

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy and the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

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16 September 2024

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on the right to education; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy and Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 53/7, 52/9, 50/17, 51/21, 55/3 and 50/10.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government some observations concerning the Bill entitled *The Law of Georgia on Family Values and Protection of Minors*, adopted by the Parliament of Georgia upon second reading on 4 September 2024.

The Bill was assessed with regard to international human rights standards and rule-of-law principles. The following conclusions and issues contributing to those conclusions have been identified:

General comments

The top-line conclusion of the signatory Special Procedures' review of the Bill, following its adoption by the Parliament upon second reading, is that the Bill runs counter to Georgia's national and international human rights legal obligations not to discriminate in the protection of human rights based on any status. The Bill appears on its surface to be overtly and unlawfully discriminatory, and if not revised would provide for the selective restriction of multiple fundamental human rights based on prohibited grounds of discrimination. Furthermore, the Bill lacks legal clarity and precision in its drafting; and, if adopted and implemented, would inevitably lead to multiple human rights violations.

If passed in its current form, the Bill would constitute the most expansive restriction on the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and other gender-

His Excellency
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diverse (LGBT) persons in Georgia in the last 20 years since the Government began acceding to core human rights treaties of the United Nations.

This is particularly concerning in light of the fact that, following its most recent cycle of the Universal Periodic Review in 2021, the Government of Georgia accepted all 20 recommendations by the Human Rights Council to ensure protection from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (A/HRC/47/15/Add 1). This Bill undermines those commitments.

In response to previous communications sent to the Government of Georgia by Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Government has likewise acknowledged its obligations and commitment to protect LGBT persons from discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, including in the context of their exercising of the universal rights to freedom of assembly and expression (see, e.g., State responses to AL GEO 1/2013 and UA GEO 1/2019).

In light of the above, the procedure followed to draft the Bill would appear not to have aligned the provisions of the Bill with Georgia's international human rights obligations or corresponding political commitments. Indeed, the explanatory note accompanying the Bill states clearly that the Government did not meaningfully assess the provisions of the Bill to ensure their conformity with Georgia's international human rights obligations, and that the Government held no consultations either with the persons whose human rights it would restrict or with other relevant human rights experts. Such consultations are vital in the legislative process.

In its October 2018 resolution 39/11, the Human Rights Council encouraged Governments to give due consideration to the *Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs*, submitted to the Council pursuant to its resolution 32/22 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The *Guidelines* elaborate, among other basic principles underpinning the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs, that "States should create and maintain a safe and enabling environment that is conducive to the exercise of the right to participate in public affairs," including by guaranteeing "the equal participation of individuals and groups in the design, implementation and evaluation of any law, regulation, policy, programme or strategy affecting them. Effective remedies should be available if this right is violated." (*Guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs*, p. 6, available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/GuidelinesRightParticipatePublicAffairs_web.pdf.)

Although the Bill indicates that its purpose (article 1) is to protect children and "family values" (based on, and limited to, heterosexual marriages), the majority of the Bill appears to be narrowly focused on prohibiting the equal enjoyment of human rights by LGBT persons and those defending their human rights. In particular, the Bill overtly provides for discriminatory restrictions on the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, including access to information

and freedom of the media (articles 3, 8, 9, 10), the rights to privacy and family life (articles 4 and 5), the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (article 6), the right to recognition as a person before the law (article 7), the right to education (article 8), the right to freedom of peaceful assembly (article 10), and the right to work (article 11).

Those restrictions are neither in conformity with international human rights law, nor in compliance with Georgia's national legislation on non-discrimination, namely the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2339687?publication=0>). The stated purpose of that Law is to "to eliminate every form of discrimination and to ensure equal rights of every natural and legal persons under the legislation of Georgia, irrespective of [...] sexual orientation, gender identity and expression," or any other characteristics (article 1).

Freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly

The Bill provides in several articles for the prohibition of so-called "promotion" of LGBT identities (article 3), including by prohibiting the expression of LGBT identities and the dissemination of factual information about LGBT persons and their human rights in schools (article 8), in the media (article 9), and/or in public assemblies (article 10).

In June 2024, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (IE SOGI) presented his report to the 56th session of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/56/49) on the theme of unlawful restrictions on the human rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The restrictions provided by the Bill run counter to article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which provides that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" as well as to article 20(1) of the UDHR, which provides that "everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association."

