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Law of Georgia on Refugee and Humanitarian Status

This law is based on the Constitution of Georgia, universally recognized principles and norms of international laws including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and serves the purpose of meeting the international liabilities undertaken by Georgia in the field of the refugee and human rights law.

This law determines the legal status, rights and obligations, and legal guarantees of a person seeking asylum in Georgia, the legal status of a refugee or a person holding a humanitarian status, the social-economic guarantees of a refugee or a person having a humanitarian status, and the grounds and procedures for granting, suspending and revoking the refugee or humanitarian status.

Chapter I

General Provisions

Article 1. Definition of terms

For the purposes of this law, the terms used there-in shall have the following meaning:

- a) Seeking an asylum - expression of a will by a person in front of the Government of Georgia, to have legal protection based on this law;
- b) Application - written application requesting asylum filed to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, with the purpose of attaining humanitarian status;
- c) Asylum-seeker - a person, who is requesting legal protection based on this law through the granting of refugee or humanitarian status;
- d) Person having a refugee status - person, to whom a refugee status has been granted under the Article 2 of this Law;

- e) Person having a humanitarian status – person, to whom a humanitarian status has been granted under the Article 4 of this Law;
- f) Ministry – Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia
- g) Reception center – place of temporary accommodation for asylum-seekers;
- h) Certificate – document certifying (the asylum seeking/application for asylum), for which the form and the rule of its issuance and replacement is determined by the Ministry;
- i) A minor left without parental care – a minor that is a citizen of a foreign country or has no citizenship that entered Georgia alone, without being accompanied by a legal guardian or authorized adult and who has no guardianship by the time of filing an application, or a minor that is no longer accompanied by the guardian or authorized adult after entering Georgia.
- j) Family member – spouse, elderly parents , child under 18, son/daughter lacking legal capacity, or those lacking legal capacity or other dependents of the refugee or a person with humanitarian status;
- k) Family reunion – legal entrance of family members of the refugee or persons with humanitarian status to Georgia with the purpose of family unification;
- l) Country of origin – the country of citizenship or a permanent residence of an asylum-seeker or a person with humanitarian status.

Chapter II

Granting refugee or humanitarian status

Article 2. Granting the refugee status

Refugee status is granted to a person who is not a citizen of Georgia or a stateless person permanently residing in Georgia; also to a person who is in Georgia and has a reasonable fear that s/he may become a victim of prosecution on the basis of race, religion, faith, ethnicity, belonging to a certain social group or political views, and cannot or does not want, because of such fear, to return to the country of origin or be under the protection of such a country.

Article 3. Reasons for refusing to grant refugee status

1. Refugee status is not granted to a person that:

- a. Committed a crime against peace, humanity, or war crimes, as stipulated in relevant international legislation;
 - b. Committed a non-political gross offense outside of Georgia before receiving refugee status;
 - c. Is accused of offense against UN goals and principles;
 - d. Does not require legal protection under Article 1, Section D of the UN Convention on Refugee Status of 1951;
 - e. May, based on a reasonable assumption, create a threat to state security, territorial integrity as well as to the public order of Georgia;
 - f. Is convicted for especially heavy crimes by a legally authorized court decision;
 - g. Is recognized to have conducted actions against Georgia and has committed a crime during previous visit(s) to Georgia;
 - h. Has left the country of origin for economic, epidemiological, natural or manmade disaster-related emergencies.
2. Refugee status may not be granted to a person that:
- a. Has already been recognized as a refugee in a different country and is still under the protection of this country, unless proven otherwise;
 - b. Holds a travel document issued by another country in line with article 28 of the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees;
 - c. Has initiated procedures for refugee status in another state signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and is eligible to continue such procedures.
3. A person who holds citizenship of two or more countries may not be granted refugee status if the person is able to benefit from the protection of one of such countries.

