



Newsletter

October – December 2010

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Dear EUGBC Members & Partners,

In the spirit of the festive season, let us once again wish you a happy and successful year in 2011!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your partnership and cooperation throughout the past years. The progress we have made would not be possible without your continued support. Therefore, we look forward to working with you in the year 2011 and hope that this productive cooperation will continue for many years to come.

2010 was a remarkable year in EU-Georgia relations. During this year, the EU and Georgia signed several important agreements, such as the Visa Facilitation Agreement, the Readmission Agreement, and the Air Transport Agreement. Besides, the negotiation on the Agreement for Mutual Protection of Agricultural Products and Other Foodstuffs was completed, the negotiation on the Association Agreement was launched and three plenary sessions held, and talks on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) were launched and are currently ongoing. It is also noteworthy that, in 2010, a Georgia Energy Investment Conference was successfully held in Brussels.

It is our pleasure to note that EUGBC has been able to contribute a well-informed and constructive business perspective to all these important developments.

We are happy to anticipate that 2011 will be another busy year in EU-Georgia cooperation and the EUGBC, with the support of its members, will continue to strengthen its contribution to the development of EU-Georgia economic relations.

Yours sincerely,

*Konstantin Zaldastanishvili
EUGBC Secretary General*



*Howard Chase
Chairman of EUGBC Board*



EUGBC Secretary General participated in the open discussion on DCFTA between EU and Eastern Partner Countries

On October 1, 2010, EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili participated in the open discussions on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA) between the EU and Eastern partner countries. Discussion took place in Brussels within the meeting of Working Group 2: "Economic Integration and Convergence with EU policy" of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.



Representative of Directorate General (DG) for Trade of European Commission, Philippe Cuisson Presented the state of ongoing and planned negotiations on DCFTAs between the EU and following Eastern partner countries: Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Moldova. There are no negotiations with Azerbaijan and Belarus as these countries are not the members of WTO. Philippe Coisson stressed that WTO Membership is the most important precondition for free trade area, but there are other important conditions as well.

The representatives of the participant business associations and civil society stressed that active dialogue between the the business community, the European Commission and the Governments of Easter partner countries is essential in the process of the DCFTA negotiations.

EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili underlined that it is important to raise awareness of the business community in the Eastern partner countries regarding the DCFTA, as well as its costs and benefits. He also stressed that the business associations along with the Governments of the Easter partner countries and the European Commission should play an important role in upholding this process.

The participants of the discussion agreed that such meetings between the representatives of the European Commission, business community and civil society will systematically be held in future.

EUGBC Secretary General met in Brussels new EU Ambassador designate to Georgia, Philip Dimitrov

EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili met new EU Ambassador designate to Georgia, Philip Dimitrov on October 5, 2010, in Brussels.

After congratulating on the new position, the Secretary General informed the Ambassador Dimitrov on the goals and activities of EUGBC, including the projects referring to EU-Georgia trade relations carried out with the support of the EU Delegation to Georgia, released publications and respective seminars held in various regions of Georgia.

Ambassador Dimitrov showed strong interest towards EUGBC activities and considered the cooperation between EUGBC and the EU Delegation to Georgia important. He thereby stressed that this cooperation shall remain at least similarly intensive during his term in Georgia.

Next, the parties spoke about the current political and economic processes taking place in Georgia as well as the issues affecting the EU-Georgia relations and agreed to maintain regular dialogue.



EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili participated in the roundtable discussion "EU integration and Ukraine"

On 7th of October, 2010, EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili took part in the roundtable discussion "EU integration and Ukraine" with Olexander Feldman, Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and founder of the Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Xenophobia and Extremism.

The Roundtable was organized by *Glocal Communications* and was moderated by Amanda Paul, Policy Analyst and Ukraine expert at the European Policy Centre (EPC).

Olexander Feldman is a well known Ukrainian businessman and politician. In his presentation Mr. Feldman focused on the issue of minority rights in Ukraine, what Ukraine needs to do in order to advance tolerance and approximate its legislation to those of EU. Mr. Feldman suggested that EU integration can play significant role in ensuring high standards for national, ethnic, religious, language and other minorities in the country and that enhancing minority rights can bring Ukraine closer to EU.

Mr. Feldman's presentation was followed by the remarks from Willy Fautre, Director of the international human rights watchdog, Human Rights without Frontiers, who presented some statistical data on human right violations in Ukraine and suggested his views how EU can best contribute to the improvement of human and minority rights in EU's Eastern neighbourhood.

In the questions and answers session participants discussed recent political and economic developments in Ukraine including foreign policy and relations with the EU.

Second Plenary Session of the Negotiations on Association Agreement between Georgia and EU was held in Brussels

Second plenary session of talks for the elaboration of the text of the Agreement on Association between Georgia and the European Union was held in Brussels on 11th of October, 2010 (first plenary session was held in Batumi, on 15 July 2010).



The Georgian delegation including representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, Internal Affairs and the Office of the State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was led by Deputy Foreign Minister **Tornike Gordadze**. The European side was headed by Deputy Director General of Directorate General for External Relations in the European Commission, **Hugues Mingareli**.

This round of negotiations was focused on political dialogue and cooperation in the frame of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as well as legal issues and internal policy.

Negotiations on Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union will also cover the issues of sectoral cooperation.



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) supports EUGBC publication and seminar on Export of Organic Products to the EU Market from Third Countries

On 14th of October, 2010, EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili has signed a Contract with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ).

According to the contract, in the scope of the GTZ funded project, Private Sector Development in the South Caucasus, EUGBC will produce a publication on Export of Organic Products to the EU Market from Third Countries in Georgian language with a short English summary and will also organise a respective seminar for interested Georgian companies.

