain organizational issues were regulated and relevant order of the Head of the Service was issued. Furthermore, in order to more effectively manage the process of preparation of certain protocols drawn up by commission, an electronic procedure for drawing up of the mentioned protocols was introduced.

In 2022, amendments were made to the statute of the Training Center of the State Security Service, on the basis of which certain functions related to the development / organization of special programs intended for the Service's incumbent personnel and prospective candidates to the Service were separated between the structural units of the Center.

During the reporting year, within the framework of the controlling tasks of the Administration of the Government of Georgia, relevant information on the conduction of measures subject to implementation under the transitional regulations of the legal acts of the Government was uninterruptedly provided by the Service.

It is noteworthy to mention the active involvement of the Service in the relevant working groups established in the Parliament of Georgia with the aim of fulfilling the 12-point recommendations of the European Commission. Relevant documents were prepared within the framework of the working groups, in which the activities within the competence of the Service were defined together with various agencies.

During the reporting period, the activities of the State Security Service in terms of relation with the common courts of Georgia were also significant.

Based on the relevant court rulings, the Service provided to the common courts the classified and non-classified information/evidences (in total, more than 1,200 pieces of information/evidences) required for the hearing of cases. At the same time, more than 580 documents submitted by the courts were processed within the reporting period.

In 2022, up to 40 civil or administrative litigation cases were run by the State Security Service, out of which 10 cases were completed in various instances. In most of the cases, the court considered the position of the Service as substantiated, which was reflected in relevant decisions.

In 2022, 4 administrative complaints were submitted to the Service, which were responded in accordance with the legislation. In addition, during the reporting period, positions were prepared and submitted to the Parliament of Georgia on 2 constitutional complaints, in one of which the representative of the Service directly participated.

Accountability, Protection of Personal Data, Accessibility to Public Information

Accountability

During the reporting period, the State Security Service cooperated with the relevant organizations conducting oversight in accordance with the rule and within the period specified by law. Within the framework of accountability to the Parliament of Georgia as defined by law, the Service actively cooperated with the legislative body and provided reports on measures implemented or planned in the direction of security and various types of information reports proactively, as well as upon request.

The leading officials of the Service took part in a number of sessions of the relevant committees of the Parliament of Georgia and sessions held within the frames of the Trust Group. In 2022, 6 meetings were held between the leadership of the Service and the Trust Group, where the members of the Group were presented with information (including, information containing state secrets) on various security issues within the competence of the Service in accordance with the rule defined by law. Besides, during the reporting period, the Service duly responded to 80 questions received from the Parliament of Georgia (36 of them within the Trust Group).

During the reporting period, cooperation with the Public Defender and the Personal Data Protection Service was also significant, taking into consideration the specifics of the various structural units of the State Security Service. In 2022, 31 pieces of correspondence received from the Public Defender were duly responded and the requested information (including, information containing state secrets) was uninterruptedly provided to him/her in accordance with the legislation.

In 2022, the Personal Data Protection Service, taking into consideration the requirements envisaged by the legislation, continued the conduction of real-time observation and control measures over covert investigative activities, as well as carried out unscheduled inspections. During the reporting period, meeting of the Head of the Service with the Head of the Personal Data Protection Service was held, where the important role of the Personal Data Protection Service in the direction of monitoring covert investigative activities and the coordination mechanisms existing between the agencies were underlined.

During the reporting period, the leadership of the Service also held a meeting with the Head of the newly established Special Investigation Service, where the parties discussed the functions of the independent investigative service and emphasized the importance of cooperation.

In 2022, the Service, in the process of carrying out investigations into the crimes falling under its investigative jurisdiction, actively cooperated with the General Prosecutor's Service of Georgia, which is the authority responsible for conducting oversight over investigations.

At the same time, during the reporting year, the Service actively applied internal control and oversight mechanisms. The Service pays special attention to the protection of the rights of individuals placed in temporary detention isolator. In 2022, the relevant unit of the Service continuously conducted internal monitoring in this direction and all the necessary conditions were created for the Public Defender to check the activities of the isolator.

