



# Integrated Country Strategy

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**Georgia**

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

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## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

As a developing democracy, Georgia is a critical part of the United States' global network of alliances and partnerships built on internationally agreed rights and mutual values. The U.S. commitment to the people of Georgia remains unshakeable as our strategic partnership enters its 30th year. That commitment is based on our deeply held shared values, including our love of freedom, independence, and democracy. The United States will not waver in our support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity or its right to choose its own security arrangements. Defending human rights and dignity remain central to our mission and to U.S. influence in Georgia. In our continuing effort to increase opportunities for all members of Georgian society, we will improve equity and access to our programs. The Mission will increase efforts to promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility, including by leveraging diverse perspectives to advance the security and prosperity of both our countries.

Georgia's strategic importance lies in its example as a young democracy committed to greater integration into the Euro-Atlantic family, its location at a key international crossroads, and its ability and willingness to contribute to mutual security objectives. This strategy serves as a roadmap to guide the Mission's efforts to preserve and expand our strategic partnership and help the people of Georgia deliver a more resilient, prosperous democracy.

The U.S.-Georgia defense partnership will remain at the core of our relationship. Georgia has been a steadfast partner in NATO-led missions. We are helping Georgia identify new ways to contribute to international security, particularly in the Black Sea region. We will continue to assist Georgia modernize its defense and security sector and divest Soviet-era equipment, structures, and organizations. Transforming its defense institutions and processes, and further strengthening capabilities will remain essential to deterring adversaries and defending Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The United States remains committed to the Bucharest Declaration stating that Georgia will become a member of NATO, and the Mission will support the implementation of Georgia's Annual National Plan, detailing the path to membership. Recognizing that NATO is a political-military alliance, we will emphasize both the

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importance of developing Georgia's defense capabilities and NATO interoperability, and meeting NATO's standards for strong democratic institutions and processes and the rule of law.

Russia continues to occupy nearly 20 percent of Georgian territory, posing a potentially existential threat to Georgia's security and undermining the right of all Georgian citizens to enjoy the benefits of Georgia's economic and democratic progress. U.S. support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity will remain central to our support for Georgia's engagement with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Progress on the occupied territories will be difficult, yet opportunities exist in areas of mutual interest. We will continue to support Georgia's efforts to reach out to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions, with a focus on building humanitarian and people-to-people links and laying the groundwork for eventual reconciliation. We will also encourage the government to consider actions it could take to address consequences of the early 1990s and 2008 wars, including through effective integration of IDPs displaced from Abkhazia. Georgia's history as a multi-ethnic cultural hub and its strong relations with the other South Caucasus countries create opportunities for it to play a larger regional role. This includes increasing connectivity within the region and with partners in Europe. These ties will help Georgia diversify economically and become more resilient to malign external forces.

While the country has achieved impressive reforms and built a strong economic foundation, three years of continuous political crisis have slowed Georgia's progress on Euro-Atlantic integration and sustainable economic growth. Extreme domestic polarization, including a rise in right-wing violence, continues to disrupt the reform agenda, fomented by aggressive Russian disinformation campaigns and political power struggles. The Mission will work with the Georgian government and other stakeholders to advance the next phase of reforms needed to firmly situate Georgia's governance and economic systems in independent, impartial, professional institutions consistent with Euro-Atlantic standards. Progress will require political will, a culture of consensus, and the prioritization of national good over personal power.

Recent electoral reforms improved the mechanics of elections, but widespread, entrenched violations during the campaign periods undermined their fairness and competitiveness. The Mission will continue efforts to ensure every citizen can vote or run for office freely and

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without intimidation. Interference in the work of professional judges remains an impediment to Georgia's democratic development and a significant obstacle to greater economic growth and investment. Impartial, fair, and professional courts are an essential prerequisite to free and fair elections, preventing politically motivated prosecutions, and ensuring that business disputes will be resolved on a level playing field.

