



# Inside IRIS Georgia

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IRIS Georgia is a satellite office of the IRIS Center at the University of Maryland. IRIS is an internationally-recognized source of research and advisory expertise for addressing economic growth and governance issues in transition and developing countries. See the Web site at <http://www.iris.umd.edu> for more information.

## Presentation to USAID



On March 26, 2004, IRIS Georgia and several of our partner organizations made a presentation to the United States Agency

for International Development (USAID) on current activities. The presentation was arranged in honor of Mr. Brock D. Bierman, Chief of Staff for USAID, who was visiting Georgia for the parliamentary elections. Cate Johnson, Robert Bayer and other USAID/Caucasus staff

attended the presentation. IRIS Georgia was represented by Chief of Party Nona Tsotsoria and Staff Attorney Eka Tkeshelashvili. Presenters included the United Nations Association, the Young Economists' Association and the Young Lawyers' Association.

## IRIS public awareness campaign underway

In April 2004 IRIS Georgia launched the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of its outdoor billboard campaign. Seven billboards on the right to legal counsel, the right to remain silent, illegal search, religious equality, torture, police bribery and equality of all citizens were displayed in 56 locations in Tbilisi,

Kutaisi and Poti.

In the near future, IRIS Georgia plans to launch a series of advertisements in the Tbilisi subway system based on the billboard campaign. Smaller versions of the billboards will be placed in all 170 train cars of the Tbilisi subway system.

In May 2004, the public awareness campaign will be supplemented by five PSAs on various human rights issues, mainly related to criminal procedures. These PSAs were created last year and will be broadcast for the first time on Georgian TV stations in May.

## FOI training for ministry staff

In response to increasing inquiries from newly-appointed staff at the Ministry of Justice regarding Administrative Law, particularly on freedom of information, IRIS Georgia conducted a training on issues related to Administrative Law for Ministry staff on March 31, 2004. Approximately 30 public officials from the Ministry were trained in the implementation of the Freedom of Information Chapter of the General Administrative Code of Georgia.

The Ministry of Justice is an administrative agency and therefore obliged to fulfill the requirements stipulated by administrative legislation, including release of public information and maintenance of a registry. The trainees showed great interest in discussing related theoretical issues and court practice.

some of the vague norms of the Code. The trainees received updated materials, including the *Guide to the FOI Chapter*, *the Guide to Administrative Law for the Staff of the Georgian Ministry of Justice*, and the revised General Administrative Code for Georgia.

The training demonstrated practical aspects regarding the implementation of the General Administrative Code and helped the participants to understand

IRIS Georgia will continue to cooperate with the Ministry of Justice through consultation and training of staff as needed.



## Featuring IRIS grantee Association and Radio Green Wave

There is an ongoing debate in Georgian society about the influence of Western values of tolerance and concern for human rights – some groups feel the development of Western values can harm Georgia’s national integrity, while others feel integration with the West only accents similar values found in Georgian culture.

In response to such trends, last year IRIS decided to confront this problem and award several small grants to local NGOs, with the purpose of informing the Georgian citizenry that human rights and other values of modern democracy are historically characteristic of Georgia and common to many

aspects of Georgian culture. One of these grants was awarded to the Association and Radio Green Wave. As part of their project, Radio Green Wave will broadcast 48 thematic radio programs and 60 radio clips from October 2003 through September 2004.

The programs developed by Radio Green Wave present the works of Georgian cultural icons and the history of past political developments, which highlight the principles of tolerance and human rights. The host of the programs, Shavleg Gegechkori, invites prominent public figures, lawyers, and historians to participate in the discussions. Twenty-three programs have been broadcast to date, and on-

air calls from listeners demonstrate that the programs have earned great public interest.

During the course of the project, 60 radio clips will be broadcast more than 9,000 times, with voiceovers recorded by professional actors and famous persons. Radio clips contain quotes from famous Georgian figures on liberalism, democracy and human rights. These programs and clips are also broadcasted on six regional stations of the country’s free radio network.