The publication will contain the following topics: Definition of organic farming; Rules of production and Labeling of organic products; Import requirements of organic products to the EU market, including procedural aspects; Inspection system for import of organic products and Specific principles applicable to processing of organic food.

The project envisages increasing awareness of Georgian business community (mainly small and medium entrepreneurs) as well as other interested parties on the EU trade legislation, regulations, procedures, rules and standards.

The project commences on October 15, 2010 and its duration is 6 months.

EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC) has organized a seminar for the Georgian producers on the export of fresh fruits and vegetables to the EU market



EUGBC with the support of the EU Delegation to Georgia in cooperation with the National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection of the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia has organizing a seminar on "What the Georgian Exporters Should Know to Access EU Market". The seminar took place on October 28, 2010, at the Conference Hall of the National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection of the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia.

The goal of the seminar was to inform Georgian producers on the issues affecting the export of fresh fruits and vegetables to the EU market.

The Head of the National Service of Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection, David Koberidze and Secretary General of the EU-Georgia Business Council, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili welcomed the participants and took part in the seminar sessions.

During the seminar the expert of the food safety, veterinary and plant quarantine, Otar Skhvitaridze and the expert of the food safety and quality control, Giorgi Mikadze provided the participants the information on the following subjects:

- The main aspects of marketing standards for fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Specific marketing standards for citrus fruits;
- Sanitary and phytosanitary measures for plants and plant products;
- Food safety and hygiene requirements of the EU.



In addition, Irakli Moistrashvili, Export Promotion Chief Coordinator of Georgian National Investment Agency (GNIA) informed the seminar participants on the Export Promotion Service of GNIA, its goals and activities.

Around 50 representatives of Georgian producers of fruits and vegetables and other interested companies took part in the seminar.

The participants showed strong interest towards the seminar topics, which resulted in a lively discussion and question and answer sessions.

Chairman of the EUGBC Board attended a concert of Caucasian Chamber Orchestra at the European Parliament

On 26th of October, 2010, Howard Chase, Chairman of the EUGBC Board attended a concert of Caucasian Chamber Orchestra at the European Parliament. The event was hosted by Milan Cabrnoch, Member of the European Parliament and Chairman of the Delegation to the EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.



EUGBC was one of the sponsors of the event.

Along with number of musical pieces of Caucasian origin, Caucasian Chamber Orchestra performed several miniatures of reknown Georgian composer Sulkhan Tsintsadze.

The concert was followed by the reception with participation of members of the European Parliament and representatives of diplomatic missions in Brussels.

EUGBC Honorary Member, Arve Thorvik and Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili met with the First Deputy Energy Minister of Georgia, Mariam Valishvili

EUGBC Honorary Member, **Arve Thorvik** and Council's Secretary General, **Konstantin Zaldastanishvili** held a meeting with the First Deputy Energy Minister of Georgia, **Mariam Valishvili** in Tbilisi on 22nd of October, 2010.



Prior to the Energy Conference to be held in Brussels on November 5, 2010, the parties to the meeting discussed the role of Georgia as a transit country and its importance in the EU's energy security, Georgia's potential in renewable energy, namely hydro energy resources. At the meeting Trans-Adriatic Pipeline project was also discussed.



Georgia Energy Investment Conference was held in Brussels

On November 5, 2010, Georgia Energy Investment Conference was held in Brussels.

Conference was co-chaired by **Prime Minister of Georgia, Nika Gilauri** and Member of the European Commission, **Commissioner for Energy, Guenter Oettinger**.

Following the welcoming speeches delivered by PM Gilauri and Commissioner Oettinger, two panel sessions took place:

Panel 1: Georgia – a Reliable Transit Partner focused on Energy cooperation in the Black Sea Region, as well as Georgia’s transit potential in the framework of large scale energy infrastructure projects from the Caspian Basin to Europe. Director of European Government Affairs for BP and Chairman of the Board of the EU-Georgia Business Council, Howard Chase talked about energy resources of the Caspian and Central Asia and the concept of energy corridor through Georgia and Turkey into south-eastern Europe as a practical reality. Representative of BP also talked about overall trade and investment between Georgia and EU and underlined the role of Brussels based EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC) that facilitates these processes.

Panel 2: Investment opportunities in Georgia’s Energy Sector and Georgia Energy Legal Framework discussed Georgia’s Renewable Energy Projects, presented by the Minister of Energy of Georgia, Alexander Khetaguri. Representative of the Czech company EnergoPro informed about experience of the company as an investor in Georgia’s energy sector. Representatives of financial institutions (EIB, EBRD and KFW) presented the case studies of energy projects in Georgia. The Legal Counsel of Energy Community Secretariat delivered the information regarding Georgia’s Energy legal Framework and the role of Energy Community.

Both Panels were followed by Questions & Answers sessions during which the speakers of the conference could reply on the remarks and questions of the audience.

The conference was closed by the moderator of the event, representative of European Commission, Deputy Director General for Energy, Fabrizio Barbaso.

The event was followed by a networking lunch.

The presentations delivered at the conference can be viewed at EUGBC web site (www.eugbc.net) at the link: http://www.eugbc.net/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=3&info_id=214

EUGBC participated in the Polish Business Delegation visit

EUGBC took part in the Georgian National Investment Agency (GNIA) hosted Polish Business Mission to Georgia held on November 18-20, 2010.

In the frameworks of the visit on November 18 GNIA, Polish Exporters Association and company “EuroAssociates” organized a business meeting at Courtyard Marriot hotel.



