

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Solidarity Rally of Georgian NGOs outside GYLA Office

Representatives of NGOs held a solidarity rally in support of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association on September 8, at 1:00 pm, outside the office of GYLA. They declared their solidarity to GYLA that has been subject to incorrect comments by the authorities after it published findings of a British forensic analysis bureau regarding the case of Nika Kvintradze who died during the May 26 developments. Furthermore, some media outlets broadcasted reports aimed to discredit GYLA. NGOs participating in the solidarity rally released a special petition.

Petition of Georgian Non-Governmental Organization

Concerning GYLA's Release of Independent Forensic Findings on Circumstances of Death of Nika Kvintradze, One of the Persons who Died during the May 26 Developments

On September 6, 2011, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) released independent forensic findings regarding circumstances of death of Nika Kvintradze, one of the persons who died during the developments of the May 26 rally.

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GYLA underlined that the released information was based on the forensic report prepared by an independent forensic analysis bureau. The findings clearly indicate that images in the photo and video materials aired on May 31 in Kurieri news by Rustavi 2 TV, and provided by GYLA to forensic analysts are of one and the same person.

Following the publication of the independent forensic findings, incorrect comments were made both by the Ministry of Interior Affairs of Georgia and representatives of the legislative authority. At the same time, *Kurieri* news on Rustavi 2 and *Kronika* news on Imedi broadcasted reports aimed to discredit GYLA and prepared in full disregard of journalistic standards and ethic norms. We are particularly concerned that GYLA's impartiality as opposed to credibility of the forensic findings was questioned.

GYLA, one of the strongest NGOs in Georgia based on professional membership, which has been working for promotion of democracy and rule of law in the country for over the years, was subjected to biased reproaching both by the authorities and private TV companies.

Furthermore, the Georgian authorities have not provided an argued statement about why MIA questions contents of the forensic findings, which casts doubt on professionalism and objectivity of MIA representatives.

We believe that it is unacceptable to wage such an unfounded attack against representatives of civil society, in order to not discredit the organization and the NGO sector as a whole in the eyes of general public.

Representatives of civil society express their concern about the negative campaign waged against a leading NGO and express their support to the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association.

At the same time, we call on

the media representatives - namely, Rustavi 2 and Imedi broadcasting companies to observe journalistic ethic norms when preparing a news report and to publicly apologize before GYLA and the Georgian population for distortion of facts

the Government of Georgia – to immediately renew investigation into the death of Nika Kvintradze, carry out the investigation in an objective manner and inform public of its results.

Signatories:

1. Public Defender
2. Healthy World
3. The Centre for Technology Policy Research
4. Multinational Georgia
5. Century 21
6. International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy
7. Coalition for Civil Development
8. Human Rights Center
9. Article 42 of the Constitution
10. Center of Migrants Protection and Integration
11. International Center for Geopolitical Studies
12. Human Rights Institute
13. Transparency International – Georgia
14. Open Society – Georgia Foundation
15. Eurasian Partnership Fund
16. Justice and Liberty
17. Human Rights Priority
18. Trade Unions of Georgia
19. Institute for Strategic Studies
20. Caucasian House
21. The Green Movement of Georgia
22. NGO Coalition Georgia