During the reporting period, the representatives of the Public Defender's Office, during their visit at the Temporary Detention Isolator of the Service, inspected the conditions in the cells and the documentations attached to the cases of the detained individuals. They had the opportunity to interview the detainees and familiarize with the standards of medical services provided to individuals placed in the Temporary Detention Isolator. As a result of the inspection, no remarks and recommendations regarding human rights were made by the employees of the Public Defender's Office.

During the reporting period, within the scope of internal control mechanisms, the operational-searching, investigative and procedural activities conducted by the General Inspection of the State Security Service, as well as the preventive measures implemented with the aim of avoiding possible commission of crime by the employees of the Service shall be underlined. The Service continued to check legality and appropriateness of the disposal of material and financial resources by the structural units of the Service and to ensure the security of the information systems of the Service.

From January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, the General Inspection of the State Security Service conducted up to 70 service inspections with the aim of identifying and duly responding to possible violations of the norms established by the Code of Ethics, improper performance of official duties and possible commission of an unlawful acts in the system of the Service. Based on the prepared conclusions, different disciplinary sanctions were imposed to 29 employees (including employees on managerial positions), in particular, 5 employees were dismissed, 1 employee was demoted, strict reprimands were applied to 11 employees, reprimands were applied to 6 employees and warnings were given to 6 employees. In addition, instructions of a recommendatory nature were given to 4 employees.

In 2022, the General Inspection of the Service launched investigation into 5 cases, while criminal prosecution was carried out on 3 criminal cases against 3 individuals, among whom are two former employees of the State Security Service.

Protection of personal data

During the reporting period, for the interests of national security, the Service' LEPL – Operative-Technical Agency of Georgia continued to carry out covert investigative activities and other requirements defined by the legislation on the territory of the country. During this process, the

Service paid special attention to the observation of the regulations on human rights and freedoms, including inviolability of personal data and private life.

During 2022, in total, 2300 court rulings on the implementation of covert investigative activities, 137 reasoned motions of prosecutor on the implementation of covert investigative activities in an urgent manner and 33 orders issued by the supervising judge of the Supreme Court of Georgia on the implementation of electronic surveillance were submitted by authorized investigative bodies to the LEPL – Operative-Technical Agency.

During the reporting period, the activities of the Operative-Technical Agency were controlled by the Parliament of Georgia through applying the forms of parliamentary control. In addition, the activities of the Agency, in accordance with the rule established by the legislation, were subject to the control of the Prime Minister, judiciary, State Audit Service, Personal Data Protection Service and the Head of the State Security Service.

Within the frames of the parliamentary control, in 2022, the Trust Group and the Defence and Security Committee submitted information requests in written form in 13 cases on the implemented measures and certain activities of the Agency, which were duly responded.

During the reporting period, the Operative-Technical Agency presented the annual report of 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 accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

In 2022, the Personal Data Protection Service continued to inspect the activities of the Agency and used the powers to suspend covert investigative activity in accordance with the legislation, through application of special electronic control measures and inspection procedures.

During the reporting period, the Personal Data Protection Service, within the scope of its powers granted by the legislation, carried out an unscheduled inspection of investigative activities of covert eavesdropping and recording, which took place from July 28, 2022 to September 28, 2022.

During the inspection, the representatives of the mentioned Service had the opportunity to enter the restricted access area of the Operative-Technical Agency and to inspect the activities of the Agency in real time, its regulatory legal documents (including, documents containing state secrets) and to obtain information on the technical infrastructure used for the purposes of covert investigative activities.

The inspection did not reveal any violation of requirements of the legislation by the Agency. The Agency was given mandatory assignments to be implemented with the aim of improving the certain aspects of personal data processing.

Accessibility to public information

During the reporting year, the requested public information was uninterruptedly released by the Service in accordance with the legislation. From January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, the Service received 93 applications (including from citizens and civil sector representatives) on requesting public information, out of which 70 applications were satisfied, 9 applications were forwarded to other public agency for further response within the scope of competence, 7 applications were satisfied partially, and 7 applications were not satisfied.

The hotline (“123”) operating in the State Security Service was actively used, giving citizens the opportunity to provide or request various types of information from the Service. In 2022, through the mentioned mechanism, more than 1200 submissions were received by the Service, which were duly responded.

During the reporting period, the information received through the electronic means of the Service (info.ssg.gov.ge) was processed on a systematic basis. In total, up to 420 electronic applications were duly responded. In addition, the Service responded to more than 3,500 pieces of correspondence received from citizens, various agencies and organizations, including the Public Defender.