The Polish delegation was headed by Mrs. Grażyna Henclewska, Vice Minister of Economy. From the Georgian side Mr. Archil Kekelia, First Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development made a welcome speech and emphasized the importance of developing business relations between two

countries. Director of the Georgian National Investment Agency provided a detailed presentation on the current investment climate and most attractive sectors for FDI.

On November 19 the bilateral meetings were conducted between Georgian and Polish company representatives. The Polish side was represented by 8 companies operating in the following fields: furniture production, motor industry, steel and extinguishing products, construction business, food industry, insurance, consulting services.

Representatives of over 50 Georgian companies, including EUGBC members, participated in the business meetings.

Black Sea Coast Urban Development Master Class 2010

In November 2010, Stadslab European Urban Design Laboratory of Dutch Architect's Academy offered a 10 day international Master Class on the regeneration of Georgia's Black Sea coast and the transformations of Batumi and Poti as its main port cities.



During the Master Class a number of Dutch, German, Polish, Romanian, Serbian and Georgian architects and planners developed strategies and designed solutions for two strategic corridors in the Western part of Georgia: a tourism corridor along the subtropical Black Sea coast, connecting Batumi with Poti, and an industrial corridor connecting Poti harbor with Tbilisi and further to Central Asia. Project aims to position strategic corridors and promote Georgia as a country on international level for its economic advantages, tourism potential and investment opportunities. Produced plans will be presented to international public during the conferences of architects and urban designers.

EUGBC Board Members met the new British Ambassador to Georgia, HM Judith Gough

In the framework of EUGBC dialogue with the EU Member States' Embassies in Georgia, EUGBC Board Members held a meeting with the new British Ambassador to Georgia, HM **Judith Gough**. The meeting took place at the new permanent office of the British Embassy in Krtsanisi on November 19, 2010.



On behalf of EUGBC, Vice-Chairman of the Board, Badri Japaridze, Members of the Board, Nick Gvinadze, Natia Turnava, Tengiz Bendukidze and Country Representative, Tamar Khuntsaria took part.

The meeting aimed at introducing EUGBC and its activities to the Ambassador, discussing cooperation possibilities and reviewing the talks on Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) between Georgia and the EU, British programmes supporting business development in Georgia, business environment and reforms in the country.

In addition, EUGBC briefed the British Embassy about the council's publications and seminars concerning EU-Georgia trade, which the Ambassador considered as an important campaign for raising business sector's awareness and thereby expressed strong interest towards cooperation with EUGBC on important issues referring to trade development and investment growth in Georgia. It was also noted from both parties that increasing business dialogue and professional contacts between British and Georgian businesses will be extremely productive for both countries. To this end, the Ambassador emphasised the importance of renewing direct flights between UK and Georgia, and added that she and the Minister of

Economic and Sustainable Development of Georgia have recently signed the Aviation Treaty setting a legal base for the cooperation of British and Georgian aviation companies. In addition, the Ambassador and the Board Members stressed the potential role of business associations and UK institutions supporting business development, alongside with the British Embassy in Georgia and the Georgian Embassy in London was highlighted.

Both EUGBC and the Embassy stated readiness to cooperate in the framework of the preparation of possible business mission from Britain and other joint events. A wider introductory meeting of the new British Ambassador with the EUGBC members was also envisaged at a later stage.

Georgia signs readmission agreement with the European Union

On 22nd of November, 2010, the European Union and Georgia signed in Brussels an agreement on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation. Agreement was signed on Georgian side by **Grigol Vashadze**, Georgian Foreign Minister and on EU side by **Melchior Wathelet**, State Secretary for the Budget, Migration and Asylum Policy, Family Policy and Federal Cultural Institutions of the Kingdom of Belgium, representing the current Presidency of the EU, and **Cecilia Malmström**, Commissioner for Home Affairs, Member of the European Commission.

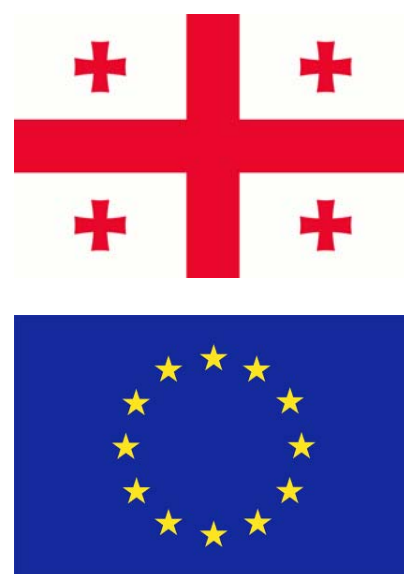
The readmission agreement sets out clear obligations and procedures for the authorities of both Georgia and the respective EU Member State as to when and how to take back people who are illegally residing on their territories. These obligations cover nationals from Georgia, the EU Member States and those from third countries and stateless people, provided the latter have a clear link with the requested Party (e.g. visa or resident permit).

A visa facilitation agreement between Georgia and EU, opening the way for easier travel and people-to-people contact across Europe, was already signed on 17th of June, 2010.

"The signature of a readmission agreement is a concrete step forward in EU-Georgia relations." said Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs. "The visa facilitation and readmission agreements are a very tangible result of the Eastern Partnership and will promote interaction between citizens of the EU and Georgia and strengthen our cooperation in the fight against irregular immigration. I am very pleased that both agreements have now been signed - this means that Georgians will be able to travel more easily while maintaining the efforts to clamp down on irregular migration", continued Ms Malmström.

Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle added: "Georgia and EU-Georgia relations remain high on our agenda. I warmly welcome the signature of the readmission agreement. It is a concrete sign of continued effort of the EU to strengthen relations with Georgia. This signature will now allow both the visa facilitation and readmission agreements to be ratified and enter into force, facilitating mobility for Georgian citizens who want to come to the EU. It will make it easier, cheaper and quicker to obtain a short term Schengen visa."

The agreements on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation and on the visa facilitation between Georgia and EU will enter into force once both Parties have completed their internal ratification procedures. This involves, on the EU side, the European Parliament which will have to give its consent.





EUGBC Secretary General Participated in Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum 2010 held in Berlin

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) Civil Society Forum (CSF) has been established in 2009 following the Prague Summit launching the Eastern Partnership. The EaP CSF aims to support the further development of civil society organisations and promote contacts between them as well as facilitate their dialogue with public authorities. The CSF is an integral part of the EaP, which forms the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The EaP addresses Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The European Commission received 562 applications from Civil Society Organisations (CSO) for participation in the second EaP CSF. Only 230 CSOs from the EaP countries and EU member states were selected from 562 applicants.

Selected CSOs met in the second EaP CSF held on 18th–19th of November, 2010, in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Berlin. The EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC) was represented by Secretary General, Konstantin zaldastanishvili.

Cornelia Pieper, State Minister at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, **Štefan Füle**, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, **Mikołaj Dowgiałewicz**, Minister for Europe in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **Jiří Schneider**, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, and **Jacek Krawczyk**, Vice President of the Brussels based European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) welcomed the participants of the event on 18th of November.

Guido Westerwelle, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany addressed the participants of the forum on 19th of November. The speech can be viewed at EUGBC web site (www.eugbc.net) at the link: http://www.eugbc.net/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=3&info_id=215

Besides the Plenary Sessions, CSOs met in the scope of following four working groups (WG) to elaborate the recommendations of the forum:

1. Democracy, good governance, stability, border management
2. Economic integration, convergence with EU policies
3. Energy, climate change, environment
4. Contacts between people

EUGBC Secretary General participated in the WG2. After two days of active consultations, members of the WG2 elaborated and agreed on a set of recommendations.

The recommendations can be viewed at EUGBC web site (www.eugbc.net) at the link: http://www.eugbc.net/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=3&info_id=215

The Forum elected Country Coordinators for EaP countries, Coordinators for WGs and EU representatives in the EaP CSF Steering Committee. **Kakha Gogolashvili**, Director of European Studies at Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies and **Ivan Voleš**, member of the Brussels based European Economic and Social Committee were elected as coordinators of WG2. **Tamar Khidasheli**, Chairperson of Georgian Young Lawyers' Association was elected as a country coordinator for Georgia.

How to export to the EU? The Export Helpdesk, now available in Russian



To facilitate the access to the EU market for potential exporters of the Eastern neighbourhood, the Russian version of the Export Helpdesk was launched on 26th of November, 2010. Please consult the Export Helpdesk at the following link: www.exporthelp.europa.eu.

Export Helpdesk is an online service provided by the Commission to facilitate EU market access for developing countries.

It offers information required by exporters interested in supplying the EU market. From labelling rules to import tariffs, through rules of origin; the Export Helpdesk offers information free of charge and in six languages : English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and now in Russian as well.

The launch of the Export Helpdesk into Russian is an important step to better address the needs of the economic operators not only in the Eastern Partnership region but also in all countries where Russian remains an important vehicular language.

In 2009 the database received almost 35000 hits from the South Caucasus countries. It is a very valuable tool for economic operators willing to export their goods to the EU.

EUGBC Secretary General participated in the 5th Panel on Trade and Trade Related Regulatory Cooperation organised by European Commission in Brussels

The 5th Panel on Trade and Trade Related Regulatory Cooperation linked to Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) - Business to Business and Business to Government contacts was organised by European Commission in scope of the Eastern Partnership Initiative on November 25-26, 2010, in Brussels.

EUGBC Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili was nominated by the Government of Georgia to participate in this two days event together with other representatives of Georgian business community.

Representatives of European Commission, governments and business associations from EU and it's eastern neighbours (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus) discussed the general approach and content of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) and the opportunities and challenges this creates for business from Eastern Partnership Countries and the EU, as well as the steps how to involve the business community in the trade and trade related approximation process that underpins the preparation and negotiation of DCFTAs.

It was underlined that in order to enhance dialogue and improve information and guidance it is important that Eastern Partnership Countries approximate to EU institutional set-up and integrate in the existing structures. European side stated that in the EU two organizations play an important role in the above mentioned dialogue and in the dissemination of information, BUSINESSEUROPE and EUROCHAMBRES.

The East-Invest Program – new regional investment and trade facilitation project for the economic development of Eastern Partnership Countries, launched in the framework of the EU Eastern Partnership initiative, was presented at the event.

At the 5th Panel on Trade and Trade Related Regulatory Cooperation European Commission announced the Launch of EXPORT HELPDESK's Russian version (www.exporthelp.europa.eu), important free of charge trade facilitation tool for economic operators in the Eastern Partner countries, providing information on import tariffs, EU regulations, import formalities, etc.

Visit of the EUGBC Board Members to Brussels and Luxembourg

On the occasion of Board members visit of the EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC) to Brussels on 29-30 November, 2010, EUGBC organized and participated in number of events in Brussels and Luxembourg. The events described below attracted the interest of the Brussels community. As a result EUGBC branded events have lifted both Georgia's and EUGBC's profile and strengthened links with important audiences in Brussels. EUGBC Board members have agreed to regularly organize such events in Brussels.