Article 4. Granting humanitarian status

1. Humanitarian status is granted to a person that is not a citizen of Georgia, or is a permanent resident of Georgia without citizenship of any of the countries, and does not meet requirements of article 2, and:
 - a. Was forced to leave the country of origin due to violence, external aggression, occupation, internal conflicts, mass violation of human rights or significant breach of public order;

- b. Cannot be returned to the country of origin because of legal requirements, namely, international responsibilities undertaken by Georgia (stipulated in article 2 of the Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of torture, inhumane treatment or punishment) or other international agreements prohibiting forcing a person out of the country) or cannot travel to another country;
 - c. May face serious life-threatening conditions or violation of rights if returned to the country of origin.
2. Humanitarian status may be granted to a person that is not a citizen of Georgia or a permanent resident of Georgia without citizenship and:
 - a. Was obliged to move inside Georgia, but is not entitled to the IDP status according to the law of Georgia on IDPs;
 - b. Entered Georgia from a neighboring country of origin as a result of a natural disaster;
 - c. Requires other justified humanitarian assistance.
3. The person is not entitled to humanitarian status if he/she meets the criteria listed in article 3.1 of this law, or if his/her presence in Georgia is conflicting with the interests of this country for any significant reason.
4. Humanitarian status is granted for the period of 1 year and can be extended if the grounds for granting such status still exist.

Article 5. Massive entrance

In case the circumstances described in articles 2 and 4 of this law do not exist and persons that are not citizens of Georgia enter the country, the Ministry makes a decision on granting refugee or humanitarian status based on the general situation in the country of origin.

Article 6. Protection of family members of refugees or humanitarian status holders

1. A Family member of the refugee may be granted refugee status, even if he/she does not individually meet the requirements of article 2 of this law and does not contradict with requirements of article 3.1.
2. A Family member of the refugee is granted refugee status if he/she cannot individually meet criteria listed in article 4 of this law, does not contradict requirements of article 3.1 of this law, and his/her presence does not create a threat to the interests of Georgia.

Article 7. Family reunion

1. A person with refugee status will be granted the right for family reunification within 1 year after submitting application.
2. A person with humanitarian status may be allowed to reunite with his/her family. This right has to be used, if within a year from receiving humanitarian status, a person could not reunite with the family, and this is impossible in another country.
3. A person will be refused family reunification if a family member cannot meet requirements stipulated in article 3.1 of this law.
4. After entering Georgia, a family member of the person is subject to article 6 of this law.

Article 8. Care/guardianship of minors

1. Information of a minor family member entering Georgia with an adult is included in the application of one of the parents, and in case of missing parents – caregiver/guardian, one of the adult family members or relatives.
2. If the minor enters Georgia alone, application including all relevant details and circumstances and with consideration of the best interests of the minor is filed by the appointed caregiver/guardian of the minor according to the legislation of Georgia. The Ministry immediately files a written request to the appropriate care and guardianship agency to appoint a caregiver/guardian to the minor during his/her stay in Georgia.
3. The care and guardianship agency should take immediate measures to provide care and guardianship for unaccompanied minors, according to the legislation of Georgia. The procedure for assigning refugee or humanitarian status for a minor left without care is implemented in accordance to the age, development and mental state and with due consideration of the fact that the minor without care may have very little information on the situation in the country of origin.

Article 9. Transferring responsibility for a refugee to Georgia

1. A citizen of a foreign country or a person without citizenship that holds refugee status from a state signatory to the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951 should be considered a holder of refugee status under this law if he/she has gained permission to live in Georgia for no less than 2 years.
2. A temporary residence permit is issued to persons described in section 1 of this article based on the written request of the Ministry.

3. Persons described in section 1 of this article are not eligible for social-economic guarantees ensured by this law.

Chapter III

Procedure for the granting of refugee or humanitarian status

Article 10. Procedure for the granting of refugee or humanitarian status

Procedure for the granting of refugee or humanitarian status includes:

- a. Submission of application;
- b. Preliminary revision of application, interview and making a decision on registering a person as an asylum-seeker;
- c. Issuance of a certification or handing over the decision of the Ministry on the refusal of case consideration on merit;
- d. Application consideration on merit and making a decision on the granting of refugee or humanitarian status or refusal to granting such status;
- e. Issuance of a temporary residence permit to a person with refugee or humanitarian status, or handing in the decision of the Ministry on the refusal to grant refugee or humanitarian status.