The lack of an impartial, transparent, and independent justice sector undermines public confidence and limits recourse and accountability when other aspects of the democratic or economic system are endangered. The Mission will provide training and support to dedicated, qualified judges to increase their capacity, efficiency, and professionalism and protect their independence from those who would interfere in the impartial administration of justice. Our robust partnership with members of law enforcement and the broader justice sector is designed to encourage the fair and impartial application of Georgian law, with an emphasis on respecting human rights, ensuring victims are treated with dignity, and protecting all citizens.

The Mission will deepen our relationship with Georgia by engaging people across the country, building resilience to external malign influence, increasing capacity in the health sector, supporting economic development-- especially in minority and rural areas-- and empowering individuals through education and increased participation in government. We will promote more equitable and sustainable economic growth and stability, enhance energy security and advance climate goals through the development of renewable energy, energy storage, and greater efficiency, improve agricultural production, and adopt international standards in agricultural trade. We will expand our programs to help Georgia stimulate deeper trade, investment, and regional cooperation, and support a transparent, market-based economy.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Further Georgia's Euro-Atlantic and regional integration and enhance Georgia's capacity and capability to address domestic, regional, and global threats and challenges as a strategic partner.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Strengthen Georgia's capacity and capability to defend its own territory and deter aggression in order to contribute to global security operations and NATO interoperability.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Strengthen Georgia's security and law enforcement capacity and capability to respond to domestic, international, and transnational threats.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Strengthen Georgia's capacity and capability to address global health threats and climate change.
- **Mission Objective 1.4:** Support Georgia's engagement with its neighbors to advance peace and reconciliation and regional integration to counter external malign influence and strengthen regional efforts to combat transnational threats and challenges.

**Mission Goal 2:** Strengthen democracy, rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, and education to better prepare Georgia and its citizens to achieve their Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Strengthen citizen-centered governance with capable and accountable institutions, a vibrant and responsible civil society, and independent media to ensure democratic gains are consolidated and counteract autocratic tendencies. (CDCS DO2: Fragile democratic gains consolidated through enhanced citizen responsive governance).
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Foster an integrated and inclusive stable society and strengthen resilience to external malign influence. (CDCS DO1: Resilience to external malign influence strengthened)

- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Promote a well-educated and engaged citizenry, representing the diversity of the country, with the skills to fully participate in Georgia's economic, political, and social development, and the country's continued Western integration.

**Mission Goal 3:** Foster shared prosperity by promoting deeper trade, investment, and regional cooperation, and by supporting a transparent, resilient, and market-based economy.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Increase economic security through regional economic cooperation, diversified trade and partnerships, and economic reforms, to attract climate-smart, sustainable, and responsible investments.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Increase inclusive, higher value employment in a variety of sectors to foster broad-based economic growth. (CDCS DO3: Inclusive High-Value Employment Opportunities Provided Through Increased Economic Growth).
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Advocate for a transparent market environment open to U.S. trade and investment

**Management Objective 1:** Develop personnel, policies, and systems to reflect and embrace the diversity of American and Georgian societies and empower staff to maximize mission impact.

**Management Objective 2:** Strengthen security and decision-making practices that support the safe advancement of mission priorities by mission personnel.

**Management Objective 3:** Encourage collaborative, evidence-based management practices generate greater efficiencies and greener Embassy operations.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** | Further Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and enhance Georgia's capacity and capability to address domestic, regional, and global threats and challenges as a strategic partner.

**Description** | The United States will advance its global security interests by strengthening Georgia's ability to defend its own territory, deter aggression, and contribute to global security operations. The United States also will enhance Georgia's capacity to address domestic, regional, and transnational threats, including terrorism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, money laundering, cybercrime, cyber-attacks, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and biosecurity threats to public health. Georgia can play a constructive role in the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the South Caucasus and the wider Black Sea region. The United States will support Georgia's engagement with its neighbors to advance peace and reconciliation and regional integration to counter external malign influence and strengthen regional efforts to combat transnational threats and challenges.

**Objective 1.1** | Strengthen Georgia's capacity and capability to defend its own territory and deter aggression in order to contribute to global security operations and NATO interoperability.