Meeting at BusinessEurope

On 29th of November, Members of EUGBC Board and Secretary General met with Adrian Van den Hoven, Director of International Relations Department of BusinessEurope and Leander van Laerhoven, Adviser of this department. BusinessEurope is the largest European business confederation which unites 40 central industrial and employers federations from 34 countries across Europe. BusinessEurope also represents small, medium and large companies and defends their interests vis-à-vis the European institutions with the principal aim of preserving and strengthening corporate competitiveness.

At the meeting with the EUGBC Board, representatives of BusinessEurope presented their activities and initiatives in the Eastern neighbourhood of the European Union. Participants of the meeting discussed the prospects of cooperation between EUGBC, Georgian business community and BusinessEurope.

Meeting with Philip Dimitrov, newly appointed EU Ambassador to Georgia

On 29th of November, Members of the EUGBC Board and Secretary General organized a lunch meeting with Philip Dimitrov, newly appointed EU Ambassador to Georgia. The meeting took place at BP's office in Brussels. EUGBC representatives described the economic situation in Georgia in general sense and also from the sector specific perspective in which each of the EUGBC members is involved. Members of the EUGBC discussed the recent developments in the regulatory framework of Georgia and potential of the country to attract foreign investments.

Ambassador Dimitrov thanked EUGBC Board members for the invitation and for the introduction of EUGBC activities as well as presenting each of member's business perspective on Georgia. Ambassador stressed the strategic importance of Georgia to the European Union. He expressed readiness to contribute to the approximation of Georgia and the EU and the best cooperation with EUGBC during his term of service as an Ambassador.

Roundtable discussion at the European Policy Centre

On 29th of November, Members of EUGBC Board and Secretary General took part in a roundtable discussion on "**EU-Georgia Economic Relations - Achievements and Challenges**", organised by the European Policy Centre (EPC) in cooperation with EUGBC.

Amanda Paul, Policy Analyst from EPC, and Konstantin Zaldastanishvili, EUGBC Secretary General welcomed the participants of the roundtable. Howard Chase, Chairman of the EUGBC Board and Nick Gvinadze, member of the EUGBC Board, gave a presentation on the investment climate in Georgia and the state of EU-Georgia economic relations. Other participants of the panel were Dirk Vantghem - Director of International Affairs in EUROCHAMBRES (association of more than 1200 European Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and David Solomonias - Deputy Chief of Mission of Georgia to the EU.

Working dinner with EU officials and other Guests

On 29th of November, EUGBC organized a working dinner with participation of high level Georgian and European officials and representatives of the Council. From Georgian side **HE Salome Samadashvili**, Georgian Ambassador to EU, Belgium and Luxembourg was present. Other guests included **Gunnar Wiegand**, European Commission, DG External Relations, Director - Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, Central Asia, **Milan Cabrnock**, Member of the European Parliament (EP), Chairman of the EP Delegation to the EU-Georgia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, Head of Milan Cabrnock's office **Eva Moravcova** and **Philip Dimitrov**, newly appointed EU Ambassador to Georgia.

The dinner was moderated by **Howard Chase**, Chairman of the EUGBC Board, who engaged the attendees in a lively discussion about the EU-Georgia relations and a range of other Georgia-related topics. Work of EUGBC was well recognized by both Georgian and EU officials. They underlined the importance of business community's contribution to EU-Georgia relations and expressed their interest to closely cooperate with the Council in future.

Meeting at the European Investment Bank

On 30th of November, Members of the EUGBC Board and Secretary General held a meeting at the European Investment Bank (EIB), in Luxembourg with the representatives of Eastern Europe, Russia and Southern Caucasus, Europe's Neighbour and Partner Countries Department: Philippe Szymczak - Head of Transport, Telecom and Corporate Division, Tomas Tamosauskas - Loan Officer in Transport, Telecom and Corporate Division, Markus Pfeffer - Senior Loan Officer in Energy, Environment and SMEs Division.

EIB representatives presented their ongoing and planned projects in Georgia, specifically the Eastern Partners Facility (EPF) instrument which is a EUR 1,5 bln facility to be implemented by EIB in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan during 2010-2013. Through EPF instrument EIB will support investment projects essentially with medium- and long-term loans which will be project-oriented.

Participants of the meeting also discussed the investment climate in Georgia in a broader sense. They expressed appreciation of current level of the cooperation between EUGBC and EIB and willingness for working closely in future.

Meeting at FERRERO International S.A.

On 30th of November, Members of the EUGBC Board and Secretary General had a meeting in the head office of FERRERO International S.A. with Giuseppe Di Bernardo - Finance Head of A.I.S. Division and Ivan Adorno - Managing Counsel.

EUGBC representatives recognized a very positive role of AgriGeorgia from FERRERO Group as a member of EUGBC. Representatives of FERRERO International S.A. presented their current and planned activities in Georgia. It was underlined that FERRERO Group is a one of the biggest investors in the Georgian agriculture sector.

EUGBC representatives described the objectives and activities of the EUGBC, including the trade publications and regular seminars on export issues organized by EUGBC for Georgian entrepreneurs, as well as the online investment guide which is run by EUGBC in cooperation with Amcham Georgia.

The parties to the meeting agreed to cooperate closely in the future.

Georgia and EU sign air transport agreement

The European Union and Georgia have signed a comprehensive air services agreement on December 3, 2010, in Brussels. This will open up and integrate the respective markets, strengthen cooperation and offer new opportunities for consumers and operators. The agreement that was signed in the margins of the EU Transport Council will establish a "Common Aviation Area" between Georgia and the EU based on common rules in important areas, such as aviation safety and security. From Georgian side the agreement was signed by **Vera Kobalia**, Minister of Economy and Sustained Development.



