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**NDI POLL: GEORGIANS CONTINUE TO SEE JOBS AS NUMBER ONE PRIORITY
AND SAY COUNTRY IS HEADED IN RIGHT DIRECTION**

TBILISI – A survey of public opinion in Georgia, released today by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), shows that jobs remain the number one priority issue for 61 percent of Georgians. Territorial integrity and affordable healthcare are the second and third priority issues at 34 and 32 percent respectively.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents view Georgia as headed in the right direction, while eight percent said the country is going in the wrong direction. Asked whether Georgia is a democracy now, 43 percent of respondents said “yes,” compared to 38 percent who said “no.” Attitudes toward the direction Georgia is heading and Georgia’s democracy have remained statistically the same since NDI’s November 2012 poll.

Eighty-eight percent of Georgians say that the president should be directly elected by Georgian citizens. Eight percent believe the president should be elected by the Parliament of Georgia.

“Priority issues for Georgians have not changed. People continue to be optimistic in the direction that Georgia is heading and the ability of the government to make the changes that matter to them,” said Luis Navarro, NDI’s country director in Georgia. “By more than a nine to one margin, Georgians believe that the president of Georgia should be directly elected.”

The results reflect data collected from March 13-27 in face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgian speakers that included 3,103 completed interviews. The survey looks at issues of public importance, perceptions of democracy and attitudes toward reforms, as well as various domestic and foreign policy issues. The survey has an average margin of error of +/-2.5%.

NDI’s survey work is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and carried out by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC).

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NDI is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. More information is available at www.ndi.org.