Article 11. Seeking asylum

1. Seeking asylum is a direct or indirect, oral or written wish of a person to seek the legal protection of Georgia under the circumstances described in articles 2 and 4 of this law.
2. In the case of illegal crossing of the Georgian border, a person is responsible to report this to the very first state agency that they encounter within 24 hours.
3. In case of circumstances beyond the control of a person that hinder timely reporting to the state agency, the timeframe could be extended only throughout the period of such circumstances in force.
4. Request for asylum, received by any state agency is put in written form and sent to the Ministry within 3 days and a copy is given to the person involved.
5. If granting of refugee status is requested by a person that is in Georgia legally, he/she is to file the application in person to the Ministry.

Article 12. Preliminary the revision of an application, interview and making a decision on registering a person as an asylum-seeker

1. Application of the asylum-seeker located in Georgia is reviewed by the Ministry within 10 days from the date of filing.
2. Within 10 days after filing an application the Ministry conducts an interview according to the pre-determined questionnaire. The applicant is notified about the date of the interview upon submission of the application.
3. The Ministry makes a decision on registering a person as an asylum-seeker or refusing such registration, and issues a certification for the asylum-seeker and his/her family member(s) within 5 days of making such a decision. Certification of the minor is given to his/her authorized representative.
4. The decision on registering a person as an asylum-seeker is the basis for granting rights and imposing responsibilities stipulated in article 18 of this law to the person and his/her family members.

Article 13. Reasons for refusing registration as an asylum-seeker

1. A person is refused registration as an asylum-seeker if he/she:
 - a. Has submitted fraudulent documents or included incorrect information in the application;
 - b. Violated the timeframe indicated in article 11.2, except for cases allowed by article 11.3;
 - c. Is a subject of criminal prosecution;
 - d. Has an infectious or other disease that, because of its nature, severity and longevity may create a threat to the population of Georgia. The list of such diseases is determined by the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia;
 - e. Was refused to receive refugee or humanitarian status because of failure to meet requirements stipulated in articles 2 and 4 of this law, and from the date of receiving refusal to the moment of application the situation in the country of origin has not changed;
 - f. Was refused to receive refugee status by the country signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, if refugee norms of these states do not contradict legislation of Georgia and there are no new circumstances of the case;

- g. Has left the country of origin when circumstances described in articles 2 and 4 of this law were non-existent and does not want to return to the country fearing to take a responsibility for the crime committed in violation of the legislation of this country;
 - h. Refuses to provide personal information or the circumstances of entering Georgia.
- 2. If the Ministry makes a decision on refusing to register the person as an asylum-seeker, the decision will be handed or sent to the applicant explaining the reasons and indicating procedures for appealing the decision according to the legislation of Georgia.
- 3. If a person does not appeal the negative decision on registering as an asylum-seeker, he/she is responsible to leave Georgia together with the family within one month after receiving the notification, unless he/she or family members have other legal grounds of staying in Georgia.

Article 14. Consideration of application on merit and making a decision

- 1. The Ministry reviews the application within 6 months from the moment of registration. The Ministry may extend the revision timeframe for no more than 3 months, duly informing the applicant in writing.
- 2. The Ministry interviews the asylum-seeker within 5 months from the moment of registration of the application. The applicant should be notified about the interview at least 3 days in advance, by sending written notification at the place of residence. In cases where the applicant fails to attend the interview twice, without a justified excuse, the Ministry may stop reviewing the application. If possible, the asylum-seeker should be interviewed by an officer of the same gender, and should be provided with the services of an interpreter of the same gender. It is allowed to hold additional interviews to specify some of the facts provided by the asylum-seeker.
- 3. The relevant unit of the Ministry prepares a conclusion on the granting of asylum or refusal, based on the following:
 - a. Questionnaire of the asylum-seeker;
 - b. Interview of the asylum-seeker;
 - c. Analysis of the genuineness of the facts provided by the asylum-seeker as well as his/her behavior;
 - d. Verification of the information provided by the asylum-seeker and his/her family members;