Vice-President of the European Commission, Commissioner for Transport **Siim Kallas**, said: "The comprehensive air services agreement signed in Brussels today is very important for further strengthening the overall economic, trade and tourism relations between Georgia and the EU. The

agreement will allow Georgia to become a full partner of the EU in aviation and gradually integrate Georgia into a wider pan-European aviation market.”

The agreement will open the respective markets and integrate Georgia into a wider European Common Aviation Area. As a result, Georgia will harmonise its legislation with European standards and implement the EU aviation rules in areas such as aviation safety, security, environment, consumer protection, air traffic management, economic regulation, competition issues and social aspects. The agreement will enable all EU airlines to operate direct flights to Georgia from anywhere in the EU and vice versa for Georgian carriers, as well as remove all restrictions on prices and the number of weekly flights between Georgia and the EU. The new comprehensive aviation agreement will provide significant impetus towards strengthening aviation relations generally between the EU and Georgia. Over the past five years passenger traffic between the EU and Georgia has increased by an average of 10% per year whereas cargo traffic in the same period has increased by an annual average of no less than 26% over the past five years.

Similar agreements have already been concluded between the EU and the Western Balkan countries and between the EU and Morocco – both with very positive results. An agreement with Jordan will be signed later this month. Currently, the EU is also negotiating agreements of this type with Ukraine, Israel, and Lebanon. The European Commission has received a mandate to negotiate similar agreements also with Tunisia and Algeria, while Moldova expressed interest in negotiating such an air transport agreement with the EU earlier this year.



***EUR 1,5 bln Eastern Partners Facility (EPF)
established by European Investment Bank (EIB)***

EUGBC is cooperating closely with European Investment Bank's (EIB) headquarters in Luxembourg. During the last meeting at EIB, EUGBC Secretary General and Members of EUGBC Board were informed that to supplement its Mandate the EIB has established a EUR 1,5 bln Eastern Partners Facility (EPF).

The purpose of EPF is to support EU investments in EU's Eastern partner countries. Under this facility, the EIB can support investment projects carried out by the subsidiaries of the EU companies or by joint-ventures in which these companies are involved. The EPF enables EIB to take a more active role in strengthening economic ties between EU and its Eastern partner countries.

A short presentation of Eastern Partners Facility (EPF) can be found at the EUGBC web site (www.eugbc.net) at the link: http://www.eugbc.net/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=3&info_id=216

***EU-Georgia Cooperation Council eleventh meeting
was held in Brussels***

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and Georgia held its eleventh meeting on December 7, 2010. The EU was represented by **Zsolt Németh**, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Hungary (Chair of the Cooperation Council meeting) and **Štefan Füle**, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy. The Georgian delegation was led by **Salome Samadashvili**, Ambassador of Georgia to the EU. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Ambassador **Peter Semneby**, also took part in the meeting.



The parties discussed the implementation of the EU-Georgia European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan and issues related to enhancing EU-Georgia relations, including the ongoing negotiations of a new EU-Georgia Association Agreement within the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The Cooperation Council noted Georgia's strong commitment to the implementation of the ENP Action Plan, welcomed achievements in a number of areas and underlined the need to remain focussed on further implementation, also in view of the Progress Report to be published in spring 2011.

The Cooperation Council provided a good opportunity to take stock of latest developments in the South Caucasus, as well as to review recent political and economic reforms in Georgia.

The third plenary session of the negotiations for the elaboration of the text of the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union was held in Tbilisi

The third plenary session of the negotiations for the elaboration of the text of the future Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union was held in Tbilisi on December 8-9, 2010. (The negotiations were officially launched in Batumi, on 15 July 2010. The second plenary session was held in Brussels, on October 11, 2010).

The Georgian delegation consisted of representatives of the relevant line Ministries and was led by the Deputy Foreign Minister **Tornike Gordadze**, chief negotiator from the Georgian side. The European side was headed by **Hugues Mingarelli**, Deputy Director General of the External Relations Directorate General of the European Commission and the chief negotiator from the EU side.

The parties discussed the following issues:

- Reforms process in Georgia;
- Political dialogue and cooperation on the common foreign and security policy;
- Justice, freedom and security;
- Regulatory approximation with the EU.

The sides took stock of the progress achieved and set the plans for the future cooperation. The sides positively evaluated the ongoing negotiation process.



EUGBC Secretary General participated in the Conference "DCFTA Impact on the Business Community in Georgia"

The Government of Georgia and the Georgian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre (GEPLAC) organized a Round Table - Conference dedicated to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with Georgia. The event took place on December 13, 2010 at Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Tbilisi. Government and business representatives as well as NGOs attended the event.

On behalf of EUGBC the Secretary General, Konstantin Zaldastanishvili took part in the event.

The Conference had the following focus:

- Raising the awareness of its participants on the importance of DCFTA with Europe and its impact on business sector;
- Raising the awareness of business sector on how to get prepared to face these reforms and enactment of the Agreement;
- Establishing dialogue between the government and business on the relevant and related topics;
- Allowing the business representatives to debate topic with government representatives, put questions and receive answers on issues of their interest.

The conference was moderated by European and Georgian Directors of GEPLAC. Tamar Kovziridse, Senior Advisor to Prime Minister, Francois Massoulie, Deputy Head of Economic, Political and Press Section of the EU Delegation to Georgia, and GEPLAC short term experts made the presentations. The representatives of the Business Associations had a chance to discuss DCFTA prospects with the representatives of Georgian Government and the EU Delegation.

You have already been informed that UNDP has published a Georgian Manual on Corporate Social Responsibility. This publication has been developed in collaboration with number of experts, private sector representatives, major business associations, and academic and civil society organizations, including your members. It provides an overview of the CSR-related situation in the country, and gives companies of all sizes and levels of experience simple guidance and tools to start aligning their practices with market leaders here in Georgia and worldwide.