The society was actively informed about the measures taken by the Service and their results through the official website of the Service (ssg.gov.ge) and other channels of communication. The relevant unit actively cooperated with the media and other informational outlets on the matters within the competence of the Service. In 2022, up to 80 different pieces of information were published by the Service, including information on the developments resonated in the society in the direction of security, with regard to which the Service released a number of special statements and provided objective and fact-based information to the population.

On December 10, 2022, in accordance with the requirements of the legislation, the relevant report on the 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 LELP – Legislative Herald of Georgia.

International Cooperation and Interagency Coordination

International cooperation

Taking into consideration the most difficult situation created in the region in 2022 and new geopolitical factors, it was critically important for the State Security Service of Georgia to continue close coordination with strategic partners and friendly states, to further strengthen the Service’s capabilities in certain security directions through cooperation with them, as well as to share information on security issues within the framework of strong partnership relations.

The leadership of the Service was systematically providing the international partners with information on the security environment and risks in Georgia and its surroundings, the situation created in the occupied territories and along the occupation line, as well as on hybrid threats and processes developed in different directions. Information was shared on the challenges evolving as a result of large-scale hostilities and the perspectives of their possible impact, in the context of the security of Georgia and the region, as well as of Europe.

In this regard, high-level meetings and cooperation with representatives and heads of relevant agencies of allied countries, diplomatic missions, regional and international organizations taking place throughout 2022 shall be highlighted.

The State Security Service, due to the specifics of its activities, continued close coordination, as well as cooperation in bilateral and multilateral formats with strategic partners and relevant international organizations in specific directions, including in terms of terrorism and violent extremism, hybrid threats, cyber security and various transnational crimes. During the reporting period, the exchange of analytical and operational information with partners on various security issues was efficiently carried out through secure and timely communication tools, including Interpol and Europol channels, as well as through the network of liaison officers, police and defence attachés accredited in Georgia.

Meanwhile, in the mentioned direction, the State Security Service continued its efforts with regard to concluding agreements on the exchange and mutual protection of classified information, as well as treaties and memoranda on cooperation in the field of law enforcement and security with NATO and EU member states and other partner states. In terms of the development of the mentioned international legal mechanisms and secured communication channels, in 2022 the Service carried out a number of important activities.

Overall, Georgia concluded similar agreements on the exchange and mutual protection of classified information with 24 partner states (most of them are NATO and EU member states), the NATO and the EU, and agreements on cooperation in the field of combating terrorism / law enforcement are concluded with 29 states and the Europol.

In addition, in 2022, upon the initiative of the Service, Georgia joined counterterrorism analysis projects of the Europol, such as: “Travellers”, “Terrorist Finance Tracking Program” (TFTP) and “Check the Web” (CTW).

Along with joining the mentioned projects, Georgia also became a member of Europol's Counter Terrorism Joint Liaison Team (CT JLT).

In addition, in 2022, within its competence, from the legal and security point of view, the Service processed and duly responded to more than 60 draft international agreements on various topics, including the fields of fight against crime, defence, transport and air safety, customs, readmission,

visa-free travel, etc. Security issues of state importance were duly reflected in the mentioned documents.

The ongoing cooperation between the State Security Service and the relevant agencies of the EU and NATO member states in 2022 shall be emphasized. The Service has close partnership relations with the counterpart agencies of the United States of America, with which cooperation in various formats took place during the reporting period. The Service was actively involved in joint efforts to combat international terrorism and radicalization, terrorism financing and money-laundering, threats stemming from proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, border security, cyber operations and other critical incident response areas.

During the reporting period, with the support of American partners, including on the basis of cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), dozens of different training programs, table-top and field exercises were held. The purpose of the mentioned activities was to enhance the capabilities of particular units of the State Security Service, to strengthen the national response framework in a multi-agency format and to improve the management of joint operations between the agencies.

In 2022, cooperation with the European Union and its agencies in the field of security and law enforcement, including within the framework of projects funded by the European Union was of importance and a priority for the Service. The Service was involved in the Security, Accountability and Fight against Crime in Georgia (SAFE) program. In addition, the representatives of the Service participated in a number of events implemented within the framework of the EU project on Technical Assistance to Support the Fight against Organized Crime, the EU-CoE joint program - the project on Fight Against Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism, the exchange program of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and of other projects.