- e. Information on the country of origin of the asylum-seeker;
 - f. Results of the study conducted to determine a reason for the asylum-seeker leaving the country of origin, transit through the third country, entering Georgia and stay in Georgia.
4. Based on the conclusion on the granting or refusal of asylum, the Ministry decides on whether the asylum-seeker meets the criteria described in articles 2 and 4 of this law. If the asylum-seeker does not meet the above criteria, the Ministry decides on the compliance of requirements described in article 4 of this law. If the asylum-seeker does not meet requirements described in articles 2 and 4 of this law, the Ministry can refuse to grant refugee or humanitarian status.
 5. An asylum-seeker that was granted humanitarian status is entitled to submit a new application, if the circumstances changed significantly after the granting of humanitarian status and the grounds for requesting refugee status have arisen/ been created.
 6. A residence permit is issued to persons with refugee or humanitarian status according to the regulations stated in the law.
 7. A temporary residence permit is issued to the holder of humanitarian status for the period of validity of the humanitarian status. At the same time, in the case of extension of the humanitarian status, a renewal permit is issued, while a person holding refugee status will receive a permit for 3 years.
 8. If the Ministry makes a decision to refuse to grant refugee or humanitarian status, the decision will be handed or sent to the asylum-seeker within three days to the address indicated in the application, stating the reasons for refusal and legal mechanisms for appealing the decision.
 9. The decision of the Ministry to refuse the granting of refugee or humanitarian status may be appealed to the court according to the current legislation of Georgia. Before the court decision enters its legal force, the applicant has rights and guarantees stipulated in article 18 and 21 of this law.
 10. A person holding refugee or humanitarian status needs to go through annual registration according to the regulation of the Ministry.

Chapter IV

Suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status

Article 15. Grounds for suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status

1. The refugee or humanitarian status of a person is cancelled, if this person:

- a. Was granted citizenship or a permanent residence permit of Georgia;
 - b. Has lost and then voluntarily regained citizenship of the country of origin;
 - c. Has received citizenship of another state and is under the protection of that country;
 - d. Has voluntarily used the protection of the country he/she was forced to leave;
 - e. Cannot refuse the protection of the country of origin, provided that circumstances for receiving such status have ceased to exist;
 - f. For personal reasons does not want to use refugee or humanitarian status;
 - g. Is dead;
 - h. There is a reasonable suspicion that the person poses a threat to the security of Georgia;
2. Section “e” of this article does not cover holders of refugee or humanitarian status if the person can submit a justified motivation to refuse return to the country of origin because of fear of prosecution.
 3. If the family of the person falls apart due to divorce, separation or death of family members, these individuals maintain their refugee or humanitarian status granted as a result of family reunification, unless requirements stipulated in this article apply.
 4. A person’s humanitarian status is cancelled if this person receives refugee status based on article 14.5 of this law.

Article 16. Grounds for revoking refugee or humanitarian status

1. Refugee or humanitarian status is to be cancelled if it becomes known that the person does not meet the requirements listed in articles 2 and 4 of this law, namely, if newly discovered information certifies that information provided earlier is incorrect or the document is fraudulent.
2. Refugee or humanitarian status is cancelled if the court recognizes a person as missing or dead. The status will be restored if the court makes a decision on revoking this status.
3. The decision on revoking refugee or humanitarian status also covers family members of the person that have received this status according to articles 6 and 7 of this law.

Article 17. Procedure for suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status

1. In case one of the grounds described in articles 15 and 16 of this law arises, causing the suspension or revocation of refugee or humanitarian status, the Ministry initiates suspension or revocation procedures.
2. The procedure for suspending or revoking the status includes:
 - a. Warning a person on starting the above procedure and holding an interview;
 - b. An interview with the person within 1 month from initiation of the procedure;
 - c. Possibility to legally appeal against a decision made to suspend or revoke refugee or humanitarian status according to the legislation of Georgia.
3. During the procedure of suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status the Ministry does not consider compliance of the person with the requirements of articles 2 and 4 of this law.
4. A person with refugee or humanitarian status, in the case where such procedures are initiated towards him, retains a temporary residence permit and all rights of the status holder until the issue is fully finalized.
5. Suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status for a person results in the suspension of the residence permit and travel document issued to that person.
6. Within 3 days after making a decision on suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status the Ministry hands in or sends the decision to the person indicating the reasons and procedures to appeal.
7. If a person does not appeal the decision on suspending or revoking refugee or humanitarian status and if a person does not have other legal grounds for remaining in Georgia, the person is required to leave the country within a month after receiving the decision.
8. Failure to meet the requirements stipulated in section 7 of this article will become a subject to a law of Georgia on the Legal Status of Foreigners.

