



## Parliament Should Elect Politically Neutral Person as Auditor General

The term of office of the Auditor General of the State Audit Office of Georgia ended on July 25. The new Auditor General will be elected by the nomination of the Chair of the Parliament of Georgia and through the majority vote of the Parliament. According to [reports](#) in the media, the Georgian Dream is considering to nominate members of the ruling party for this position.

We believe it is critical for the government to demonstrate political will to elect an independent Auditor General that will not be affiliated with any political power and will be accountable only to the Constitution and the Parliament. This is an important precondition to safeguard independence of the Audit Office, an institution established under the Constitution of Georgia.

In the course of the past years, the Audit Office has become an impartial institution

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free from political influence. This is also supported in various [reports](#) published by NGOs. This is an important achievement considering the experience prior to 2012.

Based on the past experience, as well as for ensuring high level of independence of the institution, which is required for its functions and purpose, NGOs proposed a [recommendation](#) to the government in 2013. The recommendation proposed that the legislation impose restrictions on political/partisan activities by high officials of the Audit Office, including the Auditor General and his/her deputies. The restrictions would be imposed not only during the terms of their office but also for a certain periods before and after taking the office. This is due to the fact that the independence of Audit Office is largely dependent on the independence from political influence of the Auditor General and his/her deputies.

We would like to remind the public that over two months have passed since the incident that happened between Lasha Tordia, the current Auditor General, and Otar Partskhaladze, former General Prosecutor, when, according to Tordia, the former General Prosecutor and his security staff physically assaulted him. Two months have passed and the incident has still not been fully investigated and questions remain whether this incident was related to the official functions of the chair of the constitutional body. This causes irreparable damage to the functioning of the institution. In view of this, it is important for there to be no perception of political favoritism when electing a new Auditor General.

We call on the Parliament to carry out its supervisory mandate granted by the Constitution in good faith and to elect a politically neutral candidate for the new Auditor General, who will not be affiliated with any political party but instead will be the guarantee of impartiality and independence of the State Audit Office.

The undersigned organizations are:

Transparency International – Georgia

International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association

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Civil Development Agency

Georgian Democracy Initiative

Institute for Development of Freedom of Information

Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center

Human Rights Center

The Economic Policy Research Center

Georgia's Reforms Associates

Liberal Academy Tbilisi