

# **Georgian National Platform of Eastern Partnership**

## **Statute**

(Approved by the General Meeting of Georgian National Platform of Eastern Partnership on January 21, 2012)

### **1. General Provisions**

- 1.1. Georgian National Platform of Eastern Partnership is an association of local and international non-commercial legal entities registered in Georgia, aiming to promote and implement the Eastern Partnership goals initiated by the European Union in its eastern neighborhood.
- 1.2. The member organizations of Georgian National Platform agree that the EU integration is the most perspective way of Georgia's economic, social and political development and by joining the Platform they commit themselves to promote this process.

### **2. Goals of Georgian National Platform**

- 2.1. The goals of Georgian National Platform are:
  - a) Raising public awareness about the European integration process;
  - b) Popularization of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;
  - c) Promoting the creation of such conditions that will accelerate deepening of political cooperation between the European Union and Georgia and will promote closer economic integration;
  - d) Promoting the implementation of the goals set by the Joint Declarations of the Prague and Warsaw Eastern Partnership Summits and the EU-Georgia Action Plan of European Neighborhood Policy, including:
    - Implementation of measures envisaged by the priority spheres of EU-Georgia Action Plan;
    - Harmonization of Georgian legislation with that of the European Union, including approximation of the trade and investment regulation laws with the EU standards;
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    - Creation of relevant conditions for signing and further effective implementation of Association Agreement;

- In the sphere of democratization, human rights and rule of law;
  - Promotion of meeting the Copenhagen criteria;
  - Supporting the movement of citizens and simplification of visa rules for them in a safe environment;
  - Strengthening energy security and cooperation in the sphere of long-term, stable and safe energy supplies and transit;
  - Sustainable development and environmental protection;
  - Promotion of social dialogue and partnership;
- e) Promotion of civil society development in respect of Eastern Partnership, including through informing, involvement and mutual cooperation.

### **3. Forms of Activities**

3.1. To achieve the goals set by the Statute, the National Platform shall:

- a) promote raising public awareness about EU integration;
- b) set up four working groups in line with four thematic platforms of Eastern Partnership as well as subgroups, as needed;
- c) Discuss the implementation of four thematic platforms of Eastern Partnership as well as special initiatives of the Partnership in Georgia, including through monitoring;
- d) Acquaint the society with the results of the discussion;
- e) Submit the results of the discussion to the Georgian Government, Parliament, European and Euro-Atlantic structures in a form of recommendations/opinions;
- f) Cooperate with civil society organizations and public agencies of Georgia;
- g) Promote the correct and efficient implementation of recommendations shared by Georgian National Platform of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in Georgia;
- h) Cooperate with the EU Delegation to Georgia and the European Commission;
- i) Cooperate with National Platforms of Civil Society Forums of other Eastern Partnership member states;
- j) Cooperate with international, EU and third countries' civil society organizations participating in Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

- k) Cooperate with working groups, steering committees and other structures of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

#### **4. National Platform Membership**

- 4.1. National Platform Membership is open to any local and international non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity registered in Georgia, who shares the goals and values of National Platform of Eastern Partnership, except of those entities that have been founded by legal entities of public law.
- 4.2. Apart from the requirement set forth in paragraph 4.1 of the present article, an organization willing to join the National Platform of Eastern Partnership should:
- a) Be registered pursuant to Georgian legislation no later than two years upon submitting a written application about the National Platform membership;
  - b) Have at least one-year experience of working in any sphere/spheres of four thematic platforms of Eastern Partnership;
  - c) Have relevant human resources for stable participation in the Platform's activities.
- 4.3. Interested organizations, which fail to meet the criteria set forth in paragraph 4.2 of the present article, can be invited, upon the recommendation of the Coordinating Council, as associated members, who participate in the activities of working groups as observers.
- 4.4. An interested organization shall submit a written application composed in an established form to the Coordinating Council of the Platform, wherein it shall indicate about those person/persons, who, in case of membership, will represent the interested organization in the relations with the Platform. Contact persons must not be public servants or leaders of political parties.
- 4.5. An interested organization must attach to the written application a registration certificate and copies of the organization's statute, as well as information about number of staff members and implemented projects.
- 4.6. The Coordinating Council shall solve the issue of membership no later than 2 months upon receiving the application based on consultations with the members of the working group. Before the membership issue is solved, an organization seeking membership must provide a written application about approval and sharing of the Platform goals, as well as recognition of the Code of Ethics as a mandatory measure.
- 4.7. A National Platform member organization must participate in the activities of at least one working group of the Platform in accordance with the organization's scope of activity and experience.

