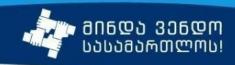
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Coalition Reacts to the Suspension of a High Council of Justice Member's Appointment Process

On July 22, Liela Poladishvili, a Tbilisi City Court Judge suspended the President's decree appointing Kakha Tsikarishvili as a member of the High Council of Justice. The suspension of the President's decision by the court largely violates the principle of separation of powers guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia. This action is another alarming example of the judicial administration revealing its true nature. It is a manifestation of how the Clan leverages the justice system for its ends and is additional evidence of a pressing need for personnel reform within key judicial institutions.

Recent judicial appointments, including the <u>election of High Council of Justice</u> members by Parliament, the selection process of Supreme Court judges, and the <u>outcomes</u> of the 2024 Conference of Judges, reveal the Clan's intention to place loyal individuals in key judicial positions. The suspension of the appointment of a High Council of Justice member reconfirms this trend. This is not the first instance when the

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Clan has weaponized the judiciary in pursuit of its interests. As an example, in 2024, Levan Murusidze and Mikheil Chinchaladze stopped the process of inspecting judges' assets through a court order.

In this context, it is clear that the ruling party's opposition to investigating problems within the justice system and conducting extraordinary integrity checks is yet another manifestation of its support for the Clan. Integrity checks are a vital step toward Georgia's integration into the European Union. Yet, the ruling party is employing various methods to discredit this process.

Georgia needs an independent and impartial judiciary to ensure fairness and equality in public life. This need can only be addressed through fundamental judicial reform, both at the institutional and personnel levels.