- **Objective 1.1 Justification** | Georgia remains on the front line of Russian aggression, with approximately 20 percent of Georgian territory occupied by Russia, and a Russian military presence in neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan as of 2021. Improving the defense and security sector's capacity and capability to defend Georgia's territory and sovereignty helps to deter further Russian aggression, enhance Black Sea Security, and augment regional stability. Continuing U.S. efforts to bolster Georgian defense capabilities also shows U.S. resolve in the face of attempted Russian intimidation and U.S. dedication to the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. While Georgia no longer serves alongside the United States in a NATO out-of-area operation, Georgia remains a committed partner, eager to deploy with U.S. forces and increase



interoperability with NATO partners. Accordingly, Georgia consistently ranks among the highest recipients of U.S. security assistance in Europe. Embassy Tbilisi will carry out this work via capacity-building events and advisement including training, exercises, exchanges, oversight of U.S. military grant assistance to bolster key capabilities for the Georgia.

- **Objective 1.1 Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goals 1 and 4.
- **Objective 1.1 Risks** | The risks of not achieving the objective include a destabilized Georgia and a destabilized region, which could threaten U.S. national security interests. In a worst-case scenario, Georgia could slip back into a Russian sphere of influence, imperiling U.S. credibility in the process. Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate this risk via high-level engagements with political and military leadership and persistent lower-level engagement to encourage Georgia to maintain its Euro-Atlantic trajectory.

**Objective 1.2** | Strengthen Georgia's security and law enforcement capacity and capability to respond to domestic, international, and transnational threats.

- **Justification** | Georgia borders Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and the Black Sea, and is located in a region with significant risk of transit and transshipment of illicit weapons, narcotics, and commodities of proliferation concern. Enhancing Georgia's border security, ability to detect and interdict illicit shipments, and capacity to prosecute violators is vital to regional security. Active collaboration and cooperation with regional and international partners in addressing these threats is paramount. It is essential that as Georgia's security and law enforcement bodies work to protect society, they simultaneously secure the trust of the Georgian people through respect for their human rights and due process. A strong system of checks and balances, as well as oversight mechanisms are key to ensuring that security and law enforcement bodies perform their duties effectively. Embassy Tbilisi will carry out this work via capacity-building activities including trainings, workshops, meetings, and study visits to the

United States and Western Allies, as well as via the provision of equipment, advanced technology, and analytical tools, and advocating for necessary legislative reforms

- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 1 and 4.
- **Risks** | The risks of not achieving the objective include a destabilized region which could threaten U.S. national security interests. Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate the risk via high-level engagements with political leadership to encourage Georgia to maintain their Euro-Atlantic trajectory.

**Objective 1.3** | Strengthen Georgia's capacity and capability to address global health threats and climate change.

- **Justification** | Georgia borders Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and the Black Sea, and is located in a region where the populace is at elevated risk of circulating and emerging infectious disease exposure and degraded health outcomes as well as increased risk associated with climate change. While Georgia has demonstrated considerable regional leadership in both the international fight against climate change and the public health arena thanks to a sustained partnership with the U.S. government, it lacks the depth and breadth of biomedical scientific expertise across governmental, non-governmental and private sectors to optimally counter the effects of climate change and emerging pandemic and health security threats across the spectrum of identification, prevention, and treatment responses augmented by surveillance, research, development, testing and evaluation efforts. The desired end state for Mission Objective 1.3 is Georgia's increased ability to address climate change and its effects as well as the increased capacity of the scientific community comprised of governmental, private, and academic entities which work independently and collectively to counter the effect of climate change, infectious disease, and other medical threats, resulting in optimized health and climate security for the Georgian people. Increased engagement and collaboration between public and private institutions with support from USG partners will enhance Georgia's effort to combat climate change, build

climate resilience, improve global health security, biomedical capability and support future advances and growth in Georgian biotechnology solutions. Embassy Tbilisi will carry out this work via capability and capacity-building events including collaborative programming in research and surveillance, trainings, workshops, meetings, exchanges, research collaborations with local partners, public awareness, and partner study visits to the United States.

- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 4.
- **Risks** | The risks of not achieving the objective include near-, mid- and long-term limitations in Georgia's ability to conduct infectious disease surveillance and clinical research and development efforts, and erosion of the capability, credibility, and capacity to conduct biomedical sciences. Limitations in these sectors will degrade national biomedical capability resulting in continued reliance on foreign expertise and resources to sustain Georgia's health security. Additional risks include potential overburdening of Georgia's health infrastructure, detrimental economic impacts linked to pandemic related unemployment and loss of future generations of leaders in the biomedical sciences to foreign opportunity. Embassy Tbilisi intends to diminish this threat via strategic engagement with governmental and academic partners to mitigate pandemic risk and build capability in the biomedical sciences adequate to sustain Georgia's regional scientific and public health leadership and to promote and maintain their Euro-Atlantic trajectory.

**Objective 1.4** | Support Georgia's engagement with its neighbors to advance peace and reconciliation and regional integration to counter external malign influence and strengthen regional efforts to combat transnational threats and challenges.

- **Justification** | The three countries of the South Caucasus face significant challenges including unresolved conflicts, significant numbers of refugees and internally displaced peoples, and lingering border disputes that undermine the ability of the countries to cooperate effectively to address regional and global common threats and challenges.

Georgia, which has friendly relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia, is well-placed to foster improved cooperation. U.S. Embassy Tbilisi will work with Georgian counterparts to strengthen regional linkages and external engagement as well as collaboration with Embassies in Baku and Yerevan to support this objective. U.S. Embassy will also work to promote reconciliation within Georgia although those efforts are covered by Mission Objective 2.2.

- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 4, particularly objectives 3 and 4.
- **Risks** | There are two main categories of risks impacting this objective. First, intra-regional dynamics, including potentially renewed fighting, could undermine efforts to foster closer regional cooperation. Second, countries bordering the region such as Russia and Iran may seek to disrupt cooperation in an effort to undermine coordinated responses. In addition, budget constraints may limit additional regional programming. High level diplomatic engagement and well as efforts to promote resiliency can help mitigate these risks.

**Mission Goal 2** | Strengthen democracy, rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, and basic education to better prepare Georgia and its citizens to achieve their Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations.

**Description** | The U.S. commitment to Georgia is based on our deeply held shared values including democracy and human rights. Georgia's strategic importance to the United States lies in its example as a young democracy committed to transition from its Soviet past to greater integration in the Euro-Atlantic family. While Georgia has made a lot of progress, Georgia's democratic institutions, processes, and governance and rule of law are immature and not fully consistent with Euro-Atlantic standards. Strengthening rule of law, anti-corruption, and other governing institutions are essential to fulfilling Georgia's democratic and human rights commitments and are critical to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations.

**Objective 2.1** | Strengthen citizen-centered governance with capable and accountable institutions and a vibrant and responsible civil society and independent media to ensure democratic gains are consolidated and to counteract autocratic tendencies. (CDCS DO2: Fragile democratic gains consolidated through enhanced citizen responsive governance)

- **Justification** | Internal challenges to democratic checks and balances – including less pluralistic political, judicial, and media environments – jeopardize Georgia’s integration with the West. A strengthened judiciary, electoral systems, parliamentary oversight, and decentralization are critical to improving the function, accountability, and responsiveness of Georgia’s democratic institutions and processes. Efforts to improve in these areas must be championed by a strong civil society and by advocates working in democratic institutions. These efforts require technical and diplomatic support to ensure they are implemented. Despite the country making significant strides since independence, Georgia’s democracy remains fragile and is backsliding in some important areas. Increasing pressure on civil society and the media space threatens previous gains. After recent flawed elections, the public’s trust in elections and election administration is eroding. Georgian public administration institutions remain models for the region, but citizen participation and trust in many democratic institutions lags behind, threatening democratic consolidation. To strengthen democracy and rule of law in Georgia, citizen-centered governance and more citizen ownership of political and policy processes and oversight mechanisms is required. The foundation of any democratic system are well-educated citizens who understand civics and have the critical thinking, literacy, writing, and basic numeracy skills to contribute to public debate and decision making.
- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 2 as well as EUR Goal 1 objective 3.
- **Risks** | Political and social instability may cause Georgia to miss reform targets for EU and NATO integration, or to deviate further from its path of Euro-Atlantic integration. Lack of progress in strengthening rule of law, decentralization, parliamentary oversight, and other core democratic functions could put at risk citizens’ hopes for a more vibrant,

multi-party democracy as the country transitions to a fully proportional electoral system in 2024. Embassy Tbilisi will use diplomatic engagement and assistance programming to mitigate this risk.

