Contribution of The Government of Georgia to the preparation of thematic report for the 63rd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council focusing on the topic: "Autonomy, participation and human dignity of older persons with cognitive impairment".

In the area of social policy, Georgia has undertaken numerous proactive measures to strengthen its social protection system and create a more comprehensive and sustainable social welfare framework.

With regard to the social protection of older persons, a particularly significant development has been the introduction of the state pension indexation mechanism. Pursuant to the amendments to the Law of Georgia on State Pension, pensions are indexed annually, ensuring that pensions for all beneficiaries increase by no less than the annual inflation rate. For pensioners aged 70 and above, the indexation formula provides for an increase equivalent to the inflation rate plus 80 per cent of real economic growth. A similar indexation mechanism has also been introduced for the social package provided to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, individuals permanently residing in Georgia's mountainous regions who receive a state pension or social package are entitled to an additional benefit amounting to 20 per cent of their pension or social package.

To address extreme poverty and mitigate social risks, the Government implements the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) Programme. Households with no income or income-generating assets may qualify for subsistence assistance. Recognizing that older persons constitute one of the most vulnerable groups in society and often have greater support needs, the programme's methodology assigns them a relatively high equivalence coefficient (needs index), thereby substantially increasing their eligibility for subsistence benefits. At present, the Government is undertaking a comprehensive reform of the Targeted Social Assistance Programme—the country's principal poverty reduction instrument—with the objective of ensuring a faster and more effective response to emerging social and economic crises.

In addition to cash benefits, the State implements the "Social Rehabilitation and Child Care" State Programme, which encompasses a broad range of social services. To promote the social inclusion and independent living of older persons, the Government finances community-based care services. These services provide accommodation, daily care, meals, primary healthcare, outpatient and inpatient medical services, and individualized support plans tailored to beneficiaries' preferences, capacities, and specific needs. Beneficiaries are also provided with clothing and personal hygiene products.

Moreover, in order to enhance the functional independence and social integration of persons with disabilities and older persons, the Government finances programmes for the provision of assistive devices, including manual and electric wheelchairs, prosthetic and orthopaedic devices, canes, hearing aids, walking frames, crutches, personal lifting equipment, and bathroom and toilet assistive chairs. Prosthetic and orthopaedic services are likewise available to older persons. Furthermore, under the Long-Term Care Services Sub-programme, family-type independent living services are provided for persons with disabilities.

The Community-Based Care Services Sub-programme is specifically designed to facilitate independent living and promote the social integration of older persons and persons with disabilities. Beneficiaries receive accommodation, daily care, and three meals per day through accredited service providers. Where necessary, the programme also ensures access to primary healthcare, as well as the organization of outpatient and inpatient medical services. In accordance with beneficiaries' individual capacities, interests, and preferences, the programme supports the development of vocational and life skills, vocational orientation and training, acquisition of competencies necessary for independent living, and, where appropriate, subsequent employment opportunities.

Safeguarding the autonomy, dignity, and personal security of older persons constitutes a key priority of the State. The prevention of violence in residential care institutions is regulated through a comprehensive legal framework and internal institutional policies. In particular, Order No. 01-54/N of 23 July 2014 of the

Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia establishes the Minimum Standards for the Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons in Residential Specialized Institutions. Compliance with these standards is mandatory for all 24-hour residential care facilities financed by the State.

Among other requirements, these standards guarantee beneficiaries protection against all forms of violence—including physical, psychological, sexual, and economic violence—as well as coercion and discrimination, while ensuring equal access to services for all beneficiaries. The standards further establish formal complaint and feedback mechanisms, ensuring that beneficiaries have access to emergency hotlines, the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia, and the contact details of the Ministry and the State Care Agency responsible for monitoring service quality. Where necessary, service providers are required to implement appropriate psychosocial support measures for beneficiaries.

In addition, within the framework of the Sub-programme for the Promotion of Rehabilitation of War Veterans, older beneficiaries have access to preventive healthcare, therapeutic treatment, and rehabilitation services.