

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Statement of GYLA on the Developments in the Village of Tsintskaro

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Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) responds to the developments in the village of Tsintskaro, Tetrtskaro District, and reminds the state and the law enforcement authorities in particular about the obligation to protect freedom of religion, and calls them to interfere in the current confrontation between the Christian and the Muslim population; including by means of instituting criminal prosecution where appropriate, as well as undertaking preventive measures by the police to ensure safety of the Muslim population.

GYLA is particularly concerned by [the statement of MP Viktor Japaridze released in relation to the Tsintskaro Conflict by Kakheti Information Center](#).

In an interview with the journalist, MP Japaridze notes: "they are doing it in a way [to ensure] that their rights are not violated; however, are rights are also violated, aren't they? [...] if this involves violation of rights, if they want for mullah to pray at 6 in the morning [...] what if rights of Christians are violated What if they don't want to hear muslims pray at 6 in the morning?" MP Japaridze emphasizing the necessity to protect majority's rights is absolutely unsubstantiated; especially considering that the present case involves clear restriction of Muslim population's freedom of religion and violent threats against them.

Such comments made by state officials are in conflict with the Constitution of Georgia which guarantees freedom of religion. GYLA believes that similar statements pose a threat to peaceful cohabitation of religious adherents of different confessions and stability. The threat grows bigger in light of current confrintaiton.

GYLA calls on the representatives of the legislative branch to exercise particular caution when making certain statements and actions, and to harmonize them with the Constitution of Georgia, in view of their Constitutional status. Further, GYLA calls on the law enforcement and the Ministry of Interior Affairs in particular, to take all possible measures for preventing possible confrontation and for full realization of religious practice by Muslim population in a safe environment.