**Objective 2.2** | Foster an integrated and inclusive stable society and strengthen resilience to external malign influence. (CDCS DO1: Resilience to external malign influence strengthened)

- **Justification** | Mission Objective 2.2 is grounded in development and national security priorities. Russia's occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia remains a destabilizing factor and creates challenges to the U.S. and Georgia's shared goals and objectives. Entrenched positions and Russia's control of the de facto regimes limit opportunities for meaningful interaction with populations living in Russia-occupied territories. Increased engagement and confidence-building efforts with Abkhazia and South Ossetia may contribute to a foundation for the eventual peaceful reintegration of these territories. Economic vulnerabilities, disinformation, and lack of integration of ethnic and religious minorities can be exploited by external actors to destabilize Georgia while denying the entire country the benefits of contributions from all citizens. Efforts to combat disinformation are essential to strengthen resistance to malign influence. Work to reintegrate both the occupied territories and the minority communities within Tbilisi-administered territory of Georgia is essential for the creation of a stable and prosperous state.
- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 2, particularly objective 3.
- **Risks** | Failure to foster an integrated and inclusive stable society may expose Georgia to external malign influence which could undermine support for Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and our bilateral relationship. Legal restrictions to programming in the occupied territories may be imposed. Neighbors may impose trade embargoes in key sectors. Participation in energy infrastructure construction by malign actors may increase. Democratic backsliding could hinder the activity of civic organizations in the

country which could undermine reconciliation and integration efforts. Embassy Tbilisi will use diplomatic engagement and assistance programming to mitigate this risk.

**Objective 2.3** | Promote a well-educated and engaged citizenry, representing the diversity of the country, with the skills to fully participate in Georgia's economic, political, and social development, and the country's continued Western integration.

- **Justification** | Georgia's economic, political, and social development, as well as the country's continued Western integration, requires strong engagement on the part of citizens, including those from ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority communities who are historically less engaged in nationwide development efforts and less likely to see examples of the benefits of democracy, economic growth, and Western integration in their own communities. Engagement requires that people be both motivated to participate and that they have the core skills to do so --skills that are developed through formal and informal education systems. U.S. government efforts to strengthen the public education system, particularly the teaching of critical thinking, problem solving, literacy, numeracy, civics, and Georgian language for non-native speakers, will better prepare citizens with the skills to engage in Georgia's economy, political systems, and social networks. Programs that encourage more active engagement can ensure those skills are put to use and developed outside the education system for those who have already completed their education.
- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with top U.S. foreign policy priorities, as outlined in EUR JRS Goal 2.
- **Risks** | Education reform efforts are often politicized in Georgia and approaches often abruptly change when there are changes in political leadership, not because there are philosophical differences of opinion on substance or pedagogy but because education remains a high-priority issue for voters, and leaders want to show they are doing things differently from their predecessors. U.S. government programs must be designed with the flexibility to weather these changes and complementary to the full spectrum of

Georgian approaches to education reform. Embassy Tbilisi will use diplomatic engagement and assistance programming to mitigate this risk.

**Mission Goal 3** | Foster shared prosperity by promoting deeper trade, investment, and regional cooperation, and by supporting a transparent, resilient, and market-based economy.

**Description** | Advancing U.S. business interests, fostering shared economic prosperity, promoting strong trade cooperation, and supporting a diverse, competitive, market-based economy are core policy priorities for our interagency economic engagement in Georgia. The United States will partner with Georgia to promote economic growth and develop Georgia's role as a reliable economic partner, free of malign influence on its economy and trade. This includes strengthening investment screening, increasing Georgia's energy security, supporting growth to drive employment opportunities, and promoting investments that reduce Georgia's vulnerabilities and dependencies on foreign nations, including Russia.

