



## THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S DIPLOMA STILL RAISES QUESTIONS

The Coalition for an Independent and Transparent Judiciary responds to the discussion about the authenticity of Shalva Tadumadze's diploma, the acting Prosecutor General. On October 9, Prosecutor General Shalva Tadumadze appeared before the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs as a candidate judge for the Supreme Court. At the hearing, the validity of his diploma captured the attention of lawmakers as well as the general public.

At the sitting of the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs, the Chief Prosecutor noted that the year of his admission to the university was not properly indicated in his diploma, as the educational institution did not exist at all in 1993. Therefore, it is clear that Shalva Tadumadze could not have started his studies in 1993, which accentuates the suspicion that the document may contain false data.

According to Article 362 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, not only making, purchasing or selling but also using forged identity cards or other official documents shall be a

punishable act. Thus, the issue goes beyond the scope of an ordinary political discussion and professional competence of the candidate and acquires the legal dimension.

During the committee meeting, Shalva Tadumadze explained that he graduated from the university in 1998 as an extern student in line with the amendment introduced to the Law of Georgia “On Education” in 1997, and the educational institution indicated this information in the diploma by changing the year of his enrollment to 1993. Despite the explanation provided, it is unclear why the school indicated 1993 as the year of the admission when, at that time, the institution was not registered at all and did not specify in the diploma that the graduate took the degree without attending the classes, i.e. as an extern.

It is noteworthy that the diplomas of several other candidates raised questions about their compatibility with the law and the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs [asked](#) them, including Shalva Tadumadze, to submit prior to the voting information on their diplomas of higher education, which would confirm that the document was issued in accordance with the legal requirements.

According to the law, higher legal education is a necessary prerequisite not only for the judiciary of the Supreme Court but also for the exercise of the prosecutor’s powers, therefore, the lack of appropriate education shall render the Prosecutor General incompetent. This may cause serious legal implications regarding any actions performed by the Prosecutor General.

Apart from legal consequences, the case may severely affect public confidence in state institutions. Where the position of the Prosecutor General may be held by a person who fails to comply with the requirements of the law and the position can be taken based on a forged document, the reputation of the entire institute of the Prosecutor’s Office is damaged irreparably.

### **Consequently, we believe that:**

- A comprehensive investigation should be conducted into the authenticity of the diploma of the Prosecutor General to provide convincing answers to legitimate questions concerning its validity and alleged use of a forged official document;

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- The Parliament should not put to vote the candidacy of Shalva Tadumadze for the Supreme Court until all of the above-mentioned procedures are finalized and all questions regarding the diploma are answered;
- The Parliament should examine the authenticity of Shalva Tadumadze's diploma in accordance with the procedures prescribed by law, and in case the Parliament discovers any signs of crime in the actions of Tadumadze, it should initiate an impeachment procedure against the Prosecutor General under Article 48 of the Constitution of Georgia.