During the reporting period, respective units of the State Security Service, in accordance with their competence, were actively involved in the preparation of information on specific areas of security for the special questionnaires related to the accession of Georgia to the European Union, in the process of the implementation of National Action Plans for the implementation of the Association Agreement and Association Agenda, and the development of relevant documents. The Service participated in the meeting of the Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security held within the framework of the Georgia-EU Association Agreement, as well as in the activities to be implemented within the framework of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan with the European Union.

In 2022, the Service's cooperation with NATO and participation in the implementation process of relevant initiatives of the Substantial NATO-Georgia Package (SNGP) were particularly important.

The Service was designated as the lead implementing agency for the new SNGP initiative on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threat Reduction.

During the reporting year, the Service was actively involved in the implementation of the Annual National Program (ANP).

In addition, the representatives of the Service took an active part in various events organized within the framework of NATO-Georgia cooperation on the issues of sustainability and security of the country, including the activities carried out within the framework of the NATO Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program (IPCP) and the “Partnership for Peace” Program (PFP), and training courses held in the NATO School on terrorism, cyber security, hybrid threats, strategic communications and other issues.

Close cooperation was ongoing with various agencies of the United Nations, including the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Office on Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center (UNCCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In the direction of the fight against international terrorism, the State Security Service successfully continued cooperation with international partners in bilateral and multilateral formats, including the participation in the Global Coalition Against Daesh initiative.

In 2022, the Service also participated in the Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Forum (CTLEF) organized by the Governments of the United States and Germany.

In addition to the abovementioned, the Service continued to participate actively in the plenary sessions and activities of the working groups of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Council of Europe (CDCT), as well as in international and regional projects and events held under the auspices of Interpol on various transnational threats.

In order to further strengthen international cooperation in the field of combating the proliferation of weapons and materials of mass destruction, during the reporting period, the State Security Service took a number of effective steps and implemented important measures. In this regard, the cooperation with certain member countries of the EU and the NATO and partner organizations, as well as the assistance provided by them shall be emphasized. During the reporting period, the relevant units of the Service participated in tens of field and theoretical trainings, international and regional seminars and thematic meetings.

A national inter-agency practical field training related to the CBRN security issues with the support of partners and hosted by the State Security Service was held In 2022, which brought together up to 200 representatives from the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. Georgian units received the highest evaluation from the expert groups.

Furthermore, a large-scale exercise held during the reporting period with the support of the General Secretariat of Interpol shall be mentioned, which brought together around 100 representatives from 10 countries. The State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other relevant agencies shared information with the participating countries about efficient and coordinated handling of nuclear and radiation incidents at the state border.

The Service also continued to successfully cooperate with EU CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative. As the host of South-East and Eastern European Regional Secretariat of the mentioned Initiative (uniting 10 countries), the Service was actively involved in the implementation of a number of projects and various activities supported by the European Union. At the same time, cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) continued within the framework of the ongoing project on combating smuggling of nuclear materials in the Black Sea region.

During the reporting period, within the framework of the obligations undertaken by Georgia within international agreements and multilateral conventions, the State Security Service continuously ensured the preparation and provision of relevant reports to the international organizations on the issues and directions within its competence.

Interagency cooperation and coordination

Taking into account the gravest developments taking place in the region in 2022, as well as dramatically increased threats with regard to the country's security, the strengthening of inter-agency cooperation and coordinated work at national level acquired an even greater importance for the State Security Service. In the mentioned direction, during the reporting period, the Service took a number of important steps, while continuous and intensive coordination with relevant state structures in various areas of national security was underway.

The Service continuously processed information obtained from open and closed sources in an operational and analytical manner, while senior officials of the Government were duly informed on the threats, risks and challenges identified in the context of state security, and opinions and recommendations on the necessary preventive measures were shared with them, including within the framework of the work of the National Security Council of Georgia.

Information exchange mechanisms with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Prosecutor's Service of Georgia, the Special State Protection Service and the Georgian Intelligence Service were applied in an active and efficient manner.

