



## Illegal construction works at 13 Vazha-Pshavela Street in Batumi should be immediately terminated

With this statement we react to the developments around the cultural heritage monument at Vazha-Pshavela 13 in Batumi and state the following:

- According to official reports, in July 2015, a building located at 13 Vazha-Pshavela Street in Batumi was granted the status of a cultural heritage monument. Since then, the building has been subject to all standards for protection of cultural heritage monuments;
- Batumelebi Newspaper reported that within five months after the building was granted the status, its roof was gradually removed, its interior walls were destroyed, its balcony was removed and as a result, by October 2015, what was left from the

cultural heritage monument was its façade wall;

- In November 2015, the building was illegally demolished by its owner Slava Ltd., while the prosecutor's office has not yet taken any effective measures to investigate and prosecute the destruction of the cultural heritage monument;

- According to media reports, in March 2016, Slava Ltd. illegally renewed construction works at 13 Vazha-Pshavela Street but relevant administrative agencies have not taken any measures to stop these illegal actions.

In light of the foregoing, GYLA believes that it is crucial:

- for Slava Ltd. to immediately stop illegal construction works at 13 Vazha-Pshavela Str. in Batumi;

- for all relevant administrative bodies (the National Agency of Protection of Cultural Heritage of Ajara, Batumi City Hall's City Supervisory Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia) to stop the illegal works in a timely manner;

- for the Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia, the National Agency for Protection of Cultural Heritage of Georgia and the National Agency for Protection of Cultural Heritage of Ajara, should ensure that Slava Ltd. pays a compensation for destruction of a monument of cultural heritage;

- for the Office of the Prosecutor of Georgia to investigate the act of destruction of the cultural heritage monument swiftly and effectively and to criminally prosecute all perpetrators.