UNDP has published the Georgian Corporate Social Responsibility Manual

UNDP, in collaboration with several major business and civil organizations, has published the Georgian Corporate Social Responsibility Manual, the launch of which took place on December 15, 2010, at the Radisson Hotel in Tbilisi.

The publication was developed as a part of a wide collaborative effort: over 50 representatives of best Georgian businesses, business associations, academic and civil society organizations participated in its development. The contributors come from: AmCham, Bank of Georgia, Nikora, EBRD, ProCredit Bank, Wissol, Marriott, Magticom, BP, Statoil, Bank Republic, Caucasus University, CSRDG, **EU-Georgia Business Council (EUGBC)**, AYEG, Silknet, EPF, TBC Bank, GAU, Elkana, HSBC Bank, Caucasus Online, Borjomi, Geocell, IFC, NIA, The British Council, ICC, CENN, Rakeen, PricewaterhouseCoopers, First Step Foundation, Noe Group, DLA Piper, Teliani Valley, UGT, Heidelberg Cement, TAV, and others. It is printed in both Georgian and English.



The Manual is the first publication of its kind in Georgia: it provides practical instruction to companies on how to set up and improve their corporate social responsibility practices, and lists numerous examples of best practice on the part of Georgian and international companies. It is also designed to help the civil society organizations in establishing collaboration with the private sector.

The Manual consists of five chapters: Overview, Community, Marketplace, Workplace, and Environment. In each of them, the business reasons for corporate social responsibility are listed; instructions are given on how to set up the internal processes and programs separately for companies just starting, those who wish to improve their existing practice, and for advanced companies; instructions for communication and reporting are laid out; and further resources are listed.

The Manual also represents the review of the current national and international practice in the area of responsible business practices, and is therefore indispensable to all companies which wish to establish themselves as market leaders in this area.

Both Georgian and English electronic versions of the Manual can be viewed at the following links:
http://www.undp.org.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=24&info_id=1129
http://www.undp.org.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=24&info_id=1130

EUGBC members are welcome to pick the Manual's hard copies at the UN House from the beginning of 2011. Please contact Sophie Tchitchinadze at +995 32 25.11.26 (ext. 158).



The EU Ambassador Presented Credentials to the President of Georgia

On December 22, 2010, Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia, Ambassador Philip Dimitrov presented a letter of credence to the President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili.

Bulgarian politician, Philip Dimitrov (born 31 March 1955), was appointed as the EU Ambassador to Georgia by Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Commission Vice-President in September, 2010. Before arriving to Georgia, Ambassador Dimitrov had an interesting and successful exchange of views with European Parliament on 30th of November, 2010.

After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the rank of the Heads of Delegations is now equal to Ambassadors for the first time in European history.

Tbilisi City Hall Property Management Agency

Tbilisi City Hall Property Management Agency was established on 12th of April, 2010 and is responsible for preparing Tbilisi City hall-owned property for an auction, conducting an auction and recording the results. The Agency is also responsible for issuing official acts necessary for creating official agreements and/or contracts related to the privatization of Tbilisi City Hall-owned property.



In addition to the above mentioned services, we provide additional paid and/or expedite services; besides, our duties include managing enterprises owned (wholly or partly) by Tbilisi City Hall within the framework of delegated authenticity on Property Management Agency by the partner.

As a result of already implemented reforms, all kinds of procedures related to purchasing Tbilisi-based property have become much simpler. We have already launched one of the most comfortable systems of purchasing Real Estate – Online Auctions - which enables interested persons to buy the property via the internet from any part of the world.

We aim to play an important role in creating an attractive business environment in the country but it should be noted as well that the country's interests will be put first when making decisions about privatization objects. We promise prospective investors that a special emphasize will be put on the protection of every single investment and on their profitability.

In the search of perfection, the agency started to provide after-sales services as well which include:

- Consulting
- Preparation of documents (for registration purpose; licenses, etc.)
- Representing the investor or group of investors in Georgia
- Providing necessary statistical and analytical information
- Assisting in dealing with government bodies
- Managing and monitoring projects

We will prove that each investment project implemented in Tbilisi will be profitable both for foreign investors and for our country.

We are looking forward to cooperating with you...

BUY WITHOUT RISK! SECURITY OF YOUR CAPITAL WILL BE GUARANTEED BY COOPERATING WITH US!

EUGBC Members News

Two New Members joined EUGBC in November 2010



Two new members joined EUGBC in November 2010. **Berta LTD** entered the Council as Corporate A member. Berta is a newly launched factory in Caucasus region and is the first manufacturer of household and personal care products in Caucasus region. From September 2010 Company will produce mass products such as fabric care, home care, beauty care, baby care, though currently Berta intends to export detergent powder in bulks worldwide. For information consult the following website: www.bera.ge.

Publishing House Navigator LTD joined the Council as Corporate A member. The Publishing House Navigator was founded as the company of, publishing the first in Georgia scientific newspaper about Information and Communication Technologies. Besides, another tourism project www.welcome.ge was created with the goal of supporting Georgian tourism and promoting our country on national and international basis.



At the moment this publishing house has several tourism magazines in both Georgian and English languages. Also monthly digest about Georgian Products that is a new initiative to support business made in Georgia. For information consult the following website: www.navigator.ge.

IDS Borjomi Georgia bottled "Borjomi" in a new design

IDS Borjomi Georgia met 2011 with significant news. The presentation of a new bottle of Borjomi took place at Borjomi's 120 years' jubilee event on November 20, 2010.