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Georgia acceded in 1994, likewise guarantees the right to freedom of peaceful assembly in article 21 and affirms in article 19 the right of everyone to hold opinions without interference and the right to freedom of expression, which includes the right "to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds," including not only the exchange of information that is favourable, but also that which may criticize, shock, or offend..

With regard to articles 19 and 21 of the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee has clarified that States are required to ensure that, if the rights to freedom of assembly or expression are restricted, the restrictions must have a legitimate objective among those allowed by the Covenant itself, and must also be both

necessary and proportionate to achieve that objective (CCPR/C/GC/34, para. 35; CCPR/C/GC/37, para. 36). Restrictions must not unduly intrude on other rights and must be the least intrusive means to that legitimate end. The State has the burden of proof to demonstrate that any such restrictions are compatible with the Covenant, proving “in specific and individualized fashion the precise nature of the threat, and the necessity and proportionality of the specific action taken, in particular by establishing a direct and immediate connection between the expression and the threat” (CCPR/C/GC/34, para. 35).

Furthermore, any laws that restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly must, according to the Human Rights Committee, “also themselves be compatible with the provisions, aims and objectives of the Covenant.” This means that, “Laws must not violate the non-discrimination provisions of the Covenant” (CCPR/C/GC/34, para. 26), including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (CCPR/C/GC/37, para. 25).

While protecting “public morals” can be a legitimate purpose to justify certain restrictions on individual freedoms, it can never be a mask for prejudice or a tool for discrimination. Moral disapproval of same-sex conduct, even if widespread, would not be a legitimate ground to restrict fundamental human rights.

For those reasons, the aforementioned provisions of this Bill do not adhere to the strictly and narrowly construed limitations to freedom of expression that are permitted under international human rights standards, including under the ICCPR, and would thus *prima facie* violate the human rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in an unjustified manner.

Relatedly, the Human Rights Committee has found a conviction under a so-called “LGBT propaganda” law to constitute a violation of the ICCPR, particularly in relation to the rights to freedom of expression and equal protection under the law without discrimination (CCPR/C/106/D/1932/2010). The Committee on the Rights of the Child has also expressed concerns that a so-called “LGBT propaganda” law, justified in terms of protecting children, actually inflicts harm on individuals, including children, and recommended for the repeal of such legislation (CRC/C/RUS/CO/4-5).

With regard to peaceful assemblies, the Human Rights Council has reminded States “of their obligation to respect and fully protect the rights of all individuals to assemble peacefully and associate freely, online as well as offline, including in the context of elections, and including persons espousing minority or dissenting views or beliefs, human rights defenders, trade unionists and others, including migrants, seeking to exercise or to promote these rights, and to take all necessary measures to ensure that any restrictions on the free exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association are in accordance with their obligations under international human rights law” (A/HRC/RES/21/16, para. 1).

The Human Rights Committee has likewise indicated that “States must ensure that laws and their interpretation and application do not result in discrimination

in the enjoyment of the right of peaceful assembly, for example on the basis of race, colour, ethnicity, age, sex, language, property, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, birth, minority, indigenous or other status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other status” (CCPR/C/GC/37, para. 25).

The rights to privacy and family life

In articles 4 and 5, the Bill further restricts the enjoyment of the human rights to privacy and family life by LGBT persons. Article 4 prohibits LGBT persons from marrying, entering into alternative civil unions, or having their existing marriages and unions recognized by Georgian authorities. Article 5 prohibits LGBT persons from adopting or serving as foster parents to children.

Both provisions use ambiguous and imprecise terms and meanings, resulting in lack of legal clarity.

For instance, article 5 prohibits adoption or foster parenting by any individual who “does not fall under the category of heterosexuality”, yet without indicating which authority would be authorized to determine an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity and how that would be done in conformity with Georgia’s obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the human right to privacy.

In article 7 on “Indication of sex in State-issued documents”, the Bill similarly lacks legal clarity on how and who among Government authorities would determine a “person’s biological sex”, and how that would be done in accordance with the right to privacy, among other implicated human rights.

Article 17 of the ICCPR provides the human right to “protection of the law” against “arbitrary or unlawful interference” in any person’s privacy and family life, without discrimination on the basis of sex or any other status, including sexual orientation or gender identity.