Within the framework of inter-agency cooperation, the activities of the Service were aimed at raising awareness in state agencies on certain threats, prevention of existing or expected risks and challenges,

timely response thereto, prevention-neutralization at an early stage thereof and other goals of ensuring security

During the reporting year, a number of inter-agency meetings were held and joint measures were taken. The Service was actively involved in the work of various inter-agency commissions and councils, in particular, in the activities of the Permanent Interagency Commission for Facilitation of Prevention, Detection and Suppression of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing and Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Interagency Commission for Combating Organized Crime, the Joint Maritime Operations Center, as well as in the implementation of the 2021-2024 Action Plan of the Cybersecurity Strategy of Georgia, in the elaboration of the 2023-2027 Draft Strategy of the Integrated Management of the State Border of Georgia, and in other interagency mechanisms.

At the same time, the Service actively participated in the work of commissions on Georgia's integration into NATO and EU, the Interagency Government Commission created for the Implementation of the Engagement Strategy Action Plan, the Interagency Coordinating Council against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the State Commission on Migration Issues, as well as in the process of implementing the 2022-2024 National Action Plan of Georgia for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

In 2022, the sixth 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 progress report on annual implementation of the 2022-2026 Action Plan of the National Counterterrorism Strategy was discussed by the members of the Commission. In addition, the Commission reviewed the activities of inter-agency thematic working groups and discussed the strengthening of coordination, as well as further improvement of the information exchange mechanism.

With the aim of further strengthening cooperation with the civil sector and promoting their involvement in preventive measures, the Commission also decided to continue supporting the platform of Private-Public Dialogue on issues of terrorism and violent extremism. It shall be noted that eight thematic non-governmental organizations are participating in the mentioned initiative along with the member agencies of the Permanent Interagency Commission.

In addition, two meetings held within the mentioned platform in 2022 shall be emphasized, where the existing trends and challenges in Georgia and in the world in terms of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the activities and measures implemented by the state and the private/civil sector in the direction of fight against terrorism and extremism were discussed.

At the same time, the sixth session of the Interagency Coordination Council for the Fight Against Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear Threats was held during the reporting period, which

was organized by the State Security Service, being the chair agency of the Council. At the session, the member agencies presented the 2022 progress reports of the 2021-2030 National Strategy and its Action Plan, discussed future priorities and planned activities, as well as the importance of coordination between the agencies in the mentioned process.

During the reporting period, communication with the civil sector, scientific-academic and expert circles and sharing their recommendations and opinions in the process of implementing the security policy was also a priority for the Service. Within the framework of cooperation with the civil society, a number of thematic meetings and joint events were held. Among them, in 2022, the State Security Service was a partner agency of the “Tbilisi 4th International Forum for Regional Stability”, where the developed situation and new challenges in the Black Sea region in the direction of nuclear security were discussed together with local and international participants.

Sustainability and Institutional Development

In the process of ensuring state security, special attention is paid to the areas necessary for the institutional development and sustainability of the Service, such as: the existence of appropriate human resources, infrastructure and material-technical base. In 2022, the Service continued to implement relevant measures and activities in the mentioned direction.

Human resources and professional development

During the reporting period, the priority of the State Security Service in the direction of human resources management was to retain to the greatest possible extent highly qualified, experienced and professional personnel, to motivate them and to facilitate further growth of their career.

In addition, taking into account the security challenges facing Georgia, it is highly important for the Service to pay consideration to future personnel, to attract motivated staff with high moral grounds and practical skills, and to develop them into successful security personnel.

Taking into account the mentioned tasks, in 2022, the State Security Service took a number of effective steps. In accordance with the rule envisaged by legislation, the Service awarded incentives to / motivated its personnel, as well as implemented measures for the development of their qualifications. In 2022, the Service awarded incentives to up to 340 employees in various ways. Employees were provided with equal working conditions, high work standards and enjoyed a proper social package. The principles of equality and non-discrimination on ethnic, religious or gender grounds were strictly observed in the Service.

An important part of the human resources policy of the State Security Service is the promotion of continuous professional education of employees, their retraining in accordance with modern standards and development in the direction that enables the maximum realization of the skills and potential of professional personnel.

During the reporting period, the Service created all necessary conditions for employees to develop practical and professional skills, to get familiar with modern methods and technologies and to develop their qualifications, including with the support of partner countries.

