



PRESS RELEASE

UNDP, State Commission sign an agreement to boost decentralization reform in Georgia

Tbilisi, 3 April 2006 — Robert Watkins, UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative, and Vano Khukhunaishvili, Deputy Chair of the State Commission on Effective Governance and Territorial Arrangement will sign a cooperation agreement.

In 2004, the Government of Georgia started an ambitious reform programme to strengthen local self-government in Georgia and elaborated the main policy document of the Georgian Government - Decentralisation Strategy - to outline this process. The main body entrusted to support the decentralization process has been the State Commission on the Effective Governance and Territorial Arrangement along with its executive arm – the Center, both established by the President.

Under the cooperation agreement UNDP will commit 150,000 USD for the support and operations of the Center. The main objectives of the project will be to support establishment and operations of the Center, to support the most important policy document the Strategy and facilitate coordination of the decentralization process.

“UNDP considers it is of high importance to support national authorities in this important endeavour to ensure equal development of the entire country and better public services delivered at local level. In that respect, UNDP will support the State Commission in efficiently and competently performing its tasks”, Mr. Watkins said during the signing ceremony.

The Center will try to utilize the best practices of the decentralization process in strengthening the local governance to improve service delivery to the poor. It is expected that the Center will finalize and widely disseminate among the key stakeholders as well as to the public in general the Decentralization Strategy of the country.

In order to continue the reform and successfully introduce new framework of the local self-government the Center will prepare drafts to strengthen legislative basis for the decentralization and ensure its draft laws are in compliance with European standards. The Center’s capacities will be developed to play a coordinating role for all national and international organizations and experts involved in the sphere of self-government.

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