Since March 1994, the same year that Georgia acceded to the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee has repeatedly reaffirmed in relation to article 17 that it is impermissible to “distinguish between individuals in the exercise of their right to privacy on the basis of sexual activity, sexual orientation and sexual identity”, and in relation to all of the ICCPR that “the reference to ‘sex’ in articles 2, paragraph 1, and 26 of the ICCPR is to be taken as including sexual orientation.” (See, *Toonen v. Australia*, CCPR/C/50/D/488/1992.) In numerous subsequent concluding observations, the Committee has urged State parties to guarantee equal rights to all individuals, as established in the Covenant, regardless of their sexual orientation.

In relation to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), to which Georgia acceded in 1994, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has also affirmed that the ICESCR’s non-derogable prohibition on discrimination includes the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics. In its concluding observations, the Committee has repeatedly called on States to adopt legislation to protect LGBT

and intersex persons from discrimination (see, e.g., E/C.12/HND/CO/2, E/C.12/SDN/CO/2, E/C.12/ITA/CO/5, E/C.12/IRQ/CO/4, E/C.12/UGA/CO/1, E/C.12/1/Add.107, and E/C.12/1/Add.80).

The Committee has likewise praised States for the adoption of such legislation (see, e.g., E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3, E/C.12/1/Add.35, E/C.12/1/Add.70, E/C.12/LIE/CO/1, E/C.12/MCO/CO/1, and E/C.12/CO/BRA/2). In 2016, the Committee explained that non-discrimination: “[...] encompasses the right of all persons, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, to be fully respected for their sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. [...] State parties also have an obligation to combat homophobia and transphobia, which lead to discrimination, including violation of the right to sexual and reproductive health.” (See E/C.12/GC/22: CESCR general comment No. 22, at para 23)

In the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to which Georgia acceded in 1994, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) has likewise consistently emphasized the importance of protecting the human rights of all women. In 2022, in an individual case decision, it noted that “The Committee considers that the rights enshrined in the Convention belong to all women, including lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women.” The CEDAW Committee interprets the Convention as covering all women, including those who identify as lesbian and/or engage in same-sex intimacy, and as prohibiting discrimination against women based on sexual orientation. Article 1 of CEDAW defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex” that impairs or nullifies the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in various fields. The broad definition of discrimination includes any form of discrimination against women, including on the basis of sexual orientation in the case of lesbian women, whether in public or private life, and in any field.

In its decisions, the CEDAW Committee has expressed concern about discrimination that lesbian women often face, and has urged States to review and amend laws, policies, and practices that discriminate against lesbian women. This includes decriminalizing and recognizing same-sex partnerships, and ensuring that lesbian women have equal access to health services, education, employment, and other rights (CEDAW/C/GC/28, paras. 18, 31). The Committee has also considered that the rights enshrined in the Convention belong to all women, including lesbian women, and that article 16 of the Convention applies to non-heterosexual relations (CEDAW/C/81/D/134/2018, para 9.7). Article 16 provides: “States shall ensure that women have equal rights with men in relation to marriage and as parents, as well as in respect of other aspects of family life”.

In their implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Georgia acceded in 1994, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has also urged States to “repeal all laws criminalizing or otherwise discriminating against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity or

intersex status and adopt laws prohibiting discrimination on those grounds” (CRC/C/GC/20, para. 34).

In the report following his country visit to Georgia in 2019, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity recalled that proposed prohibitions on same-sex marriage and civil unions – subsequently adopted by the Government of Georgia – were initiated for political purposes, even in the absence of LGBT organizations and activists advocating for such unions. The report noted in this regard: “The Independent Expert calls on all relevant actors to reflect on how such unnecessary initiatives fuel negative sentiments and contribute to stigma and stereotypes. He also calls on political leaders to shoulder their responsibility to promote social peace and foster tolerance.” (A/HRC/41/45/Add.1, at paras. 70-71).

Nonetheless, in its own advisory opinions on the (then) draft prohibitions of same-sex marriage, the Venice Commission noted that Georgia, like any other Council of Europe member State, was obliged to comply with standards set by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights) and therefore “must provide legal recognition (such as civil unions or registered partnerships for same sex couples)”. (Draft opinion 876/2017, CDL-PI(2017)006 of 22 September 2017, para. 38, and opinion 876/2017, CDL-AD(2017)013 of 19 June 2017, para. 63.)

