

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



New Evidence in the Case of Zurab Vazagashvili and Aleksandre Khubulov

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On May 2, 2006, Zurab Vazagashvili and Aleksandre Khubulov were shot to death in a BMW by officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia following a special operation in Tbilisi near tennis court. According to official statement of MIA, these persons were on their way to committ a robbery and police officers fired only after shots were fired from the vehicle to the police. There were many questions about the

case from the outset, indicating that MIA's official statement was untrue. GYLA's lawyers were defending interests of Zurab Vazagashvili's legal successor. Although investigation was launched, we believe that it was conducted in a biased and subjective manner, resulting in termination of proceedings for no evident violation of criminal laws in actions of the police.

The defence has now acquired important evidence. As public is aware, the only person sitting in the BMW during the shootout who survived is Bondo (Buba) Puturidze, who later signed a plea agreement. Up until now, it was reported that Puturidze had confessed to the charges. The statement that he gave before court confirmed that the Special Forces officers fired back after they resisted.

On October 26, 2012, Bondo Puturidze gave a statement to GYLA's lawyer Gagi Mosiashvili, rejecting his testimony before court and explaining that the testimony was obtained as a result of pressure. Puturidze noted in his statement that he and his friends had not intention of robbing and did not bear arms.

Police officers indicate that evidence was fabricated. On October 23 one of the police officers explained in interview proceedings drawn up by the defense that police officers were the ones who fired shots at the vehicle owned by MIA in order to damage the car, and with the help of an expert they tried to falsify evidence to reinforce the official version according to which bullet holes on MIA's car were the result of shots fired from the BMW at police officers.

GYLA applies to the chief prosecutor with the request to launch a probe. We have submitted to the office of the prosecutor important evidence obtained by the police that will confirm opposite of MIA's official version and will reveal violation of criminal law in actions of the police.