4.8. The issue of assigning an organization seeking membership to working groups shall be decided by the Coordinating Council on the basis of the organization's application.

4.9. The Coordinating Council shall notify the interested organization about the Platform membership or refusal to membership in writing.

## **5. Termination of National Platform Membership**

5.1. Powers of the National Platform member organization shall be terminated:

a) On the basis of a personal statement;

b) Upon liquidation of the organization or cancellation of its registration under the rules set by the legislation;

5.2. By decision of the National Platform, a member of the National Platform can be expelled from the National Platform, if:

a) It roughly violates the duties set by the Statute;

b) Its representatives roughly violate the rules set by the Code of Ethics;

c) It or its representative is deliberately discrediting the Platform goals;

d) Its representative (main representatives and/or their substitutes) is absent, without valid excuse, from three consecutive planned meetings of a working group/groups.

5.3. By the decision of the Coordinating Council, the Platform membership may be terminated to the Platform member upon emergence of the circumstance envisaged by paragraph 5.2 of the present article until the next General Meeting of the National Platform.

5.4. The decision for expulsion shall be made by a majority vote through a secret ballot.

## **6. Rights and Duties of National Platform Members**

6.1. A National Platform member organization shall have the right:

a) To participate in the work of the General Meeting of National Platform with no more than one preliminary defined representative;

b) To participate in the uniform electronic communication network of National Platform with no more than one preliminary defined representative;

- c) To participate in each working group of National Platform with no more than one preliminary defined main representative; the member organization can also appoint a substitute representative to participate in the working group;
- d) To elect and be elected in the Coordinating Council of National Platform;
- e) To attend the sessions of the Coordinating Council based on preliminary notifications. The right to attend the sessions of the Coordinating Council can be restricted upon the motivated decision of the Coordinating Council if the area or time allotted for the meeting does not provide a necessary opportunity for the attendance;
- f) To get any information from the Coordinating Council of National Platform about the activities of National Platform, including about the date and agenda of the Council meeting a week earlier, as well as to receive a protocol within a week after the meeting.

6.2. National Platform member organization shall be obliged:

- a) To observe the Statute of National Platform as well as the decisions made by the Coordinating Council;
- b) To guide by the norms set forth in the Code of Ethics in relations with the National Platform member organizations;
- c) To take care of the dignity of National Platform.

## **7. General Meeting of National Platform**

7.1. General Meeting of National Platform Members is the supreme governing body of National Platform, which is convened by the Coordinating Council at least once a year;

7.2. The decision on putting the issue of making amendments to the Statute of National Platform on the agenda of the General Meeting is made by the Coordinating Council, except for the case when the draft amendments and additions are submitted upon the request of no less than one fifth of the Platform members;

7.3. General Meeting of National Platform is valid if it is attended by more than one half of delegates on the list. General Meeting adopts decisions with a majority vote of attending delegates if not envisaged otherwise by the Statute.

7.4. Each member organization has one representative at the General Meeting. Each member organization has one vote. Transferring the right to voting to the representative of another organization shall be inadmissible.

7.5. General Meeting of National Platform shall:

- a) Elect the members of the Coordinating Council out of the representatives of the member organizations for a term of one year with a majority vote of attending delegates through a secret ballot. Each working group shall offer the General Meeting the candidates for the Coordinating Council membership. All candidates nominated by a working group shall be put to a vote at the General Meeting, Those two candidates shall be considered elected, who collect most votes among other candidates nominated by this working group. In case of an equal vote, the members shall be selected by sortition;
- b) Hear the report on National Platform's activities;
- c) Adopt the decision by the majority of attending delegates on expelling a National Platform member from the Platform;
- d) Adopt a decision by the majority of delegates on the list on disseminating a statement/appeal on behalf of National Platform, including through electronic communication network. To adopt a decision through electronic communication network, it is mandatory to raise the issue for discussion at least 3 days (72 hours) before putting the issue to a vote;
- e) Adopt a decision about reorganization or self-liquidation of National Platform by the majority of 2/3 of members;
- f) Give recommendations to Civil Society Forum about another candidate of National Coordinator;
- g) Give recommendations to the National Coordinator–Member of Civil Society Forum in primary selecting of the organizations participating in the next Civil Society Forum.