The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

In article 6 (“Use of Medical Manipulation”), the Bill provides for the absolute prohibition of any medical care to support a transgender or nonbinary person in their gender transition, including any “performance of a surgical operation on another person or the use of any other type of medical manipulation on another person in order to assign a person to a sex different from the biological sex”.

The ICESCR obligates States party to ensure for everyone the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (article 12), without discrimination of any kind (article 2), including based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has elaborated upon in multiple general comments on ICESCR obligations. (See e.g., E/C.12/GC/20, E/C.12/2000/4.) In that regard, the Committee has emphasized the right of all persons to control their health and body, noting: “The right to health contains both freedoms and entitlements. The freedoms include the right to control one’s health and body, including sexual and reproductive freedom, and the right to be free from interference, such as the right to be free from torture, non-consensual medical treatment and experimentation. By contrast, the entitlements include the right to a system of health protection which provides equality of opportunity for people to enjoy the highest attainable level of health” (E/C.12/2000/4, para. 8).

In a report to the Human Rights Council on his country visit to Georgia in 2019, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based

on sexual orientation and gender identity found that discrimination against LGBT and intersex persons remained widespread in Georgia's health sector. In this regard, the development of article 6 of the Bill would appear not to have taken into consideration the past findings and recommendations of Special Procedures in relation to Georgia, and how those could bear on the lawfulness of the apparently discriminatory proposed restrictions on the right to health. For instance, the report elaborated: "the Independent Expert was shocked at the lack of awareness and the stigma attached to sexual orientation and gender identity by health professionals. [...] The parliament's Gender Equality Council observed that the health-care needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons had not yet been studied at the national level and that policies, strategies and action plans on the health-care system did not cover or address their needs and interests." (A/HRC/41/45/Add.1, paras. 76, 77.) The process of developing legislation potentially restricting the right to health for already-marginalized populations could clearly have benefited from the consideration of such studies.

The Independent Expert's report accordingly called on the Government of Georgia to fulfill its obligations related to the right to health, including to: "Take immediate measures to improve the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse persons and guarantee their access to good quality health-care services and health-related information. This includes incorporating their needs and specificities in the State Strategy on Health Care and considering the provision of gender-affirming care as a State obligation that is neither dependent on a diagnosis nor a prerequisite for legal gender recognition." The report further called on authorities to fulfill their human rights obligations by adopting "clinical guidelines on trans-specific medical procedures in line with international standards." (A/HRC/41/45/Add 1, paras. 117, 119.)

The right to education

Closely related to the aforementioned provisions of the Bill that would impose unlawful restrictions on freedom of expression and access to information, article 8 of the Bill prohibits access to and dissemination of information on LGBT identities and equality in education institutions at all levels.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has long recognized that sexual orientation and gender identity are among the grounds of discrimination prohibited under article 2(2) of the Covenant (E/C.12/GC/20, para. 32), in relation to the right to education and all other human rights provided by the ICESCR.

Likewise, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has noted that discrimination against LGBT children and adolescents is contrary to the rights provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including in relation to the right to education. The Committee has decried "exclusion from education and training, as well as a lack of family and social support, or access to sexual and reproductive health services and information," and noted that it: "urges States to eliminate such practices, repeal all laws criminalizing or otherwise discriminating against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender

identity or intersex status and adopt laws prohibiting discrimination on those grounds. States should also take effective action to protect all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex adolescents from all forms of violence, discrimination or bullying by raising public awareness and implementing safety and support measures.” (CRC/C/GC/20, para. 33).

In a joint statement marking the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia on 17 May 2015, UN Special Procedures mandate holders, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Council of Europe Commissioner on Human Rights, and regional human rights institutions called for an end to discrimination and violence against LGBT young people and children, including in educational institution, proclaiming: “States must act to overcome prejudice and stereotypes through anti-discrimination initiatives in schools and public education campaigns. [...] The health and well-being of all children and young adults must be protected, including through ensuring access to non-discriminatory health services and comprehensive sexuality education, and by protecting the rights of all children and young adults to their identity, autonomy, and physical and psychological integrity.” (Statement available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2015/05/discriminated-and-made-vulnerable-young-lgbt-and-intersex-people-need?LangID=E&NewsID=15941>.)