To listen to Radio Green Wave’s radio programs, tune to FM 107.4 in Tbilisi, every Thursday at 11:15 am.

## Alfami events



Alfami exhibition

On April 16, 2004 IRIS grantee Alfami organized a photo exhibition of Natela Grigalashvili’s *Dysfunctional Country* in the Kopala art gallery. Ms. Grigalashvili presented works that were designed in her words to help “penetrate unmistakable reality by means of optical-visual codes.” As noted in the exhibition brochure, Ms. Grigalashvili’s photographs “change the notion of artistic boundaries and,

respectively, the status of “optic reality.”

The exhibition was attended by a wide spectrum of well-known artists, representatives of Georgian and international NGOs, including IRIS grantees, and representatives of the Ministry of Culture and embassies of foreign countries. The First Lady of Georgia, Sandra Roelofs, also attended the exhibition.

In near future, Alfami will

print 16 new postcards promoting various human rights based on the respective chapter of the Constitution of Georgia.

## GYLA seminar on the ECHR



As the importance of international legal instruments and their implementation in the Georgian legislation grows rapidly, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) has maintained and strengthened its public awareness activities related to international legal instruments and human rights protection.

In this regard, GYLA plans

to arrange a seminar in Tbilisi on the European Convention on Human Rights for students and lawyers working in Tbilisi. Due to the significance of ECHR case law for Georgian legislation and the growing need for an effective mechanism to protect human rights in Georgia, trained lawyers are vital to ensuring better promotion and observance of conventional rules and court practices in Georgia.

In addition to discussing the general framework of the Council of Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human

Rights, the main emphasis of the seminar will be on the norms of the Convention which are most relevant and important for the Georgian context and lawyers, such as:

- Article 3: Prohibition of torture, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment
- Article 5: Right to liberty and security
- Article 6: Right to a fair trial
- Article 9- freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

After the analysis of case law from the European Court of Human Rights,

there will be several moot courts on the issues discussed in order to better understand and employ the knowledge and skills acquired during the seminar.

Participants of the seminar, who will include approximately 30 lawyers, will receive texts and commentaries on the ECHR, ECHR case law pertaining to various articles and abstracts from various human rights instruments.

## Children's debates in Ozurgeti



On April 17, 2004, the Ozurgeti Young Teachers Association held a debate tournament with children from the Ozurgeti regional schools. The tournament was organized under the project "Ancestors and Predecessors Protecting Children's Rights," sponsored by USAID through the IRIS Center.

The debate resolutions – "society must protect children from violence" and "capital punishment is unacceptable" – were

based on Articles 6, 9, 23 and 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The young participants discussed the inviolability of children's rights, crimes involving children, and responsibility of the state to protect the future generation from violence. The debaters discussed these issues from a legal standpoint as well, describing the related violation of each right of the child and the rights and responsibilities of the parties involved. During the discussions, participants drew parallels with characters from Georgian literature and quoted prominent public figures.

The Chairwoman of the

Ozurgeti Young Teachers Association awarded the winning teams with diplomas and symbolic gifts. The debates were judged by referees representing the Association of Educational Debates.

This was the first debate tournament to take place in the Guria region. Such debates help to promote children's rights and encourage free expression. Children also learn the culture of debate and analytical thinking skills.

The tournament was attended by local teachers and students and representatives of the media.

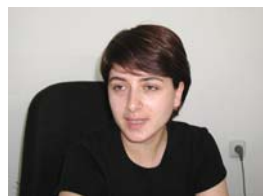
## Religion and Corruption

From the Liberty Institute's newsletter, *Liberty*, March 2004

In an interview titled "Corruption: Mental Disease" French Sociologist, Professor of the Geneva University, and member of the "Peace and Justice" council under the Pontificate, Pastor Patrick de Lobie, focused on various problematic issues for the whole Christian community. He also highlighted the problem of corruption, which, in his opinion, was the basic cause for the Rose Revolution in Georgia. By giving examples of how social doctrine operates in the Catholic Church, Pastor Lobie presented his vision of the role of the Church in solving everyday problems.

