



## **NGOs and human rights defenders respond to the statement made by the Council member judges**

NGOs and human rights defenders respond to the statements made by judge members of the High Council of Justice in the last few days to the Council member Anna Dolidze, as if her activities to defend rights of the affected population during the Russia-Georgia War of 2008 in the European Court of Human Rights were directed against Georgia.

Human rights organizations in Georgia and their international partner organizations,

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among them, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC) and Russian Justice Initiative (RJI), presented individual and collective applications of hundreds of people to the international courts against Russia on the facts of massive and cruel violations of human rights during the 2008 War and in connection with it. The applications are related to deprivation of life of civilians, torture and inhuman treatment, illegal deprivation of liberty, destruction of the property, discriminatory persecution during the war and other violation practices of fundamental rights. Based on the idea of universality and equality of the human rights, during the war, in order to recognize and protect ethnic Ossetian civilian victims, several applications has also been sent against Georgia, which supposedly included severe cases of deprivation of life and disappearance by state representatives of Georgia.

The concept of human rights protection is based on the idea of superiority of recognition and protection of human life and dignity and it sees everyone as a subject of its own protection, regardless of ethnicity and nationality. It is regrettable, that the judiciary representatives, who, first of all, should be precisely preserving idea of protecting human life and dignity, today are manipulating about state interests with narrow ideas. Over the years the main criticism of the judiciary has been precisely related to the state and public interest, that was perceived to be unhealthy and against human rights, which largely defined unfair nature of justice system.

Thus, similar statements made by the members of the High Council of Justice damage not only business reputation of a particular person, but also mislead the society and harm the activities of all human rights organizations and advocates, who are trying to establish high standards of human rights protection in the country precisely by using the international mechanisms.

**The signatory NGOs are reminding the individual members of the High Council of Justice that the European Court is one of the most effective regional mechanisms for human rights protection and it is precisely merits of many cases won against Georgia to correct system errors in Georgia, which has happened with the restoration of the rights of individuals.**

Signatories:

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1. Article 42 of the Constitution
2. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)
3. Human Right Center
4. Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC)
5. Human Rights Priority
6. Democracy Research Institute (DRI)
7. Justice International (JI)
8. International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN)
9. Tamar Khidasheli, lawyer
10. Tamar Gurchiani, lawyer