## **8. National Platform Working Groups**

8.1. To fulfill the goals set by the Statute, National Platform sets up four working groups in accordance with the four thematic platforms of Eastern Partnership;

8.2. A working group shall gather no less than every two months. The working group can also carry out its activities through the electronic communication network of the working group;

8.3. A working group is comprised of one representative of those organizations, whom the Coordinating Council assigns to a particular working group in line with the scope of activity and experience, on the basis of the member organization's application;

8.4. A working group is authorized to make a decision on behalf of the working group, if over one half of the group's members on the list are attending;

8.5. A working group adopts a decision by the majority of attending members. Consent of more than one half of the members on the list is needed to make a decision through electronic communication network;

8.6. The activities of a working group are led by two coordinators of the working group, who are elected by the General Meeting of National Platform out of the representatives of the National Platform member organizations through a secret ballot for a term of one year.

## **9. Coordinating Council of National Platform**

9.1. National Platform is coordinated by the nine-member Coordinating Council led by the Chairperson of the Coordinating Council. Members of the Coordinating Council are elected by the General Meeting of National Platform out of the representatives of the National Platform member organizations through a secret ballot, for a term of one year. A person not attending the General Meeting can be elected a member of the Coordinating Council, if there is his/her preliminary consent on his/her election as member of the Coordinating Council.

9.2. The meetings of the Coordinating Council are held at least every two months. Special sessions of the Coordinating Council are convened upon the initiative of the Chairperson or at the request of 1/3 of the Council members. The meeting of the Coordinating Council is valid if over one half of its members are attending. Decisions are made with a majority vote if not otherwise envisaged by the Statute. The Council members shall be notified about the planned meeting and its agenda five days before the meeting, and in case of convening a special session – immediately. The National Coordinator with a casting vote shall also attend the sessions of the Coordinating Council.

9.3. The Coordinating Council shall:

- a) Convene and hold a General Meeting of National Platform; notify the members of National Platform about the date and agenda of the meeting at least 10 days before the planned meeting;
- b) Solve an applicant organization's membership issue by voting;
- c) Publish the draft amendments and additions to the Statute of National Platform at least two weeks before its submitting to the General Meeting;
- d) Discuss the cases of violation of the Code of Ethics and/or National Platform Statute and send a recommendation letter to that member, whose activities contradict the Platform goals or who roughly violates his duties set forth in the Statute and/or the norms set by the Code of Ethics; in case of failure to eradicate the violations within reasonable terms, the Coordinating Council shall terminate the member's powers and submit the recommendation to the General Meeting of National Platform on expulsion of the member;
- e) Based on the needs of National Platform, the Coordinating Council shall raise funds for strengthening National Platform and fulfilling the goals set by the Statute or shall submit a relevant recommendation for receiving financing by member organizations in respect of those project proposals, which aim at strengthening the National Platform;

- f) Appoint and dismiss the employees of the National Platform Secretariat upon the nomination of the Chairperson of the Coordinating Council;
- g) Approve the regulation on the activities of the National Platform Secretariat;
- h) Elect an editorial board of the National Platform's official publication, if any such exists
- i) Solve other issues, which, under the Statute, go beyond the competence of the General Meeting;
- j) A member of the Platform shall have the right to apply to the Coordinating Council with the request to put this or that issue on the agenda.

9.4. Term of office of a member of the Coordinating Council shall be terminated ahead of time if he/she is absent, without valid excuse, from three consecutive meetings of the Council. The Coordinating Council shall decide whether the member had a valid excuse.

9.5. In case of termination of the term of office of a member of the Coordinating Council, a person, who garnered more but insufficient votes for becoming a member of the Coordinating Council at the latest General Meeting, shall become a new member of the Coordinating Council. In case of an equal vote, the member shall be selected by sortition. A newly elected member shall perform his duties during the remaining term of office of the excluded member.

9.6. A person cannot be elected as a member of the Coordinating Council for more than two consecutive terms.

## **10. Chairperson of the Coordinating Council**

10.1. Chairperson of the Coordinating Council is elected by the National Platform out of its members for a term of one year.

10.2. A person cannot be elected a Chairperson of the Coordinating Council for more than two consecutive terms.

10.3. Each member of the National Platform shall have the right to nominate a candidate of the Chairperson of the Coordinating Council;

10.4. The Chairperson's term of office starts from the moment of electing and lasts until the election of a new Chairperson;

10.5. Chairperson of the Coordinating Council represents the National Platform in relations with the third persons;

10.6. Chairperson of the Coordinating Council shall:

- a) Lead the activities of the Coordinating Council and chair its sessions;



b) Sign the statements/appeals and other documents of the Coordinating Council and National Platform;

c) Perform other functions as envisaged by the Statute.

10.7. Only the General Meeting is authorized to terminate with a majority vote the powers of the Chairperson of the Coordinating Council ahead of time by reason of non-fulfillment of duties, abuse of power and improper behavior contradicting the goals of the National Platform Statute.