It shall be noted, that a modern system of special professional education was successfully implemented for the purposes of selection, evaluation and training / retraining of employees in the State Security Service, which is substantially in line with the best practices of the EU and NATO member states. Furthermore, modern evaluation and testing methods were introduced and tested, which enables the determination of compliance of candidate's qualification with the requirements envisaged by particular position (staffing position).

In 2022, up to 400 employees of the State Security Service completed a special retraining educational program introduced in the Training Center of the Service covering various areas of security. Special attention was paid to the training / retraining of personnel in special disciplines, including theoretical part, as well as practical and tactical trainings.

At the same time, during the reporting period, training was actively conducted with the aim of improving foreign language proficiency of employees. Dozens of employees of the Service completed intensive general and professional English language courses that included assessment tools in accordance with the NATO STANAG 6001 standard.

The Service's cooperation with the education / training centers of other agencies shall also be noted, where employees of the Service were sent on periodic basis to participate in training courses organized on issues significant to the security of the country.

At the same time, in 2022, the level of involvement of Service's personnel in study courses and training programs supported by international partners was particularly high. With the support of the United States of America, NATO and other strategic allies, the employees of the State Security Service were involved in various trainings and qualification building activities. Significant attention was paid to enhancing the capabilities of the analytical team, among others.

With the aim of sharing the current trends and the best international approaches in the field of human resources management, during the reporting period, the HR Unit of the Service and the Training Center were actively involved in various special training courses, meetings and conferences organized by international partners. Cooperation in the mentioned direction also included participation in programs supported by the European Union, OSCE, the Geneva Center for Security Management, the UN Women and other partners on such issues of human resource management as are the professional development of public servants, mentoring of new employees, issues of gender perspective in the security sector, etc.

Training Center

In 2022, the Training Center of the State Security Service was actively involved in the training / retraining of relevant personnel for the units of the Service and ensured an uninterrupted educational process. Work continued in the direction of attracting highly qualified trainers and instructors, both from local and international circles of experts, as well as from the personnel resources of incumbent and former employees of the Service.

During the reporting period, 12 special training programs were implemented at the Training Center, which were attended by more than 100 employees of the Service. With the aim of assessing the candidates to be employed in the Service and developing their basic professional skills, 13 orientation programs for the training of candidates/newly-appointed employees were implemented and up to 200 trainees participated in it. At the same time, within the framework of continuous professional education, taking into account the needs of the structural units of the State Security Service, several training courses were prepared and implemented in various directions, in which, in total, more than 100 employees and personnel of partner agencies participated.

With the aim of raising the awareness of youth on security matters, the Training Center of the State Security Service continued to implement important innovative projects and various activities (including seasonal security schools, informative tours, public lectures and conferences).

During the reporting period, upon the initiative of the Service and with the support of the British Embassy in Georgia, the “Summer School of Security” was organized, in which 18 students selected from private and state higher education institutions participated. Within the two-week intensive training, the students were provided information by the leading Georgian professionals and international experts of the field on security challenges at the global, regional and national level, ways of their prevention and related processes. The program, which was specially elaborated for students, included practical activities and simulation exercises along with theoretical training.

In 2022, the activity of the Training Center of the State Security Service stood out also in terms of establishing various partnership relations, developing / initiating joint training courses or academic programs. In this regard, during the reporting period, the Memorandum on Cooperation signed between the Training Center and the Business and Technology University is worth mentioning.

On the basis of the mentioned cooperation, with the support of the European Union, the “International Security and Technology Master's Program” was developed, in which leading experts in the field of security were involved. Enrollment in the program will start in 2023, and its goal is to prepare a highly qualified, competitive professional resource, who will have a thorough academic education in the field of national and international security, both in terms of theoretical and practical (including technological issues) knowledge.

Material-technical and financial resources

During the reporting period, with the aim of comprehensive functioning and institutional sustainability of the Service, relevant structural units continued to provide various units with proper infrastructure and material-technical resources. Within the budgetary funds of 2022, the Economic Department of the State Security Service concluded 342 contracts with total value of 19 526 378 GEL.

Within the budgetary funds of 2022, 141 tenders were announced and contracts were concluded with 132 contenders within the conducted tenders. As a result of the contracts concluded through electronic tenders, the savings amounted to 223 154 GEL in total.