Chapter V

Rights and responsibilities of an asylum-seeker or a person with refugee or humanitarian status

Article 18. Rights and responsibilities of an asylum-seeker

1. An Asylum-seeker is entitled to:

- a. Use translation services and receive information on the procedures for granting refugee or humanitarian status as well as any other information described in this article;
- b. Receive referral on temporary placement and live in a reception center free of charge, and in special cases – other temporary placement allocated by the Ministry;
- c. Receive relocation and luggage moving support during admission to a reception center or in special cases – other temporary accommodation allocated by the Ministry;
- d. Receive other assistance;
- e. Benefit from the right for education just like any other citizen of Georgia;
- f. Benefit from medical or social assistance according to the legislation of Georgia;
- g. Revoke the application;
- h. Be liberated from any fees payable for revision of applications in any agencies, and use free translation services;
- i. Use the employment opportunities according to the legislation of Georgia;
- j. Address the court to protect the rights and freedoms according to the article 42.1 of the Constitution of Georgia;
- k. Be informed on the possibilities of contacting UNHCR;
- l. Use rights envisaged by the Georgian legislation for foreign citizens, unless otherwise stated in this law.

2. The Asylum-seeker is responsible to/for:

- a. Provide the appropriate Ministry agency with all documents required for the review of his/her application;
- b. Travel to the reception center or another place allocated by the Ministry within 15 days after receiving a temporary placement referral;
- c. In case of selecting another residence aside from that allocated by the Ministry, to inform the appropriate Ministry agency of the exact address and provide updated information in case of moving;
- d. Follow the legislation of Georgia and regulations for placement in reception centers, moving from the center, as established by the Ministry;

- e. Undergo a compulsory medical examination within the period established by the Ministry in an appropriate healthcare institution.
3. Failure of the asylum-seeker to meet the requirements of this article will be considered by the Ministry as a refusal to be placed in a reception center.

Article 19. Rights and responsibilities of a person with refugee or humanitarian status

1. A person with refugee or humanitarian status is entitled to:
 - a. Live in a reception center or in special cases – other temporary placement allocated by the Ministry for 3 months after receiving the status and use all rights stipulated in article 18 of this law;
 - b. Select between the housing options provided by the Ministry within 3 months after receiving such status or relocate at own expense;
 - c. Apply to the Ministry of Justice upon receiving citizenship of Georgia according to the law of Georgia on Citizenship of Georgia;
 - d. Return to the country of origin or travel to another country;
 - e. Benefit from the right for education just like any other citizen of Georgia;
 - f. Benefit from medical or social assistance according to the legislation of Georgia;
 - g. Benefit from rights envisaged by the Georgian legislation for foreign citizens, unless otherwise stated in this law.
2. A person holding refugee and humanitarian status (if the holder of a humanitarian status does not possess personal identification document or cannot obtain such a document) will be provided with a temporary residence permit and travel document according to the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees, articles 27-28.
3. A temporary residence permit and travel document is issued to the person holding humanitarian status according to article 2 of this law and written request of the Ministry.
4. The form and procedures for issuing travel document is defined by the Ministry of Justice in line with the 1951 UN Convention on Refugee Status.
5. A person holding refugee or humanitarian status is responsible for:
 - a. Respecting the legislation of Georgia;
 - b. Providing advance notification to the Ministry if he/she desires to change housing;

- c. Ensuring annual registration.

Article 20. Legal guarantees of asylum-seekers, refugees or humanitarian status holders

1. Rights of a person holding refugee or humanitarian status are protected by the state.
2. Decisions of state agencies or authorized public servants that violate rights of asylum-seekers, refugees or humanitarian status holders granted by Georgian legislation are void and do not result in any legal consequences.

