

# საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



## **GYLA's Lawyers Defending Interests of the Detained Photographers were not Allowed to Meet with the Detainees**

Lawyers of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association are defending interests of Irakli and Natia Gvendadzes. On July 7 the lawyers met with and talked to the detainees but the following evening, on July 8, when the photographers were formally charged, the investigation did not allow GYLA's lawyers to meet with the detainees whose interests they are protecting.

According to the investigator, the Gvendadzes have refused to use the service of GYLA's lawyers and have decided to hire another lawyer. The investigator also presented an application on preclusion.

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GYLA's lawyers were demanding to be allowed to meet with the detainees personally for them to confirm that the decision to change the lawyers was made willingly and without any pressure but the lawyers' demand was refused by the investigator.

It should be noted that during the most recent meeting with Irakli Gedenidze, the lawyer did not suspect anything about a possible preclusion. To the contrary, at the meeting it was agreed that the lawyer would frequently visit the detainee and that they would meet at the time he was formally charged.

Furthermore, on July 8, the lawyer attempted to submit an application for access to the case file at the chancellery of the investigative unit of the counter-espionage department but he was told that as the chancellery was closed he could not submit the application. It should be noted that the lawyer was trying to submit the application during the office hours but he was informed that the chancellery would be closed for the remainder of the day and therefore, he could not submit the application for access to the case file, which we believe amounts to a deliberate intrusion in the work of a lawyer.

The aforementioned circumstances, as well as the fact that we were not given an opportunity to meet with the detainee for him to personally confirm the preclusion, gives rise to a suspicion that the noted decision may not have been an independent will of Gedenidze.

Currently we are unable to get in touch with Natia Gedenidze who has been released and we are not allowed to visit the detained Irakli Gedenidze.