**Objective 3.1** | Increase economic security through regional economic cooperation, diversified trade and partnerships, and economic reforms, to attract climate-smart, sustainable, and responsible investments.

- **Justification** | Georgia's trade with Russia, particularly in the energy and agricultural sectors, makes it vulnerable to malign influence. Meanwhile, Georgia's location on the Black Sea provides it with an opportunity to develop as a key transit corridor connecting East and West and diversify its trading partners, thereby bolstering Georgia's economic resilience. Developing Georgia's infrastructure – including a sustainable energy sector, building links with other trading partners, and a comprehensive transportation plan incorporating roads, rails, and port system – will help reduce Georgia's susceptibility to Russian economic pressure and increase Georgia's economic prosperity. The U.S. Embassy will continue to advocate for comprehensive, climate-smart economic policy needed to secure economic independence.



- **Linkages** | Georgia's trade with Russia, particularly in the energy and agricultural sectors, makes it vulnerable to malign influence. Meanwhile, Georgia's location on the Black Sea provides it with an opportunity to develop as a key transit corridor connecting East and West and diversify its trading partners, thereby bolstering Georgia's economic resilience. Developing Georgia's infrastructure – including a sustainable energy sector, building links with other trading partners, and a comprehensive transportation plan incorporating roads, rails, and port system – will help reduce Georgia's susceptibility to Russian economic pressure and increase Georgia's economic prosperity. The U.S. Embassy will continue to advocate for comprehensive, climate-smart economic policy needed to secure economic independence.
- **Risks** | Failure to secure economic security will result in Georgia being susceptible to Russian economic levers, thereby compromising Georgia's security and independence, slowing its economic growth, and stalling its Western integration. Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate the risk via programming and advocacy to encourage diverse trade and economic partnerships and supporting participation in Western-supported initiatives.

**Objective 3.2** | Increase inclusive, higher-value employment in a variety of sectors to foster broad-based economic growth. (CDCS DO3: Inclusive High-Value Employment Opportunities Provided Through Increased Economic Growth)

- **Justification** | Georgia has achieved impressive development progress over the last decade and a half. Despite Georgia being a global leader in trade and business environment reforms, growth has not resulted in full employment or higher wages. An aggressive reform agenda and healthy growth rate have not translated into economic dynamism or opportunities for Georgian citizens. Georgia faces very high income-inequality and inequality of opportunity compared to its peers. Georgia's top income quartile receives roughly 11 times more income than the bottom income quartile, which is high by standards in the Eastern Europe and Eurasia region. The fact that public perceptions flag jobs as the most critical national issue for half of the population

suggests lack of economic opportunity could pivot the population toward Russia, which falsely promises economic rewards, and away from Euro-Atlantic integration ideals held by a large majority of the population. There are multiple causes why Georgia's economic growth has not created high-value employment opportunities for its citizens, limiting the benefits of Georgia's Western orientation to drive self-reliance. First, while Georgia has undertaken significant efforts to enact Euro-Atlantic-oriented economic reforms, it still faces challenges in implementing these reforms. This results in an uncertain business environment that slows economic activity and deters the investment that Georgia needs to drive broad-based economic growth. Second, Georgian firms lack access to resources necessary to increase competitiveness and create greater employment opportunities in key sectors, including access to high-value, diverse markets; investment resources; a workforce that has the skills demanded by the private sector; and sustainably managed natural resources that promote economic growth.

- **Linkages** | This objective is aligned with EUR JRS goal 3.
- **Risks** | Due to income inequalities created by historically uneven development towards the western model, there is significant skepticism within Georgia. Public perception polls of the economy, which identify jobs as the most critical issue for half of the population, suggest that this lack of economic opportunity could pivot the population towards Russia and away from Euro-Atlantic integration. Continued uncertainty in terms of lockdowns and the impact of COVID on the economy, could further impact the abilities of critical sectors to access finance and grow. Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate the risk via programming and advocacy. Advocacy to encourage fact-based economic decision making, including rational responses to COVID and the passage of laws that are in line with Euro-Atlantic integration. Programming will work with the Government and private sector to create a skilled workforce and employment opportunities.