Article 21. Guarantees against forced return

1. According to this law and international legislation, the principle of non-deportation means the responsibility of the Georgian state to not return an asylum-seeker or holder of refugee or humanitarian status to a country or border of the country where the life or freedom of such a person is under a threat because of his/her race, religion, faith, nationality, belonging to a certain social group, political views, or because of violence, external aggression, occupation, internal conflicts, mass violation of human rights or other gross violation of public order.
2. It is prohibited to deport an asylum-seeker from Georgia before the final decision is made on his/her application in line with article 14 of this law.
3. It is prohibited to deport the holder of refugee or humanitarian status to another country if there is a reasonable doubt that the person will become a victim of severe, non-humane or undignified treatment or punishment.

Article 22. Social-economic guarantees of persons holding refugee or humanitarian status

1. Issues regarding social-economic guarantees (reception, placement, education and security) for persons holding refugee or humanitarian status are decided by the Ministry in agreement with relevant state executive agencies. The ministry coordinates activities of the state executive agencies for providing assistance to persons holding refugee or humanitarian status.
2. Social-economic guarantees described in section 1 of this article no longer apply towards refugee or humanitarian status holder if he/she:
 - a. Has left Georgia for longer than 1 month;

- b. Committed a crime, for which a negative court verdict about the arrest has entered into legal force;
 - c. Did not register annually as required by article 19.5.c of this law and did not report to the Ministry three months after completion of registration to provide appropriate justification for failing to register.
 - d. Filed an application to refuse assistance guaranteed by the Georgian legislation.
3. Costs of receiving, defining status and placement of asylum-seekers, persons holding refugee or humanitarian status, including costs of state executive agencies and local self-governance units dealing with receiving and the placement of refugees or humanitarian status holders on their territories, are reimbursed through the funds assigned to the Ministry from the state budget.
 4. In case of the inability to independently resolve issues associated with holders of refugee or humanitarian status Georgia may seek assistance from other countries as well as international organizations.

Chapter VI

Authorized, responsible and international collaboration of the Government of Georgia

Article 23. Agencies responsible for the enforcement of this law

1. The following agencies are responsible to ensure the enforcement of this law:
 - a. Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia;
 - b. Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia;
 - c. Ministry of Justice of Georgia;
 - d. Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia
 - e. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia;
 - f. Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia;
 - g. Ministry of Education and Science;
 - h. Local government agencies.

2. Agencies listed in the above section of this article are not authorized to contact the government of the country of origin of asylum-seeker, holder of refugee or humanitarian status for the purposes of information exchange while executing this law or other legal acts regulating the field described in this law.

Article 24. Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia

1. The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and refugees of Georgia is the only administrative agency responsible for the revision of applications and making appropriate decisions on applications.
2. The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and refugees of Georgia:
 - a. Registers asylum-seekers, holders of refugee or humanitarian status; creates and maintains a database and regularly updates information;
 - b. Implements procedures described in this law according to the regulations stipulated herein;
 - c. Addresses the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, as appropriate, to receive advice on the asylum-seeker entering Georgia illegally on the issues of persons holding refugee or humanitarian status posing a potential threat to the country;
 - d. Addresses the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, as appropriate, to seek help with the identification of the asylum-seeker;
 - e. Informs the Ministry of Justice of Georgia on the case of the asylum-seeker according to the regulations of this law, on the court verdict into legal power about not satisfying the request of the asylum-seeker on the granting of asylum.
 - f. Informs the Civil Registration Agency, a legal entity of public law under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, on the suspension of revocation of refugee or humanitarian status in order to void temporary residence permits and travel documents of that person;
 - g. In order to ensure the respect of the rights of the asylum-seekers, refugees or humanitarian status holders, works with UNHCR in accordance with the article 23 of this law;
 - h. Provides information to UNHCR on asylum-seekers and holders of refugee or humanitarian status;

- i. Assists holders of refugee or humanitarian status in the return to the country of origin.

Article 25. Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia:

- a. Upon the request from the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia assists in the identification and verification of the facts provided as part of the application for the asylum-seeker status. It also provides information on the issues of asylum-seekers, holders of refugee or humanitarian status that may pose threats to Georgia;
- b. Informs the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia about any crimes committed by the asylum-seeker, holder of humanitarian or refugee status within 2 weeks after such a request is made;
- c. Verifies documents of the asylum-seeker at the checkpoint according to the set rules and procedures;
- d. Sends the application received by territorial units of the border or patrol police or other structural units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia within three days for revision.

