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TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA WELCOMES MINISTRY OF FINANCE MOVE TOWARDS GREATER AID TRANSPARENCY

Tbilisi, 22 December 2008 – Transparency International Georgia today welcomed the Ministry of Finance's decision to post breakdowns of international aid to Georgia on its website.

The positive evaluation by the Tbilisi-based organization comes in the wake of the international donor conference in Brussels on 22 October 2008, at which 38 countries and 15 international organizations pledged to provide approximately 4.5 billion dollars in aid to Georgia over the next three years. TI Georgia had criticized the negotiations surrounding the joint European Commission / World Bank conference as lacking in transparency, accountability and broad-based consultation.

"This is an important step towards greater transparency in international aid to Georgia," commented Ms Tamuna Karosanidze, Executive Director of TI Georgia. "It is encouraging to see that the Ministry of Finance is taking the lead in increasing the transparency and accountability of aid to Georgia."

A TI Georgia report on access to information to aid released earlier this month had called on the Ministry of Finance to take the lead in making aid information accessible to Georgian citizens. "The Ministry of Finance's reaction to our report shows that constructive civic engagement with aid issues can help to improve aid transparency and oversight," said Ms Karosanidze. "In the coming year, TI Georgia will continue working with donors, governmental bodies and NGOs to strengthen the transparency and accountability of international aid to Georgia."

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Transparency International Georgia has been working to combat corruption, improve governance and strengthen democracy in Georgia since 2000. TI Georgia is a non-profit, non-partisan organization legally registered in Tbilisi. As a national chapter of Transparency International, TI Georgia is an independent organization. It has no financial ties or reporting lines to the international secretariat in Berlin, but TI Georgia is able to draw on the secretariat's experience and expertise in combating corruption worldwide.

Note to Editors

Ministry of Finance breakdown of international aid to Georgia
http://www.mof.ge/Default.aspx?sec_id=3212&lang=2

TI Georgia aid database (December 2008)
http://www.transparency.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=215&info_id=467

TI Georgia opinion survey on international aid (December 2008)
http://www.transparency.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=215&info_id=462

TI Georgia report on access to information on aid to Georgia (December 2008)
http://www.transparency.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=215&info_id=452

TI Georgia press release on the Donor Conference (October 2008)
http://www.transparency.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=50600&info_id=437