**Introducing IRIS staff**

**Eka Tkeshelashvili, Staff Attorney**



*Eka Tkeshelashvili*

Eka monitors and analyzes legislative policy, particularly in the human rights field, and participates in human rights related legal services projects. She also works on projects related to implementation

of the General Administrative Code.

Eka has an international law degree from Tbilisi State University and an L.L.M. from University of Notre Dame. Eka's professional experience

includes work in the government sector, with international organizations, and an internship in the Hague.

A native Georgian, Eka speaks fluent Russian and English.

**IRIS Georgia's calendar of events – April 2004**

Date	Events
Apr 1, 2	Green Wave's radio program "Cultural traditions and modern liberal values" Institute of Law's Constitutional Roundtable on the Principles of the Constitutional Equality
Apr 5, 6	Demo of the film "My Town Doesn't Resemble Others!" by Ozurgeti Young Teachers Union GYLA's town hall meeting in Gardabani region, village Martkopi on juvenile delinquency GYLA's town hall meeting in Imereti region on amended constitutional system of Georgia Demo of film "The Sun Rises Here" by Ozurgeti Young Teachers Union
Apr 7, 8	Alfami's short video films festival "Human Rights Via Video" (through Apr 14) GYLA's town hall meeting in Vani region on public participation in local budgeting process Green Wave's radio program "Cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Apr 11, 13	Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Akhaltsikhe Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Kutaisi on corruption in Kutaisi State University
Apr 14, 15	GYLA's town hall meeting in Gori region, villages Rekha and Tsitelubani, on children's rights Alfami's video films festival "Human Rights Via Video" on TV channels of Gori and Guria Green Wave's radio program "Cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Apr 16	GYLA's workshop on ECHR for NGOs and young lawyers (through Apr 18) GYLA's town hall meeting in Gurjani region on public participation in local budgeting process AYEG's conference for entrepreneurs involved in veterinary activities ICCC's radio performance followed by discussion
Apr 17, 18	Ozurgeti Young Teachers Union's competition among debate clubs Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Poti on corruption in police
Apr 19	GYLA's town hall meeting in Gori University on amended constitutional system of Georgia GYLA's town hall meeting in Gardabani region, village Martkopi, on children's rights
Apr 20, 21	GYLA's town hall meeting in Gori on amended constitutional system of Georgia Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Rustavi on Corruption in Orphanage Houses
Apr 22	GYLA's roundtable in Kutaisi on recent amendments to the Criminal Procedures Code GYLA's town hall meeting in Kareli University on amended constitutional system of Georgia GYLA's town hall meeting in Ozurgeti on amended constitutional system of Georgia Green Wave's radio program "Cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Apr 23	Presentation of IRIS Georgia publications at the National Library GYLA's FOI workshop in Bakuriani for heads of administrative agencies of Kakheti and Tbilisi (through Apr 25) GYLA's roundtable in Kutaisi on recent amendments to the Criminal Procedures Code AYEG's conference for entrepreneurs involved in veterinary activities
Apr 25	Alfami's exhibition "Catalyst" at the Tbilisi Museum of History Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Gori on corruption in education system
Apr 26	Liberty Institute's training of journalists on legal and human rights issues, Kutaisi ICCC's radio performance followed by discussion
Apr 27	GYLA's workshop on freedom of information in Telavi Ozurgeti Young Teachers Union's concert of Theatre Studio pupils Alfami's exhibition "Public Information Box" and video festival in Akhalkalaki
Apr 28	GYLA's town hall meeting in Kutaisi on legislative innovations Liberty Institute's roundtable discussion in Telavi on illegal cutting of forest in Kakheti
Apr 29	UNAG's seminar on FOI for the representatives of target public institutions in Zugdidi GYLA's town hall meeting in Kvareli on the right to property Green Wave's radio program "Cultural traditions and modern liberal values"
Apr 30	Institute of Law's constitutional workshop Ozurgeti Young Teachers Union's competition among the pupils of local secondary schools

**Editorial Policy**

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