



Members of the Campaign “It Affects You Too, Authorities Continue to Eavesdrop on Us!” are ready for the dialogue with the Ministry of Interior

Members of the Campaign “It Affects You Too, Authorities Continue to Eavesdrop on Us” welcome the March 6 statement of the Ministry of Interior Alexander Chikaidze in terms of the readiness of the agency to have a dialogue with the civil society representatives on the problematic issue of secret eavesdropping and surveillance. Further, the Minister mentioned that it would be acceptable to consolidate the interests of the Ministry of Interior and Citizens of Georgia.

We would like to highlight that Georgia is a party to the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 8 of the Convention guarantees the privacy right. Therefore, the legislation that regulates secret eavesdropping should be drafted in compliance with the ECtHR case law, rather than joint interest of the Interior Ministry and citizens. The draft initiated in the Parliament which is supported by the members of the Campaign “It Affects You Too, Authorities Continue to Eavesdrop on Us” meets the ECtHR standards. Transfer of these standards in Georgian legislation will increase the degree of privacy protection and will avoid successfully litigated cases against Georgia and relevant financial sanctions.

In it impermissible to increase the power of law enforcement agencies, by making

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reference on human rights protection, in a manner that to prejudice protection of citizens' constitutional rights, including the right to privacy.

Furthermore, inviolability of privacy is also linked to movement of Georgian citizens without visa regulations in Shengen zone. According to the Visa Liberalization Action Plan the government undertook obligation to carry out the reforms in personal data protection field. According to the document, the government of Georgia shall regulate the legal and institutional framework in terms of personal data protection and bring applicable laws and bylaws in compliance with EU legislation.

In view of the Minister Alexander Chikaidze's statement, the organizations engaged in "It Affects You Too, Authorities Continue to Eavesdrop on Us" Campaign are ready to meet with relevant senior officials for exchange of positions about elaborated legislative proposals on secret eavesdropping.

Some dozens of organizations join the application. The initiators of the meetings with the Ministry of Interior are:

- The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association;
- Transparency International Georgia;
- Article 42 of the Constitution;
- Open Society Georgia Foundation;
- The Institute for the Development of Freedom of Information;
- "Liberal Academy Tbilisi"
- International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy;
- Coalition for Civil Development;
- The Human Rights Centre;