In March 2023, several Special Procedures mandate holders jointly published a Compendium on Comprehensive Sexuality Education demonstrating the plurality of international human rights mechanisms that have identified binding international human rights obligations to protect the rights to education, freedom of expression and access to information by ensuring young persons – including LGBT children – can access comprehensive sexuality education without discrimination on any grounds. (Compendium available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/health/sr/Compendium-Comprehensive-Sexuality-Education-March-2023.pdf>.)

The right to work

Article 11 of the Bill is vague, poorly defined, and lacks legal clarity. It provides for the voiding of any obligation, instruction or agreement in “the framework of an employment relationship” that pertains to “refraining from using any word or combination of words reflecting biological sex”.

The provision would discriminate against individual workers based on gender identity and could be directed against any person in the workplace based on their sex, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity. Such a provision could justify sexist or other discriminatory language just as easily as language intended to create unsafe and stigmatized environments for LGBT persons in workplaces.

International human rights law obligates States to protect individuals from discrimination in the enjoyment of their right to work, for which reason the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has called on States to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes sexual

orientation and gender identity among the prohibited grounds of discrimination (A/HRC/19/41, paras. 51-53, 84(e)).

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has likewise confirmed that the ICESCR “prohibits discrimination in access to and maintenance of employment on grounds of [...] sexual orientation” (E/C.12/GC/18, para. 12 (b)(i)). According to the Committee, “any discrimination in access to the labour market or to means and entitlements for obtaining employment constitutes a violation of the Covenant” (E/C.12/GC/18, para. 33). The Human Rights Committee has relayed similar obligations in its own concluding observations on periodic reviews of States (e.g. CCPR/C/USA/CO/3/Rev 1, para. 25).

In his report to the Human Rights Council on his country visit to Georgia in 2019, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity noted that employment discrimination against LGBT persons remains widespread in Georgia. This suggests that measures promoting such discrimination would likely constitute a *prima facie* violation of Georgia’s human rights obligations. The report observed: “Although the Labour Code has, since 2006, explicitly prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation, according to all available reports, such discrimination remains common in the workplace. Studies by non-State actors show that discrimination in employment is the most problematic sphere for the community, especially for trans persons” (A/HRC/41/45/Add.1, para. 72).

In its February 2023 concluding observations on Georgia’s sixth periodic report under CEDAW, the CEDAW Committee recommended that the government: “Take targeted measures, including under the active labour market policy, to reduce unemployment among women, with an emphasis on [...] lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women,” among others. (CEDAW/C/GEO/CO/6, para. 36 (a), citing CEDAW/C/GEO/CO/4-5, para. 29.) The Committee also called on Georgia to “adopt targeted measures, including temporary special measures, to ensure access to justice, employment and health care, including sexual and reproductive health services, social protection and food security for disadvantaged groups of women, such as [...] lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women,” among others, “taking into account their specific needs. (CEDAW/C/GEO/CO/6, para. 42, citing CEDAW/C/GEO/CO/4-5, para. 35.).

Conclusion

We reiterate the legal obligation of your Excellency’s Government to ensure the development, adoption and implementation of all legislation without discrimination based on any prohibited ground, including based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

In light of the analysis elaborated above, we urge the Parliament of Georgia to reject the Bill, in consideration of the above-mentioned observations in relation to international law and human rights standards.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the draft *Law of Georgia on Family Values and Protection of Minors* (the Bill), including your Government's views on the above analysis.
2. Please provide details of the process by which the Bill was developed, and any assessment undertaken to ensure that the provisions contained in the Bill comply with Georgia's obligations under international human rights law.
3. Please provide details of how the domestic legal framework safeguards the rights of all persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and how this Bill is consistent with those legal requirements implementing Georgia's international human rights obligations.
4. Please provide information of how the domestic legal framework protects the rights of human rights defenders and those advocating for the rights of LGBT persons in Georgia, so that they can carry out their legitimate work in a safe and enabling environment without fear of attacks, harassment or other intimidation.

This communication, as a comment on pending or recently adopted legislation, regulations or policies, and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) after 48 hours. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

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Irene Khan
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