



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 17, 2011

**GEORGIAN PARLIAMENT'S NEW TELEVISION PROGRAM
GIVES CONSTITUENTS FIRST LOOK AT THEIR MPs**

TBILISI – To help meet a demand by Georgians for more information about their elected representatives, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Georgian Parliament are producing *Your Parliament*, a program of televised interviews with ruling party and opposition legislators that is provided to local TV stations.

New constitutional reforms, which will take effect after 2013 presidential elections, assign the parliament new power to select a prime minister and form a government, which gives the legislature a central role in building a more inclusive democratic culture and increasing public confidence in the political process. Public opinion surveys by NDI show that Georgians want more information on legislative issues and the positions of their elected representatives.

NDI polling also shows that constituents get their information primarily through television. NDI's Parliamentary Communication Center (PCC), which produces *Your Parliament*, aims to help regional television provide more local context about legislative issues and members of parliament (MPs), particularly majoritarians, who are elected directly from single mandate districts.

The PCC also seeks to help these majoritarian members make use of new media, such as websites and Facebook, to feed the interest of growing Internet communities in Tbilisi and Batumi and to support transparency efforts as parliament begins its planned move from Tbilisi to Kutaisi.

“The PCC supports a more diverse media environment, more political dialogue and greater responsiveness to constituents. These efforts are needed to realize the ruling party promises of e-government as parliament enters the 2012 election cycle and prepares for its move,” said Luis Navarro, NDI-Georgia director.

Each *Your Parliament* show features a majoritarian MP from the region and a counterpart from the opposition. Each segment focuses on a specific topic, such as voting rules, taxes or pension reforms. Each guest has 25 seconds for opening remarks and then answers questions posed by his or her counterpart. All of the segments are available on the PCC's website, and citizens can voice their opinions about the programs on the PCC's Facebook page.

For many Georgians, the *Your Parliament* program marks the first time they have seen their MPs discussing real issues that affect their everyday lives.

The PCC is conducted in partnership with the Parliament of Georgia and Internews-Georgia, with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2013, the parliament will assume management of the PCC.

[Click here](#) to watch an edition of *Your Parliament* (in Georgian with English subtitles) in which Pavle Kublashvili, majoritarian member of the ruling United National Movement party and Legal Issues Committee chairman, discusses pension reform with Giorgi Akhvlediani, faction leader of the Christian Democratic Movement party.