

# საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



## Special Statement of NGOs

The International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy, Transparency International – Georgia, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association and the Open Society – Georgia Foundation condemn the acts of violence during protest rally outside the National Library.

We believe that the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia has failed to take preventive measures in an effective manner to avoid injuring of guests of the event. The situation could only be de-escalated after the Interior Minister arrived at the scene. It is clearly a positive fact that the minister personally got involved in the developments;

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however, we believe that the Interior Ministry has failed to plan adequate measures for ensuring safety of participants, resulting in the necessity to postpone the presidential address.

Notably, freedom of assembly and expression is one of the most important values of a democratic society but it must be realized within the legal constraints. We understand that some people have been suffering from the sense of injustice for over the years; nevertheless, this may not justify such illegal acts.

We call on the Interior Ministry to conduct an objective and effective investigation into assaults and hold as soon as possible organizers and participants of the riot legally responsible.

We call on the President's Administration to allow attendance at the event of a small group of persons who wish to attend the presidential address. To prevent further escalation of the situation, we call on the Parliament of Georgia to immediately host the presidential address and subsequent debates inside the parliament.

We call on the parties to take all measures available for avoiding a civil confrontation.