



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO GEORGIA

Ambassador

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Tbilisi, 28 April 2017

JH/mj Ares (2017)

Dear Acting Minister,

I am writing to inform about the **Project “EU-ACT: EU Action against Drugs and Organised Crime”** that the European Union's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) is financing under Phase III of the programme *Fight against organised crime and drug trafficking along the Heroin Routes*.

The project envisages Georgia as a priority country in the South Caucasus region, given your country's willingness to engage, and its constructive and positive efforts to date in relation to the issue of fighting drugs.

The project will be hosting a high-level meeting with relevant Ministries and agencies involved in both drug supply and drug demand issues. The meeting will be held on Monday 22 May 2017, at the Marriott Hotel Tbilisi; letters of formal invitation will be sent by the project in the nearest future. Given the cross-cutting nature of the project, all relevant beneficiary institutions dealing with aspects of drug supply and drug demand issues will be invited.

To facilitate an efficient process of communication, I would be grateful if the Ministry of Justice could appoint a contact person responsible for future liaison with the project and invite each beneficiary institution to nominate their contact points respectively.

For its nature, this project will need the active involvement of several national Ministries and agencies. It is suggested that a Working Group to be set up under the **Interagency Coordinating Council for Combatting Drug Abuse** chaired by the Ministry of Justice would be an appropriate forum to coordinate Georgia's participation in the project; it is recommended that the following Ministries and agencies are represented within the Working Group:

Ministry of Internal Affairs;

Ministry of Justice;

Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs;

Ministry of Finance;

Chief Prosecutor's Office;

The National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health

Subject to the agreement of the relevant authorities of Georgia, the project would also propose to deploy a senior and highly experienced EU law enforcement officer to Tbilisi. This individual would act as a single point of contact to all relevant Georgian Ministries and agencies for enquiries and requests for support. This officer would also provide *ad hoc* assistance and mentoring as requested to Georgian law enforcement agencies.

We wish to emphasise that this project is designed to respond to Georgia's perceived needs. Subsequently, following the high-level meeting, the project would propose to deploy a small team of EU experts, whose role would be to consult closely with the various Ministries and agencies, to ascertain the most relevant and effective support to be provided, and to draw up a realistic timetable for the delivery of assistance.

The benefit of this project will be the delivery of a comprehensive package of targeted assistance that contributes to a balanced approach to dealing with drug issues. This will allow to reinforce the continued efforts of Georgia, by providing targeted support in those areas that Ministries and agencies of Georgia consider being the most critical.

In addition, as the Priority country in this region, the project will look to Georgia to lead in the promotion and sharing of newly developed best practices, making use of Georgian expertise and experience in regional and international fora.

Any further information can be provided by Ms. Ketevan Khutsishvili (Ketevan.Khutsishvili@ec.europa.eu) who follows the project at the EU Delegation.

Please accept, Dear Acting Minister, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours ever,



Janos HERMAN
Ambassador

Mr Alexandre Baramidze
Acting Minister
Ministry of Justice of Georgia