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Subject: Georgian Prime Minister Available for Interviews: Country Initially Successful in Slowing COVID-19 Spread, Zero Deaths Reported
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Good Morning,

There are no true success stories in the coronavirus pandemic. Governments around the world are doing their best to slow the spread, care for the sick, and plan for the aftermath.

But amid the worldwide outbreak, a small post-Soviet state is reporting some initial success in limiting the spread: Georgia. As the statement below explains, confirmed COVID-19 cases in Georgia remain at 108, with zero deaths, even a month after the first positive test. Georgian authorities have taken numerous steps to fight the virus, including imposing travel bans; declaring a state of emergency; suspending education and all large gatherings, providing large-scale aid to businesses, and introducing a dedicated website to communicate with citizens. On March 30, the Georgian government imposed even stricter measures, instituting a nationwide lockdown and partial curfew. Georgia's response has earned praise from global health authorities, including the World Health Organization.

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia or other key members of his public health team are available for interviews to discuss Georgia's response to the coronavirus pandemic; the steps the government has taken in response; and advice he can offer other nations on how to slow the spread. Please contact Jerry Markon at DCI Group at jmarkon@dcigroup.com to schedule an interview Thank you for your time – and please stay safe.

Please also find below the text of a statement detailing how Georgia is fighting the spread of COVID-19.

Thanks,

Jerry

Statement:

Georgia: Statement from Georgian Prime Minister on COVID-19

(Tbilisi, 25 March 2020) – As the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic intensifies, the Georgian Government is working around the clock to do its part to 'Flatten the Curve' to contain and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Giorgi Gakharia, Prime Minister of Georgia, made the following statement:

"The Georgian Government's preparedness and aggressive response from the beginning has been key to reducing the spread of the virus, and doing our part to 'Flatten the Curve.'

"It is of utmost importance for all of us to take preventive steps in advance, which we are doing now, so that everyone – the authorities, the government, the civil sector, business, and of course our citizens – can defeat this virus together.

“The Georgian Government understands our responsibility not only to protect Georgian citizens, workers and businesses – but also to join the global effort to prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 pandemic”.

Update on current situation in Georgia:

- Georgia’s first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on 26th February.
- As of 31st March, there are 108 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Georgia, with zero fatalities. Twenty one patients have recovered.

What the Georgian Government is doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Inter-Agency Coordination Council of the Government of Georgia was established under a leadership of the Prime Minister of Georgia on January 28, 2020 - one month prior to the occurrence of the very first case of test-positive Coronavirus infection.
- Travel Ban: The government took early and decisive action to ensure the health and safety of all Georgians, imposing bans on flights from China on 28th January and Iran on 23rd February, a two-week ban on all foreigners entering the country on 18th March. The government also announced the closure of all winter resorts in Georgia.
- Preventing Spread: The government suspended education; cancelled large-scale cultural & sporting events; introduced remote working and e-services; closure of cafes and restaurants and enforced isolation.
- Communication: The government introduced a dedicated website: www.stopcov.ge - to provide transparent and up-to-date information for all citizens; encourage compliance with government rules; and explain the need to follow isolation and distancing protocol.
- State of Emergency: The Prime Minister called on the President to declare a State of Emergency on 21st March, setting out clear rules on isolation and quarantine to contain the spread of the virus. At this stage, only 48 cases were recorded in Georgia: on 21st March the President declared the State of Emergency.

- Working with Partners: the government is working with all major international partners, civil society organisations, and others, to deploy resources to help Georgians cope with the impacts of the virus. We are in full cooperation with all the stakeholders not only to limit the negative effects of COVID-19 to the immediate term, but to ensure readiness for the post-pandemic landscape as well, in order to ensure that the Georgian economy regains the positive momentum it had prior to this pandemic.
- Economic Plan: Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia unveiled a far-reaching plan, including unprecedented and visionary protection for the country's economy:

GEL 1 billion (\$300m) of aid to businesses

Allowing companies to restructure their debts

Property taxes and income taxes deferred for 4 months

GEL 1.2bn (\$360m) in VAT returned to companies

Government-backed loans for hotels and other affected industries

- Georgia's response has earned praise from global health authorities. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom praised Georgia's response to the threat of the spread of the epidemic. He also noted that the WHO would continue to coordinate closely with Georgian authorities and provide technical and expert assistance. Georgia thanks the WHO for its support – and affirms that the government will continue taking whatever steps are necessary to protect the people in the face of this public health crisis.

NOTE: These materials are distributed by DCI Group AZ, L.L.C. for Political Union of Citizens "Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia," and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.