IDS Borjomi Georgia started work on a new bottle design in the beginning of 2010. The shape of the bottle has been changed but all other traditional traits maintained, considering that the customers' emotional connection to the old design bottle, which existed on market for a considerable time.

"The new bottle is still in light green glass and plastic. In its new design the bottle is perfectly shaped and slightly coiled. The product trade mark, "deer" image is accented. The geometry of the prints and images on the bottle is much defined. Traditional white and red colors etiquette is also used. The decision to design the new bottle has been made on the basis of different market researches. Our customers required news and we have met this requirement." - stated the General Director of the company Mr. Zaza Kikvadze.



The history of development of this brand may be divided into three key stages. The first period is connected to imperialistic Russia, when Borjomi was reopened and developed as a brand. The second period associated to the Soviet era, when hundreds of works on the unique properties of Borjomi mineral water were published and when the demand for Borjomi exceeded much the supply. The third period started in 90s and continues nowadays. During this period the brand experiences various crises. However, Borjomi production and development has never stopped. Today, Borjomi is sold in 30 countries worldwide.

Borjomi – always contemporary since 1890!

Gvinadze & Partners welcomes back Ivan Khokhlov

Gvinadze & Partners welcomes back Ivan Khokhlov, one of the leading international business lawyers in Georgia and formerly of DLA Piper Gvinadze & Partners.



"Ivan, who has LL.M degrees from the George Washington and the Central European Universities, is an invaluable addition to our legal team given his extensive experience in handling some of the most complex cross-border transactions in the region", commented Nick Gvinadze, the Managing Partner.



The First Christmas fair-sale of Georgian products was organized by EUGBC Member Publishing House "Navigator"

In the framework of the Publishing House "Navigator" project "Georgian Product & ..." the first Christmas fair-sale of Georgian products took place in Didube Plaza business center on December 11-12, 2010.

A wide spectrum of Georgian companies was invited to take part in the fair-sale to offer their products and services at special discount system to the community during 2 weekend days.

Participants included: Department of Tourism and Resorts of Adjara, Gori children nutrition cannery – Kula, Geoplant – Tea "Gurieli", "Martvili Tea", Elkana – "Bio Valley", Restaurant, shop – "World of wine" – Champagne "Cuvee Margaux", Wine Company – "Pheasant's Tears", Wine Company – "Kindzmaraulis Marani", Hotel – "Old Batumi", Spa Hotel – "Villa Reta"(Grigoleti), Tourism Agency – Global Travel, Tourism company – "Georgian Tour", Real estate – Realtor Batumi, Italian Bakery-Confectionary – "Panetteria", Italian Restaurant – "Verona", UCS Caspian original software for restaurant & hospitality business, Print-Copy Service, "Bi Art" advertisement company & architecture & design. Art: Thick Felt – Svimonishvili, Group "Quilt": Ira Lavrinenko; Tata Baqradze, Manana Art Gallery.

EUGBC Member, Danish Christmas tree grower Bols Forstplanteskole raises the funds to improve the conditions under which the Georgian cone pickers live and work

About 5 million Nordmann Fir Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year. But until now, very few people in the UK have been aware of the serious ethical issues behind buying these trees at Christmas. Although they are farmed in the UK and Denmark, the seeds for Nordmann Firs are sourced from natural forests, mainly in Georgia.



Harvesting of the seeds in Georgia is carried out by hand under unsafe conditions. Until now, they have worked entirely without safety equipment. Several accidents happen each year, but despite working in such conditions the cone pickers are usually paid such low wages that it is difficult for them to support their families.

A Danish Christmas tree grower called Bols Forstplanteskole (www.fairtrees.co.uk) is changing all of that. Bols source their own seeds from Georgia using fair trade principles, and in 2007 was awarded fair trade accreditation by Fair Trade Denmark. Bols Forstplanteskole is the only Christmas tree grower in the world with fair trade accreditation. In 2011 Bols will have full accreditation by the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO). Not only does Bols pay a fair wage and provide health insurance to the cone pickers, but proceeds from the sale of Fair Seeds and Fair Trees® are donated to the Bols Xmas Tree Fund (www.bolsxmastreefund.com) - a charitable fund based in Georgia.

The Bols Xmas Tree Fund aims to create awareness about and improve the conditions under which the Georgian cone pickers live and work. The Fund provides the cone pickers with Danish-made safety equipment and ensures that the workers are instructed on safety. In addition, the Fund works towards creating proper conditions for workers and their families through financial support for hospitals, schools, books and health care.

The Fair Trees® has supporters in the UK. MAAssist, Business Process Outsourcing specialist, teams up with Fairwind, a leading fair trade retailer and importer raises funds for Fair Trees® (fair trade Christmas trees) project.

From 1st January 2011, MAAssist will be raising funds to send a team of tradesmen to Ambrolauri, Georgia to carry out much needed renovations on the local school. This will happen in August/September 2011. This Christmas, the serious ethical issues surrounding the Christmas tree industry are being brought to the attention of the public in the UK. The UK campaign is being lead by Fairwind, culminating in a BBC documentary to be aired on TV and radio in early December 2010 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/go/em/fr/-/news/world-europe-11863768>, www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11899260).

MAAssist will set aside £1 for every claim with value received from 1st January 2011 for the Fair Trees® project. MAAssist will also welcome support from any insurance clients, who are willing to make a donation to the Fund. In return for such a donation, the insurance client will be able to use the Fair Trees® name in any corporate social responsibility and marketing promotional material.

For more information please contact: Teresa Owen, Fairwind (t.owen@fairwindonline.com), or Paul Hayman MAAssist (Paul.Hayman@maassist.com).

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EUGBC Members



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