Article 26. Ministry of Justice of Georgia

The Ministry of Justice of Georgia:

- a. Issues temporary residence permits for persons holding refugee and humanitarian status based on the status certification document issued by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia in accordance with the legislation of Georgia;
- b. Issues travel documents to holders of refugee and humanitarian status in accordance with the legislation of Georgia;
- c. Based on the notification from the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia and in accordance with the legislation of Georgia, initiates a deportation procedure for

non-registered asylum-seekers or persons whose refugee or humanitarian status has been nullified or cancelled in accordance to the legislation of Georgia.

Article 27. The Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia

The Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia informs the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia about the expected release of a person that has been arrested and is a subject to deportation from Georgia, no later than 2 months before the expiration of such detention.

Article 28. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia:

- a. If requested, assists the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia in the verification of facts provided as part of the process to define refugee or humanitarian status as well as gathering information on the country of origin of the given person, except for information-gathering through channels described in article 23.2 of this law.
- b. Assists the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia through the consulates of Georgia to reunite families according to article 7 of this law and within the authority granted by the legislation, as requested by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia;
- c. Within the field of its competence and with the help of diplomatic representations and consulates, assists a holder of refugee or humanitarian status in the voluntary return to the country of origin.

Article 29. Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia

The Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia:

- a. Provides asylum-seekers and holders of refugee or humanitarian status with medical and social assistance as granted by the legislation of Georgia;
- b. Based on the request of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia, provides a minor without parental

care with adequate living conditions and care/guardianship in line with the legislation of Georgia.

Article 30. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

The Ministry of Education and Science:

- a. Ensures that asylum-seekers and refugee or humanitarian status holders have the right to education in line with articles 18-19 of this law;
- b. Sends appropriate information to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia on the living conditions of children of refugee or humanitarian status holders and their condition in state and general education institutions; also provides information on the possibilities of studies in professional educational institutions and conditions and possibilities of transferring them to secondary and higher professional institutions.

Article 31. Local government agencies

Local government agencies are authorized to submit a list of housing opportunities for the holders of refugee or humanitarian status. The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia provides information on the conditions of the proposed housing options to the person holding refugee or humanitarian status.

Article 32. Joint responsibility of executive government of Georgia

Executive Government agencies of Georgia:

- a. Work with local government units on receiving, placing and integrating asylum-seekers and holders of refugee or humanitarian status;
- b. Work with different public unions and organizations to assist asylum-seekers or humanitarian or refugee status holders as well as their families;
- c. Execute their respective authority to ensure execution of this law.

Article 33. Collaboration of Georgia with other governments and international organizations

1. In order to resolve issues related to holders of refugee or humanitarian status, Georgia has good relations with other states as well as UNHCR or other international organizations.
2. For supervision of implementation of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, state agencies of Georgia provide UNHCR with all appropriate support and collaboration. UNHCR representatives are entitled to meet asylum-seekers, holders of refugee or humanitarian status any time, at any stage of the application process.

Chapter VII

Responsibility for violation of this law

Article 34. Responsibility for violation of this law

In case of violating regulations of this law, responsibility is defined in line with the legislation of Georgia.

Chapter VIII

Transitional and conclusive regulations

Article 35. Actions to be implemented to activate this law

1. Within 6 months after activating this law the Government of Georgia should ensure compliance of sublegislative acts to this law.
2. 6 months from passing the law, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia should design and approve:
 - a. Regulations for annual registration of refugees and persons with humanitarian status;
 - b. Certification of the asylum-seeker, regulations for issuing or changing it;
 - c. Procedure for granting refugee or humanitarian status;
 - d. Regulations for placement in reception center; code of conduct and regulations for removing a person from a recipient center.
3. Within three months after passing this law the Ministry of Justice is to design and approve a form of travel documents for the holders of refugee and humanitarian status.

Article 36. Annulled normative act

This law annuls the law of Georgia on Refugees dated February 18, 1998 (Parliament Messenger №11-12, 14.03.1998, pg. 39).

Article 37. Activation of the law

This law is to be activated on the 90th day from the moment of promulgation.

Mikheil Saakashvili, President of Georgia

December 6, 2011

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