**Objective 3.3** | Advocate for a fair, reciprocal, and transparent market environment with a level playing field for U.S. trade and investment.

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- **Justification** | Georgia provides an attractive investment opportunity for U.S. companies looking to benefit from the general ease of conducting business, low rates of public corruption, and commercially strategic location. Increased market transparency and harmonization with international standards would help continue to ensure market access for U.S. goods and increase U.S. foreign direct investment and bilateral trade that would provide economic benefits to both U.S. and Georgian citizens. Embassy Tbilisi will continue to build the capacity of government partners, advocate for international free trade standards, and advocate for U.S. companies seeking to do business in Georgia.
- **Linkages** | This objective is aligned with EUR JRS goal 3.
- **Risks** | Georgia fails to make progress or pursues protectionist measures which hinders efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Georgian economic relationship. Failure to attract U.S. private investment and will result in Georgia looking to alternative investments including from Russian and PRC. On the demand side, Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate the risk via programming and advocacy to encourage science-based decision making, harmonization of regulations for trade and investment with western standards, and support for investment screening. On the supply side, Embassy Tbilisi will work with relevant businesses to better understand and access the Georgian market.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1** | Personnel, policies, and systems that reflect and embrace the diversity of American and Georgian societies and empower staff to maximize mission impact.

- **Justification** | In order to maximize the effectiveness of all Mission staff, U.S. Embassy Tbilisi is committed to creating an environment in which all members of our community feel valued, included, and empowered to contribute to the success of the Mission. We will design processes and procedures to ensure we recruit, hire, and retain staff that share these values and represent the strengths of both the U.S. and Georgian societies. Security practices will model sustainable and best practices supporting key engagements while informing sound risk mitigation measures.
- **Linkages** | This objective is aligned with the EUR JRS management goal and Executive Orders 14035.
- **Risks** | Our processes for filling U.S. direct hire (USDH) positions do not allow for the same Post-level contributions and therefore limit Post's ability to impact our goal of ensuring disability, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI&A) principles are considered in recruiting and filling positions. The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) limits which agencies have full-access training which limits training opportunities and thus our ability to get all agencies trained in the same manner and on the same topics.

**Management Objective 2** | Strengthen security and decision-making practices that support the safe advancement of mission priorities by mission personnel.

- **Justification** | Jockeying and malign activities by regional and great powers threaten to destabilize Georgia and create security challenges for Embassy operations in Georgia. In addition, the Russian occupation of 20 percent of Georgian territory and the presence of significant numbers of Russian troops create logistical and security challenges for

operations and limit access to the occupied territories for program monitoring. Security practices will employ best practices sound risk mitigation measures to support diplomatic engagement.

- **Linkages** | This objective is in line with Diplomatic Security priorities to provide for the safe conduct of diplomacy abroad, and the localized need by the RSO to provide this.
- **Risks** | The risks of not achieving the objective include a reduced capacity to conduct foreign policy in Georgia, advance key engagements, and provide for the safety of our staff and facilities. Embassy Tbilisi intends to mitigate the risk by utilizing a robust security office.

**Management Objective 3** | Encourage collaborative, evidence-based management practices that generate greater efficiencies and greener Embassy operations.

- **Justification** | To facilitate their success of the Mission, we will design and operate a management platform focused on efficiency that maximizes our resources, promotes sustainability and eliminates waste.
- **Linkages** | This management objective is fully in line with EUR policies and practices.
- **Risks** |
  - Our systems do not all integrate, making effective communications and collaboration difficult.
  - Rising labor costs and inflation limits Post ability to stabilize costs, let alone reduce costs without major staff reductions.
  - Physical limitations in Georgian infrastructure could reduce Post's ability to implement greening technologies and use of electric vehicles.

Embassy Tbilisi will monitor these risks and adapt appropriate countermeasures as appropriate.